

THE STORY OF 'LITTLE BREECHES'

But for an Iowa now gratefully growing gray in Los Angeles there would have been no "Little Breeches"—for Hay's masterpiece rests upon a true story, says The Land of Sunshine.

Ephraim H. Winans is now a well known Angeleno. About the year 1863 he was an itinerant preacher in the Middle West, and in New Virginia Ia., witnessed the dramatic incident which was destined to be the motif of one of the best dialect ballads in American literature.

Several years later M. Winans was in Warsaw, Ill., the home of Hay's father. He dined at the Hay house, and afterward the family (including John) accompanied him to the Presbyterian church, where he preached on Divine Providence; its possibilities Under Natural Laws. His exegesis was briefly that Providence may work in answer to prayer or of its own tender mercy without miracle, but wholly in accord with rational laws—chiefly through the spirit. And among other illustrations he told the story which has since (with some changes under poetical license) become the enduring "Little Breeches."

In a visit this spring to Warsaw, Mr. Winans secured the letter in which Hay acknowledged the source of his inspiration. The episode which inspired Hay was as follows: A dark rainy night in April 1863 (or thereabout; it cannot have been more than a year aside from that), a district ministerial association was in session in New Virginia, Ia. The Rev. Henry Hancock (now located somewhere in Northern California) had just stepped to the stand and was giving out the hymn:

"Forever with the Lord! Amen! So let it be!" When a man named Proudfoot burst into the church, crying: "A horse! For God's sake, a horse!" He had driven his wagon up to the church steps, and handed out his wife and parents, but just as he reached to take his little 4-year-old boy from the back of the wagon, the horses stampeded and were gone in the darkness.

The meeting was broken up, and the congregation, Mr. Winans among them, started out to follow the runaway. The night was impenetrably black; the rain and the Iowa mud made anything like tracking impossible. The searchers swept concentric circles in the direction in which the horses had headed, and in that fencible prairie through gloom and mire, they floundered on.

At last, possibly a half-mile from town, they came upon the runaways. One horse was down in the head of a gully, the other upon the bank, the wagon half overturned behind them. But the child was not there. Round about they searched for the presumably trampled lad, but no trace was to be found. Their improvised torches were burning low. A Mr. Reed remembered an unused cabin half a mile across the fields and led a party thither to find dry material for new torches. A flock of about 50 sheep had taken refuge in the cabin from the storm, and their bleating served to guide the searchers. But when they at last found the place they could not open the door of the cabin.

A man was boosted up, crawled in to the gabel and brought out the torchwood. When he crawled out he said: "I thought I heard a voice in there."

No one believed him; it must have been some note of the bleating sheep; but he insisted. At last they forced the reluctant door, and lo, in the middle of the flock sitting on a box, was the lost child! He did not in real life say:

"I want a chew of tobacco. And that's what's the matter of me." He simply said: "Here I am papa," quite unabashed by his experience.

How had he come there in the night across the uncompassed fields so far from the spilled wagon? God knows.

Perhaps he had heard the voice of the sheep in the storm, and followed it. And how did he pass the door which excited men could barely force? For that, Mr. Winans says: "I suppose the door may have been open when he came and that the sheep, crowding back from where he sat, closed it, and that the rain swelled it so that it was difficult to open. As any rate, I took it as a Providence by natural means. We came forth with the child from the cabin singing the old long-meter doxology and his mother and his grand-parents weeping and praying away back in town heard us, and knew all was well. And that is the true story that John Hay and his father heard in my sermon in Warsaw the story which gave him 'Little Breeches.' He has turned the rain to snow and the ministerial association to a jug of molasses, and taken some minor license with the story, but it is the story of Proudfoot's little boy in Iowa in 1863."

A CAT THAT CAN READ.

"I have a cat," said a lady to me the other day, "that knows when a letter comes to her."

"A letter?" I exclaimed in surprise. "Yes, a letter; and if you don't believe it I will prove it to you. Just wait a minute until I direct one."

My friend left the room and in a few minutes returned with a sealed envelope, addressed to Miss Pussy, No. 1, Marlboro St., city.

"Now," said she, "if you will kindly post that for me to-night and be here when the postman comes around on his first delivery to-morrow morning, you will see that I am telling you facts."

I mailed the letter as she asked, and was at my friend's home promptly the next morning.

Soon the bell rang, and shortly afterward the servant entered with a bundle of letters, among which was that for Miss Pussy.

Placing them near the cat on the floor, my friend said "Now Miss Pussy, pick out your letter."

Sure enough, Pussy at once showed interest, and in a moment had pushed aside with her paw the envelope addressed to her.

I was almost to her to speak, when my friend said: "Wait a moment. She'll open it and eat up all that is in the envelope."

Scarcely had she said this when Miss Pussy had torn the envelope open, and was enjoying her letter very much. The envelope was filed with contempt.

UNFORTUNATE INTERRUPTION.

Willie was asleep and Dan was lonely. Willie is the minister's son, Dan is his dog. It was Sunday morning and every one was at church but these two friends. It was warm and sunny, and they could hear the good preaching, for their house was next door to the church.

"Dan," said Willie, "it is better here than in the church, for you can hear every word, and don't get pricked down your back, as you do when you have to sit up straight."

In some way, while Willie was listening he fell asleep.

Dan kissed him on the nose, but when Willie went to sleep he went to sleep to sleep, and did not mind trifles. So Dan sat down with the funniest look of care on his wise, black face, and with one ear ready for outside noises.

Now the minister had for his subject "Daniel." This was the name he always gave Dan when he was teaching him to sit up and beg, and other tricks. While the dog sat thinking, the name "Daniel" fell in his ready ear. Dan at once ran into the church through the vestry door. He stood on his hind legs, with forepaws drooping close beside the minister, who did not see him, but the congregation did. When the minister shouted "Daniel!" again, the sharp bark said, "Yes, sir," as plainly as Dan could answer.

The minister started back, looked around, and saw the funny little picture; then he wondered what he should do next, but just then through the vestry came Willie. His face rosy from sleep, and he looked a little frightened. He walked straight toward his father, and took Dan in his arms, and said:

"Please excuse Dan, papa. I went asleep and he ran away."

Then he walked out with Dan looking back on the smiling congregation. The preacher ended his sermon on Daniel as best he could; but then he made a resolve, if he ever preached again on the prophet Daniel he would remember to tie up his dog—Our Little Ones.

The more the farmers throughout the country look at the present price of wheat and compare it with the metallic value of the silver dollar the more they must feel satisfied with the result of the presidential election. They are getting from twenty-five to thirty cents a bushel more for wheat this season than last, and getting it in gold. Moreover, they are not paying their debts in good coin at a hundred cents on the dollar, but they have money to loan.

The farmer pays his debts on the gold basis, loans his money on the gold basis, and when it falls due he will expect to receive payment on the gold basis. Men who at all reflect on the money question and on prices of silver and wheat for a number of years, there was no necessary connection between the two productions, and it was not the demonization of silver that caused wheat to decline. Both wheat and silver suffered in price because there was an over-supply of both and a less demand. Today the world's supply of wheat is short, and the price, for natural economic reasons, advances. It is not so with silver. The over-production continues, and there is no corresponding demand. Hence the price falls. The farmers will undoubtedly do a good deal of thinking this fall, and if by Bryan and Altgeld and the whole silver crew ever enlighten them into voting for free silver again it will be because they have lost their wits.

Hon. Thomas H. Tongue arrived at his home in Hillsboro the morning of the 7th inst. The citizens of that place turned out en masse to welcome him home. We had the pleasure of a short interview with him the evening of the 9th, and while looking a little tired and fatigued from his trip across the continent, still he is the same old Tom and his handshake and grip is as hearty as ever. Mr. Tongue has built himself up most wonderfully in the regard of his constituents by his close attention to their individual interests. After a short rest and time to catch up with his business affairs he will take a run over his district to more fully ascertain its wants and needs.—Sheridan Sun.

A student said some time since to the president of one of our colleges, that he didn't think much of the book of Proverbs—"anybody could make proverbs." "Make a few,"

THE PACT-IRON INSCRIPTION DECIPHERED.

Mr. George S. Horton, United States consul at Athens, Greece, has just transmitted to the State Department at Washington a most interesting report regarding the deciphering of an inscription on the architrave of the east end of the Parthenon. The face of the east architrave is thickly dotted with small holes, and for many years scholars have been under the impression that these holes were traces of nails which had once held fast the letters of an inscription. It had also been suggested from time to time that a study of the nail holes might give some clue as to the letters themselves, which long ago were torn down, doubtless for the sake of the metal which they contained.

The difficulty of such a task, which has defied the archaeologists until now, is at once evident. The architrave is about 100 feet long, and the holes extend over 90 feet of its length. They do not thickly appear from 3 to 4 feet in length, between which are circular blanks, where shields about 4 feet in diameter hung at fixed intervals.

Various attempts have been made, chiefly by German archaeologists, to read the nail holes. The most notable of the methods employed have been photography and transcribing with the aid of magnifying glasses. No attempts met with any success until Eugene Plumb Andrews, of the American Society of Classical Studies at Athens, hit upon a practical method. He threw a rope over the eastern end of the ruined building and pulled up a rope ladder. Then he suspended a swing in front of the architrave 37 feet of the marble step below and took what is known as a "squeeze" of the holes. His method was ingenious. Damp "squeeze" paper was first applied to the surface of the stone and patted down with a brush. The paper broke through over the holes. Mr. Andrews then poked extra slips into each of the openings and lapped their ends down on the large sheet. When he had thus treated all the holes, he laid another sheet over the first, to hold the ends of the strips in place, and pounded all together into one solid sheet, on which the exact position of the nail holes was represented by protuberances or nipples. The time required in making these squeezes, twelve in number, was about one and one-half months. The twelve squeezes represented the twelve spaces between the shields. He then arranged them in order and began studying. His greatest difficulty occurred on the start, for the reason he did not know whether the inscription ran straight across all the squeezes or whether the squeezes were to be read separately, as the pages of a book. Moreover, the ancient workman who had nailed up the letters had made numerous mistakes, so that many of the holes were treacherous and confusing.

Mr. Andrews, however, persisted and light began to dawn. He found, for instance that three holes placed thus . . . indicated either delta or lambda the metal letter having been nailed at its three corners, and that three holes placed thus . . . showed where an O had been nailed. He made a transcript of the squeezes on a long strip of paper, marking the locality of the protuberances with dots, and then attempted to form the ancient letters drawing lines from dot to dot. Finally he deciphered the word "Aurora," which proved that the inscription had been Roman and not as formerly supposed, of an earlier date. The word "Nerona" threw further light on the matter. Here was evidently the dedication of a statue of the Emperor Nero, and the reading was simplified by a study of other similar inscriptions, as the same phraseology is used in all, much the same as in modern legal language.

The inscription translated is substantially as follows:

"The council of the Atræpægæus and the council of the 600 and the people of the Athenians erect this statue of the very great Emperor Nero Caesar Claudius Sevastus Germanicus, the Son of God, during the generalship over the hoplites for the eighth time of Claudius Novius, the overseer and lawyer, son of Plukenos, during the priesthood of—, daughter of—"

It appears, therefore, that the inscription recorded the erection of a statue to Nero, probably in the Parthenon. As it is known from another inscription that Claudius Novius was general for the eighth time in the year of A. D., we have the exact date of this inscription.—Scientific American.

UNITED STATES SENATOR HOAR.

The "bird" petition written by our Massachusetts Senator, Hon. Geo. F. Hoar, to our Massachusetts Legislature and which was instrumental in getting the law prohibiting the wearing of song and insectivorous birds on women's hats, is one of the best things the senator ever did in his whole life and will live in literature long after lots of other senators will have been forgotten.

We give it as follows:

To the Great and General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: We, the song birds of Massachusetts, and our play-fellows, make this our humble petition. We know more about you than you think we do. We know how good you are. We have hopped about the roofs and looked in at the windows of the houses you have built for poor and sick and hungry people and little lame and deaf and blind children. We have built our nests in the trees and sung many a song as we flew about the gardens and parks you have made so beautiful for your own children, especially your poor children to play in.

Every year we fly a great way over the country, keeping all the time where the sun is bright and warm, and we know that whenever you do anything other people all over the great lakes find it out and pretty soon will try to do the same thing. We know. We are Americans just as you are. Some of us like some of you, come from across the great sea, but most of the birds like us have lived here a long while; and birds like us welcomed your fathers when they came here many years ago. Our fathers and mothers have always done their best to please your fathers and mothers.

Now we have a sad story to tell you. Thoughtless or bad people are trying to destroy us. They kill us because our feathers are beautiful. Even pretty and sweet girls who we should think would be our best friends, kill our brothers and children so that they may wear their plumage on their hats. Sometimes people kill us from mere wantonness. Cruel boys destroy our nests and steal our eggs and our young ones. People with guns and snares lie in wait to kill us, as if the place for a bird were not in the sky, alive but in a shop window or under a glass case. If this goes on much longer all your song birds will be gone. Already, we are told in some other countries that used to be full of birds they are almost all gone. Even the nightingales are being killed in Italy.

Now we humbly pray that you will stop all this. You have already made a law that no one shall kill a harmless song bird or destroy our nests or our eggs. Will you please to make another that no one shall wear our feathers, so that no one will kill us to get them for his own selfish ends. We are told that it is as easy for you to do it as for Blackbirds to whistle.

If you will we know how to pay you a hundred times over. We will teach your children to keep themselves clean and neat. We will show them how to live together in peace and love and to agree as we do in our nests. We will play about your gardens and flower beds,—ourselves like flowers on wings,—without any cost to you. We will destroy the wicked insects and worms that spoil your cherries, currents, plums, and apples. We will give you our best songs and make the spring more beautiful and the summer sweeter to you. Every June morning when you go out into the field Oriole and Blackbird and Bobolink will fly after you and make the day more delightful to you; and when you go home tired at sundown, Vesper Sparrow will tell you how grateful we are. When you sit on your porch after dark, Fife Bird and Hermit Thrush and Wood Thrush will sing to you; and even Whip-poor-will cheer up a little. We know where we are safe. In a little while all the birds will come to live in Massachusetts again, and everybody who loves music will like to make a summer home with you.

The singers are: Brown Thrasher, Robin Red Breast, Song Sparrow, Starlet Tanager, Summer Red Bird, Blue Heron, Humming Bird, Yellow Bird, Whip-poor-will, Water Wagtail, Woodpecker, Pigeon, Indigo Bird, Yellow Throut, Wilson's Thrush, Chickadee, King Bird, Swallow, Cedar Bird, Cow Bird, Martin, Veery, Vireo, Oriole, Black Bird, Fife Bird, Wren, Linnæus, Pew Wee, Phoebe, Yoke Bird, Lark, Sandpiper, Chewink.

This petition convinced the legislators so that a state law in Massachusetts forbids all persons to sell, wear or have in possession the feathers of birds protected. There being no further market, dealers are exporting their feathers to other states. The matrons and belles of the commonwealth are quite as happy and quite as lovely as when they wore the plumage of their song birds.

How Many Secret Societies? Attorney—"How many secret societies do you belong to?" Witness—"Do I have to answer that question, your honor?" The Court—"It can do no harm."

Witness—"Well, I belong to three."

Attorney—"What are they?" Witness—"The Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, and a gas company."—Chicago Tribune.

It is remarkable with what an abiding faith the demo-political contingent are now allying to the beautiful outpouring of an overruling providence, which is starving people to death with the scarcity in some lands, while sending an abundant harvest to this land so that the price of wheat is so high that prosperity is even in sight while not many months ago they were hunting around to find adequate cuss words to heap upon Mark Hanna, because he was putting up the price of wheat to insure the success of the republican party. How eminently devout and religious they are getting all at once.

Perhaps the safest investment anywhere to be found in this section, as well as in the whole country, is water power. Easily the most striking fact of recent industrial progress is the cheap production of electricity from waterfalls, and its long distance transmission. At the present time, 30 or 40 miles is the furthest that the current has been distributed profitably, but with the rapid improve-

AN OPEN LETTER TO MOTHERS.

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March 8, 1897.

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Walter S. Lyon deceased, to sell the real estate, hereinbefore mentioned at private sale. Now, therefore, notice is hereby given that, from and after July 21, 1897, I will proceed to sell at private sale the within-mentioned real estate belonging to said estate, to-wit: The northeast 1/4 of section 35, T. 12 S. R. 2 E., in Washington County, Oregon, an 110-acre tract containing 100 acres. Terms of sale, cash in hand at the time of sale.

G. W. MERRILL, Administrator of the estate of Walter S. Lyon, deceased.

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