

GOLDEN AGES OF LITERATURE

THE OREGONIAN'S HOME STUDY COURSE. DIRECTED BY PROF. SEYMOUR EATON

XIII—GOLDEN AGE OF ENGLISH POETRY.

BY THOMAS MARC PARROTT, PH. D.

"The power of Byron's personality," it has been said, "lies in his splendid and imperishable excellence of sincerity and strength." This is an admirable appreciation, and yet it has been doubted. To many Byron's greatest fault as a poet seems a lack of sincerity, shown by his fondness for a pose of mysterious gloom and a too public parade of his bleeding heart. His strength, as well as his sincerity, has been doubted, and his criticism point out his lack of self-control, his jealousy, his inability to accomplish any great work. But such criticisms, after all, are one-sided, fixing upon the defects and overlooking the virtues. And there was much affection in Byron's character and work is not to be denied. The circumstances of his birth and training, the corruption of the age, the sphere in which he moved, made this inevitable. It was not, indeed, till the blow fell upon him which broke off his relations with a society of order and religion, and then pelted him with his genuine nature appeared. There is hardly a handful of sincere verses in his work before the "Domestic Poems" of 1816, and we have only to compare the latter with the earlier cantos of "Childe Harold" to see what an immense gain has been made by discarding the stately figure of the nominal hero and allowing the poet to speak for himself. From this time on the imperishable excellence of sincerity revealed itself more and more clearly. Byron was sincere in his love for nature, especially in his wilder and stormier aspects; he was sincere in his love for liberty, and even more sincere in his hatred of the oppression in the name of order and religion, which was then all-powerful in Europe. And he hated with a fiery passion the sham and cant that spread a thin veneer of morality over the deep corruption of English society. And the last cantos of "Childe Harold" and "Manfred," the "Prisoner of Chillon" and the "Vision of Judgment" and "Don Juan" are everlasting monuments to the sincerity of his love and of his hatred.

Byron's strength was intermittent, but it was none the less real. He was incapable of prolonged or steady effort, only apt to sink into a cynical pessimism, but always capable of rallying to noble action. Perhaps the source of his weakness and his strength alike is found in that superb egotism—Titanism, Arnold calls it—which led him to pit himself against the world. It is not a little man nor a weak one who can play the part of Manfred and utter without becoming ridiculous such a burst of nature as the prophetic cry: "Oh, Rome, my country! city of the soul!"

To Byron the ruins of his own life were quite as much a matter for concern as the ruins of the Eternal City, and so great is the power of his expression that as we read we share his conviction.

And the strength of Byron expresses itself in the simplest passions and with the greatest simplicity and directness of utterance. There is nothing ideal or super-subtle in the work of this great earth-born Titan, nothing of the peculiar "heightening effect of style" in his verse. All the more on this account do his outbursts seem to come from the heart, to the heart. The cry of Manfred, "Astarte! my beloved, speak to me, the line which served as a motto and an inspiration for one of Shelley's noblest odes,"

Yet, freedom, yet, thy banner torn but flying, Streams like a thunder storm against the wind, the summons to Greece to rise for liberty and the call to his own heart to shake off its unworthy shackles and seek an honorable end—all these move us with the grand force of an utterance of nature.

Since his death Byron's fame has been greater upon the Continent than in England. This is partly because his excellencies are universal, and his defects in diction and meter such as only a native would detect. But there is a more potent cause than this. Byron is identified with the cause of revolution and the struggle for national liberty. At the darkest hour of the cause he flung his name and person into the scales, and it was worth an army of lesser men. He was deep in the councils of the revolutionists in Italy; he gave his life for the liberation of Greece. The poets of revolution for 50 years—Leopardi, Heine, Pushkin, Hugo—looked up to him as their master. Byron is in no sense one of the peculiar glories of English literature; they supply the force, color and sound, as it were, to his verse; indeed, they interpret in the infinite variety of their manifestations the workings of a heart and mind in perfect harmony with them. Every poem written, every story told, has its proper background—the setting is as essential to the thought as the scene to the dramatic action—but to every mood and thought of Wordsworth, in truth to his very life, the lake district seems to be essential. But never for a moment must it be fancied that Wordsworth used his surroundings as a screen to press the scenery of the neighboring country into his services, nor as Byron, selected the choice places of the world for his dramatic situations, or sought to test this statement, try to reconstruct the landscape after a descriptive passage from Wordsworth. He never describes for mere description. It would be counted strange if nature could be caught grouping itself for picturesque effect, and such is the naturalness of Wordsworth's workmanship that the poet can never be said to have arranged Nature herself in the times seems to take the pen out of his hand, as Arnold says, and to deprive him of his style. Yet the likeness of Wordsworth seems to be reflected in the landscape and the streams unheard by day.

While in sweet cadence, rising small and still, The far-off minstrel of the haunted hill, As the last beating of the fold expires, Tune in the mountain dells their watery lyres.

How different the associations of Goethe and Schiller, with Weimar and the surrounding country. Here it is in the palace, park and library that one hangers to recall the visions of the past. From Rydal mount the influence of Wordsworth diffuses itself over the whole district.

Despite the local character of Wordsworth's verse, there is nothing to suggest limitation to the flight of the poet's imagination. An acre of the lake region would have sufficed to provide the mise en scene needful to the Wordsworthian mind and temper. The spiritual eye sees visions in the water drop. It would often seem that Wordsworth valued his mountains more for the seclusion and retirement offered by them than for their beauty. This utterance may seem heresy. But a tramp through the English lake district will reveal the beauties that are unnamed. Such color effects as are to be seen on the sheeny mountain slopes of slaty gneiss, resplendent with a fiery bath of sunrise and sunset, do not reappear in the poet's descriptions. And how little of the romance of this weird region of lake and mountain did Wordsworth import to us. Here was a spot wanting. All the world,

then, would have known the mysteries of tarn and fell. The background would have become as familiar to us as the land of Burns and Scott. With those writers these old hills of waste and phrygian from Skiddaw to Scall, these mountain lakes, heaven-reflecting, from Derwentwater to Windermere, would have served as scenes before which the loves and hates of man from the agon days of ancient Britons to the modern lake-dweller might have been enacted. But Wordsworth found his poetic inspiration in nature rather than in man, and he preferred to let us share in his joy rather than in poetic romances about man.

Byron's portrait

COMPLICATED RUNAWAY.

Rigs in Front Street Smashed and One Horse Killed.

A regular carnival of runaway teams created a panic on Front street, near Madison, yesterday afternoon about 3:30.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

and the animal that started it impaled herself on the tongue of a loaded wagon in front of the Hotel Elbeuf, thereby meeting instant death.

A small bay mare belonging to J. E. Ingall, hitched to a fish-delivery wagon, was the animal that started the runaway. She was playing with at the corner of First and Jefferson streets, and she dashed down Front at full speed. The keeper of a second-hand store on Front street thought he would stop the animal by shying a chair at her, and this caused the runaway to collide with a tea-delivery wagon belonging to J. Gill, on the opposite side of the street. Then there were two teams dashing down Front street.

At the Hotel Elbeuf the Ingall mare dashed up against the tongue of a wood wagon standing there, and the point of the pole ran into her breast for fully a foot. The gentle wood horse simply backed a few steps, drawing the tongue from the dead animal's body. The blood spurting into the gutter in a perfect flood, the Gill horse kept down along the east side of the street, and collided with a light wagon being driven by a farmer named Jacob Schumacher, of Garden Home, and wrecking the vehicle, but, fortunately, not injuring the driver. A little way further down, Mrs. Anson, who lives near Riverview cemetery, was driving homeward, in company with a woman friend, and the collision that happened then will cause an outlay of \$15 in restoring broken spokes and badly sprung axles.

Ingall, the owner of the first runaway rig, is in the retail fish business on the East side. He is in a bad run of luck, as he was held up several weeks ago at his barn and robbed of \$24. The driver of the Gill horse was secured at the corner of Front and Salmon, but a wheelwright bill will be incurred before the vehicle will be fit to use again. Quite a question has arisen as to who shall pay all the damages.

EAST SIDE AFFAIRS.

Gilbert Camp and Gilbert Auxiliary Camp will jointly decorate the graves of old soldiers in Lone Fir cemetery next week for Memorial day. The auxiliary and camp are making their preparations to perform this duty. Flowers are more abundant than in years past, and the abundance this year than last, and the camps will want an abundance to carry out their plans. In Lone Fir cemetery more soldiers have been buried than in all the other Portland cemeteries combined, there being about 180 buried there. Already the committees from the G. A. R. posts have been visiting the cemeteries and placing the markers on the soldiers' graves. These are made of iron, and are firmly set in the ground at the heads of the graves. They cannot be withdrawn easily, while at the top is a place in which a flag may be fixed. The committee has now placed all the markers, so that they may be readily found by the committee on decorations. It is very fitting that the soldiers of the Second Oregon should perform this service for the soldiers of the Civil War.

Death of L. D. Morris.
L. D. Morris, formerly a resident of the East side, died at Flagstaff, Arizona, May 21. Mr. Morris was well-known in the city. He was one of the charter members of Multnomah Camp, No. 7, Woodmen of the World. Also, for some time he was a partner with J. Wells in the real estate business. He left Portland about five years ago. Mr. Wells yesterday received the news of his death, but the cause was not given.

East Side Notes.
Judge J. S. Dilley, of Mount Tabor, is confined to his home with a severe attack of rheumatism. He also is suffering from a burned hand.

A fire alarm was turned in for a small blaze in a building on Railway street, Lower Albina, yesterday afternoon. It was extinguished without damage.

Mr. and Mrs. Will Stevens, who were recently married, have gone to California on a wedding tour. On their return they will make their home at Mount Tabor.

Miss Eva Alford, who formerly lived at Mount Tabor, but now is a teacher in the Heppner school, is a guest of Miss Mary Price, at Mount Tabor. She will remain there during the vacation.

Miss Lulu Cook, who lives on Columbia street, is confined to her home from the effects of a severe scalding down her left side. She accidentally emptied the contents of a boiler of hot water on herself.

W. Bramhall, who lives out on the

Base Line road, has just sold his farm for \$2000 to J. Stone, who recently arrived from Kentucky. The new owner will take possession at once. The place contains 50 acres of well-improved land.

The fruitgrowers around Mount Tabor report that the strawberry crop is turning out much better than was expected. The rains make the berries somewhat dirty, but this will disappear, and the prospect for a good crop is considered excellent.

The Haasalo-street Congregational church, from which Rev. R. W. Farquhar resigned as pastor, has called a pastor, but as yet has not received a definite answer. A reply is expected this week, and hopes are entertained that it will be favorable.

The second half of the old cannery building, which stood on the corner of East Seventh and Belmont streets, is on the way to the corner of East Ninth and East Yamhill streets. The contractor moving the building expects to have it on the new foundation before the close of the week.

The funeral of J. C. Cole, brother of Mrs. S. C. Pifer, of Sunnyside, took place from the home of the latter yesterday afternoon, and was conducted by Rev. J. J. Staut. Lone Fir cemetery was the place of interment. Mr. Cole was from Chicago, and on a visit to his sister when death came to him.

The cherry trees along the south side of the Base Line road, just east of Sunnyside, are well loaded with cherries, and they are turning red. However, they are stocked about as fast as they get ripe, as the trees are on vacant and uncultivated ground. The singular thing is that a short

distance eastward a row of cherry trees on highly cultivated ground have no crop at all.

EASTERN MULTNOMAH.

Big Scare, But So Smallpox—Bands Consolidated.

GRESHAM, Or., May 23.—Gresham has just passed through a smallpox scare. A few weeks ago H. L. Chalker, who lived here with his parents, came up from the Lower Columbia with another man, who stopped in Portland, and subsequently was taken ill and is now in the pesthouse with smallpox. Mr. Chalker stopped here two nights, and went back down the river, and is there yet. Saturday Dr. Belt received a telephone message from City Physician Wheeler, asking about the condition and whereabouts of Chalker, and the news spread all over the country that he was at home and down with smallpox. Many people became so frightened that they kept away from an entertainment Saturday evening, and from church Sunday. A letter from Mr. Chalker, Monday, stated that he was in good health, and he will be surprised to hear that he is down with smallpox in Gresham.

Lawyer Cotton's Farm.

W. W. Cotton has one of the best-improved farms in Multnomah County. It is situated on the Powell's Valley road, one mile west of Gresham, and is a model of agricultural skill. Mr. Cotton enjoys the distinction of being the proprietor of the only hopyard in Multnomah County, comprising 18 acres. It is kept in splendid condition, and has never failed to give a good yield, even in the poorest seasons. During the picking season it gives employment to about 30 persons, all of whom live in the immediate vicinity. It is the means of distributing considerable money in the community. Last year Mr. Cotton built one of the finest barns of this part of the country, and is now preparing to build another, which will be 32x50 feet, and will cost nearly \$1000. It will be used exclusively for the dairy stock, and will contain 180 stalls.

Bands Consolidated.

The Troutdale and Gresham brass bands have been consolidated, and are practicing once a week under the leadership of William Lattin, of the former place. The band now numbers 15 players, several having gone away, who were members of the two old bands.

Large Clearing Contract.

H. E. Davis, of Gresham, is about to let the contract for clearing 80 acres of land lying south of that place. It is densely covered with small timber and brush, and many old logs. The contract will call for the removal of everything but the stumps. Mr. Davis' intention being to seed the place down to grass and use it for a pasture a few years before having it cleared entirely for farming purposes.

Republican Rally.

The Gresham Republican Club is making active preparations for a grand rally Friday night. Several prominent candidates will be present, and addresses will be made which will be held in Metzger's Hall. The Gresham club is a strong one, composed of all the best Republicans of the precinct, and is doing good work. This will be the first rally of the campaign in this section, but it will be followed by others until the close.

The Southern Baptists.

While the Baptist denomination in this country is one in all that pertains to creed and practice, it is divided in its organizations for mission work. The Southern Missionary Convention met in Hot Springs, Ark., May 9-14. About 1000 delegates were present, and the proceedings were full of enthusiasm from the beginning to the end. First came the National Educational Society, which met in its meetings between the North and South.

The Society reported that there had been added to the endowments and equipment of Baptist institutions of learning in the United States during 1899 over \$250,000. About \$400,000 went to Chicago University, but advance had been made all along the line.

A review of the century showed in 1500 one institution, with 25 students and \$50,000.

In 1900 50 institutions, with 40,000 students and \$400,000, about equally divided between property and equipment and endowments. Rev. Dr. H. L. Merhouse is the secretary of the society. The convention proper has three great departments—missions, foreign missions and publishing work. These departments are in charge of boards, and all report progress with no doubt. The home of the doctor work in Cuba, where many converts have been made and there is great prosperity. What was one of the largest theaters in Havana has been purchased and made into a popular church, with 200 members and 25 outstations. In all parts of the island churches are springing up, and the people in great numbers are turning from the Roman Catholic to the Baptist faith. Special attention is also given to the negroes in the South, and a better feeling prevails than ever before. Strong resolutions against the Army canteen and lynchings were passed.

In foreign lands, the year has been marked with prosperity. The principal fields occupied are China and Italy. Ex-Governor John A. Gresham, who for several years has been president, was re-elected. He is not only an earnest Christian, but a skilled parliamentarian. This convention has had slight attention from the press, but it is to be counted as one of the great religious gatherings of the year. The next session will be in New Orleans.

ALEXANDER BLACKBURN.

INSIST ON KNOWING.

Deeply Interested Crowd Watch Building Operations.

A crowd collects daily to watch the progress made in the excavation for the foundations of the new building, owned by the Peckheimer estate, at the southwest corner of Washington and Seventh streets, and to discuss the methods employed from the press, but it is to be counted as one of the great religious gatherings of the year. The next session will be in New Orleans.

The fact that there is nothing but fine sand at the bottom of the excavation to place the foundations on is considered by some of the onlookers as opposed to the Scriptural theory of "digging deep and founding on a rock," but it is not strictly necessary to adopt all Scriptural theories in this state. The surveyor and his assistants, who meander around the excavation with a level and rod, and drive stakes in all sorts of places, also attract attention, and the purpose of driving some of these stakes provokes much discussion.

The fact that a large mound has been left in one corner of the excavation, and that a lead-to shed on the top of it has been turned around, is a source of wonder and anxiety to many. It is learned that this lead-to contains a suite of dress-room, and a theater adjoining, and that the six-foot passageway terraced along the front of the mound and thence to the street is to afford access to the rear entrance of the theater.

Castro's Peace Proclamation.

NEW YORK, May 23.—Official mail advices from Caracas, Venezuela, are to the effect that President Castro will issue formal proclamation of peace in Cuba. This date has been set because it is the first anniversary of the starting of the Castro revolution. It is more than a year since Venezuela has been free from revolution, and the occasion will be duly celebrated.

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The favorite summer drink.

Root beer.



THE ENGINEER MISUNDERSTOOD THE SIGNALS.

and there was a frightful railroad collision, with terrible loss of life. The whole country was appalled by that accident. There is doubtless a far greater loss of life occurring every day, in various sections of the country, for which the only excuse is—"the doctor didn't understand the symptoms." These cases are not the subjects of special inquest or the country would be agitated at the sacrifice of life to ignorance.

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