

Literature Music Art

THE REVIVAL OF ENGLISH FOLK SONG AND DANCES

To any student, or even to the casual reader of English history, the fact that the antique English tunes and the old-time English dances are to be revived will be greeted with pleasure. Some very praiseworthy and music-loving people in the Motherland have been going the rounds among the old-fashioned singers and have been making a collection of the primitive songs, "having discovered," to quote a recent article in the London Times, "that all this music is in the blood of the English race, just as the song without words of a brook is in the flowing of its waters. It would seem strange—if we did not know the deep occluded reason—to note how easily these folk-songs are acquired by school children, for example, who are slow to learn the melodies produced by an art conscious of its own necessities. Such a delightful action-song as 'Mowing the Barley' or the vivacious ballad of 'Bold Brennan,' or the fine heroic song of 'The Chesapeake and the Shannon' (the variant published in the fifth series of 'Gold-Songs from Somerset' is infinitely finer than that found in the ordinary collections of English songs) haunts the hearer in and out of season, till he or she gets it by heart as an everlasting possession. Traveling through Canada and the United States last year the writer found himself constantly humming or whistling these tunes—which always brought on an attack of homesickness—and dozens of his traveling companions, weary denizens of Pullman cars, and gangs of railroaders in the "caboose" of work-trains, insisted on him singing them from beginning to end until they had picked up the words and the melodies. As in Somerset so in Newfoundland and Western Canada and isolated mountain districts in the United States—these ancient songs and dance-tunes are still living in the minds of the heirs and assigns of the English commonalty.

"A most interesting feature of this revival is the growing popularity of Morris-dances. Here and there, notably in Oxfordshire, fraternities of Morris-dancers still exist efficiently, and these men who have kept the tradition of their art inviolate are now called in to teach the dwellers in cities, towns and villages the essentially English folk-dances—many of them, no doubt, the final forms of acts of Nature-worship—the like of which are not to be found among all the country dances of Europe. There is nothing in England more essentially English. It is true the name 'Morris' is derived from 'Morisco,' which makes it appear that the dance is of Moorish origin. But too much stress must not be laid on that point of etymology. If we accept the theory of a Moorish origin we must at the same time admit that the Morris dance was for centuries—and still is—a distinctively English pastime. It is the only type of folk-dance which has no element of sex—an element which is at the root of all dances invented by the Latin peoples. It demands of its performers the vigor of wholesome manhood; the virtue of a people never reduced to the servitude which makes for obsequiousness and an evasive delicacy. The Morris step, especially when the figure known as 'cat's paws' is executed, demands an athletic physique not possessed by women. At the Hogarth Fair there was some delightful dancing by a company of Chelsea girls, who had been trained by an Oxfordshire expert—a bricklayer by trade but a Morris dancer by profession, whose dancing has the ease and elegance of the true tradition. But Morris dancing is for men, not women; the grace of the latter is not full compensation for the vigor of the former. It is a pity Ruskin never discovered the Headington Morris men. Had he done so he might have set his undergraduate disciples learning the Morris step—a kind of walking in the grand style—instead of making a road nowhither which would never have been passed by a surveyor.

"About 120 Morris tunes have now been collected and recorded. All have the typical Morris rhythm, which haunts the ear strangely, and some of them are fascinating sound-patterns, arabesques of recurrent melody faintly drawn on a green background of silence. Arabesques? Perhaps the Moorish touch comes in there in the suggestion of a simile: These tunes and the dances conformable are easily learnt—so easily that the learner suspects, rightly no doubt, that one or other of his country ancestors belonged to a 'side' of Morris men in the old, old days. A mathematician has reminded us that any man had innumerable male ancestors in the fifth generation counting backwards, where n is any fairly large whole number, so that a Morris dancer is certain to be somewhere included in the list of his ancestors. The old dancers think that a knowledge of the appropriate dance implies a knowledge of the appropriate dance. It is not so easy as that, but easy enough in all conscience. The Morris step comes by nature, and the simple picturesque figures which are combined in the various traditional dances are acquired without difficulty."

OUR KINSHIP TO THE TREES

The most of us, shall we say the happiest of us, are more or less pagans at heart, for all our Christianizing. Indeed it is very doubtful if Christianity would be anything like the vital force it is today if the early fathers had not, with a true understanding of human needs, reconciled to a certain extent the faith of our primitive ancestors to that of the religion of Christ. And who among the narrowest-minded churchmen dare to deny that our instinctive

worship of the evidence of God in the beauties of His handiwork is not an uplifting, a joy-inspiring thing? For that matter those of us who experience it reckon little of what others outside the pale may say; we can only feel an infinite amount of pity for them. The teaching of the Nazarene may be made into a religion grand beyond words to express, and the faith in which may be powerful enough to move mountains or to raise the dead to life; it may be so limited and twisted and narrowed and misrepresented as to stand for nothing but a parcel of dogmas, or it may be degraded into a questionable means to some unworthy end. So the minds of men will differ and the life of men and their joys. But if we make our Saviour's religion a real saving religion, for saving means to broaden the intellect, the soul and the whole of man's physical being, we must let it embrace not only that which is written by the hand of man between the pages of a book, but that which is written by the Hand of God upon the sky above us, upon the sea, the hills and the forests about us. Our ancestors, untaught, untamed, incapable as yet of enlightenment, read the message according to their understanding, and worshipped the Creator as the God of might, of power, of unswerving justice; but Christ came when the time was ripe and taught the truer interpretation, that the Creator is a God of Love, and His mercy is everlasting.

So we are linked to the past by the highest instincts of our being, and among those things which we reverence most, though perhaps many of us have given very little thought as to why it should be so, are the Trees—the Old Trees—the Trees that stand for centuries of wind and rain and sunshine, of battling against mad storms, of basking through the hazy light of silent afternoons, of pointing up through the moon-drenched night to the changeless sky of stars; drooping willows with cradling boughs; oaks which the Druids have worshipped; pines which from the hill-crest have looked across unfrequented seas, and have seen, after generations of loneliness, the white sails of the earliest navigators; cedars, majestic, silent, gathering the drapery of their boughs about them like a mantle of mystery. If we had no undefined memory of things past, yet still must we give them our respect, these mighty monarchs of the forest. But see—what truth is ours for the seeking. The old faith of the Greeks taught that they were descended from the Plane-tree. The Norse songs of the Vikings tell us that the human race is bound to the Ash. "Among every people of antiquity each race was tethered to some ancestral tree. In the Orient, each succeeding Buddha of Indian mythology was tethered to a different tree; each god of the later classical Pantheon was similarly tethered: Jupiter to the oak, Apollo to the Laurel, Bacchus to the vine, Minerva to the Olive, Juno to the Apple, on and on. Forest worship was universal—the most impressive and bewildering to modern science that the human spirit has ever built up. At the dawn of history began the Adoration of the trees." And it is a survival of the ancient worship that the evergreens and the Christmas tree form a part of our most-blessed Christian festival.

Is it any wonder then that most of us—and God pity those who have not—have an innate love for the trees, and the wanton destruction of them hurts us a little to the innermost fibre of our being? We are not discussing the forest now as a commercial asset at all; the majority of people realize what its preservation means from that point of view. And trees are necessary to insure an equanimity of climate, and certain necessary benefits to the surrounding farming country, but we are not considering this very large phase of the question. Apart from all this there is a deeper reason to most of us for conserving some of the land as God made it. The people of the old world have realized this. Trees happily are features of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as the country. But we on the frontiers of civilization do not take time to think enough of those things which appeal solely to the sentiments, and when we acquire a piece of land, the first thing we do is to slash it and then to burn it bare. Of course it is necessary to clear land; we all admit that; but is it essential to cut away all the trees? We think not. The farming districts look a barren place for all their grain-fields and their orchards, without a stick of standing timber; and a treeless city is a city without a soul. There is such a thing as over-civilizing a human being. There is such a thing as over-cultivating the land. When we get too far away from Nature we begin to decay, and a country, no matter how great its cities, which does not bear the hall-mark of its Maker in the green of fair old trees, cannot, we think, flourish joyously to an endless length of days.

ENGLISH COMIC OPERA

Mr. C. H. Workman has formed a syndicate to produce English comic opera, and has secured the Savoy Theatre, so long associated with the names of Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte. About the end of next month he will open his season with an opera by Mr. Reginald Somerville, and this will be followed by a work from the pen of Sir William Gilbert, with music by Mr. Edward German.

SIGNOR CARUSO AND IRISH MUSIC

Signor Caruso, who has been singing in Dublin recently, was entertained by the Cor-

inthian Club. Speaking of the Irish as a musical race, he said he had observed that great achievements in English music were apt to have an Irish ancestry unless it happened to be Scottish or Welsh. This was not surprising, considering the wealth of Irish traditional music. He had recently seen a collection of over 800 Irish airs published by the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, and he was completely fascinated by the charm of the melodies. A nation which had produced such treasures of song must be musical in an uncommon degree.

VON WEBER

Karl Maria von Weber was born at Eutin, Oldenburg, December 18th, 1786. His father was an erratic, shiftless musician, who sought to train up his son to be a musical prodigy, being influenced by the example of Mozart. He was given the best possible instruction, but does not appear to have fully met his father's expectations, although he was an expert pianist and sang well. Before he was fourteen years of age he had produced an opera, but the score of it, with other youthful compositions, was burned. In his fourteenth year he produced his opera Das Waldmädchen, but it was not much of a success. In these years he was



Karl Maria von Weber

wandering around Germany with his father's troupe. In 1801 he composed his third opera which met with the approval of Haydn in Salzburg, and the Abbe Vogler in Vienna. The latter's influence secured him the position of Kappelmeister at Breslau. Later he became private secretary to the Duke of Wurtemberg. He continued his work as a composer, and was rehearsing his opera Silvana, when he was arrested. His father had misappropriated certain moneys and von Weber took the responsibility upon himself. This led to his banishment. He went to Darmstadt. Later he obtained an important musical position in Prague. In 1817 he married Caroline Brandt, a singer, who retired from the stage and devoted herself to him, although she was then at the very height of her musical powers. Von Weber's work at Prague secured for him the appointment of conductor of opera at Dresden, and he devoted himself chiefly to the cause of German opera, in which effort he was very successful notwithstanding the prejudice of the King and other prominent people in favor of Italian opera. In 1821 he produced Der Frieschutz, and it is said that his triumphant reception has never been surpassed, if it has ever been equalled. It became immensely popular. It was performed all over Europe, and in London it was produced simultaneously at three theatres. Euryanthe was his next production, but it was not so successful. In 1823 he exhibited indications of consumption, and anxiety for the future of his family led him to accept Charles Kemble's offer of £1,000 to compose Oberon and superintend its production in London. It was received with unbounded enthusiasm, but a few weeks later he died. He was buried in Dresden, where Wagner, who had arranged for the occasion a dirge founded on themes from Euryanthe, pronounced the funeral oration.

Von Weber was the founder of the school of romantic German opera. His influence on Wagner was marked and there are passages in Tannhauser that show unmistakably his views of musical structure. The attachment between these two great masters was strong. In addition to his operas von Weber composed many songs and piano-forte pieces. The best known of the latter is his Invitation a la Valse, which was written shortly after his marriage and dedicated to his wife. He was very happily married. One of his children became an eminent civil engineer, as well as a successful contributor to technical and general literature.

EXPERIENCES IN THE EAST END OF LONDON

The Apathy of the East End

"What most impressed me about the East End when I first knew it? Its sordidness and its apathy. It is true that, if you take a ride through the East End on 'bus or tram, you can hardly fail to be struck by the excellence of the main thoroughfares; but step off them, and you enter indescribably sordid regions. I am not thinking so much of dreadful slums and criminal 'rookeries' as of the respectable, but none the less appallingly mean and monotonous, streets of the East End. The monotony of the East-ender's environment is, or certainly was, reflected in his life. He did not live, he existed—painfully, and the apathy of the people when I first went among them was almost incredible. Not long before who for sixteen years had never ventured outside the alley in which she dragged out a sunless existence. She had never heard of our Settlement, of the public park, of the town hall—of anything outside her lair; and her case is only too typical of many. It was this dreadful apathy that we set ourselves to combat by giving the people an interest in life by means of social clubs, institutions, and so on. But here let me correct a very general, but most erroneous, impression about the East End.

"I mean the popular idea that depicts the East End as a region of crime and violence. This is altogether wrong. Of course, there are criminals in the East End, and 'degenerates' are all too plentiful; but the East is not nearly so criminal as the West, and the average East-ender, so far as it is possible to sum him up, is a hard-working, honest, law-abiding person.

Tragedy and Farce

"I must admit, however, that one of my earliest experiences was of an attempted murder committed in front of my lodgings. It had its grimly humorous side. The assailant, a man, had quarrelled with a woman (she had both been drinking), and tried to cut her throat. That she did not seem greatly to mind, but what really incensed her was the fact that the ruffian had taken away her umbrella to beat her with; and, the blood streaming from her neck, she staggered about, screaming 'Give me back my humberella.' Such scenes, however, are exceptional, and I have few 'sensational' stories to tell you. During all the years I was in Canning Town I was never once molested, probably because I always walked as one who knew his way about. Apathy, I expect, is the chief characteristic of the East End, and where there is apathy violence is rare.

Quaint Compensation Claims

"The Poor Man's Lawyer' has had to advise on some quaint claims, and one of the funniest was that of two tramps, who, having done a rare spell of work at weeding, had inadvertently pulled up some stinging nettles, and suffered accordingly. They wanted compensation, lots of it, and the lawyer dealing with the case being a bit of a wag told them that, after careful consideration he had come to the conclusion that the only ground on which they could base a claim under the Act was that of 'defective plant.' Amusing, too, was the case of three factory girls who wanted damages against the Vicar of their church because, while attending a garden party given by him, some Chinese lanterns had dripped upon their plush mantles. The 'Poor Man's Lawyer' has not only given sound legal advice, and helped his clients to obtain justice, or to avoid useless litigation, but in one instance at least he has made a convert to Christianity. Anyway, one old docker, who had been to the lawyer and obtained compensation for a broken leg, said to me: 'Well, if Christianity means a lawyer wot don't charge nuffink, there's something in it.'

"While on the humorous side of our work, I may mention the poor woman who explained to my wife that her husband was ill, suffering from 'an ulster in his stomach.' Then there was another poor woman who, speaking of the kind treatment her child was receiving at the Seamen's Hospital, proudly explained: 'You know, mum, they simply analyse that 'child there.' Then I retain kindly recollections of the gout-specific merchant, who complained that it had been a very bad winter for the gout. 'Oh,' I said, 'have many people been suffering from it?' 'No, gov-nor,' he replied, 'it's 'otter way about. Nobody aint 'ad the gout, an' I'm fair broke.'—Percy Alden, M.P., in M.A.P.

THE VAN DYKE-PENNELL "NEW YORK"

As the time for the great Fulton and Hudson celebration draws near, it was to be expected that books prepared in commemoration of the anniversary would begin to appear. It is hardly possible that any New York book of this year or of many years to come will surpass in beauty and attractiveness the volume which is the joint product of Professor John C. Van Dyke and Mr. Joseph Pennell. The New York it is called, and in spite of the historical occasion on which it is published, it has to do more with the present than with the past. It is a series of pictures, both in text and illustration, of the city of the present day. As Professor Van Dyke says in his preface: "The writer and the illustrator have not escaped the embarrassment of many points of view, but gradually the belief has come to them that, pictorially, the larger aspect of New York is the life and energy of its people projected upon the background of its commerce. It is this character of the place and its inhabitants that

they have sought to set forth, convinced that character is interesting in itself, and that the true municipal beauty must be more or less beholden to it. Those who believe only in the planned and plotted city will, no doubt, shake their heads over this; but many times in civic story the characteristic has proved more attractive than the formal. It has been demonstrated in the present day, here in New York. Those who have erected the new city, as need has dictated, have builded better than they knew. They have given us not the classic, but the picturesque—a later and perhaps a more interesting development.

A happier collaboration than that arranged for this volume it would be hard to conceive. Professor Van Dyke knows the city backwards and forwards, up and down, from Harlem to the Battery, and from the North River to the East River. His pages are like the informal talk of an immensely clever and amusing man—full of allusions to the things every visitor of New York and every resident want to know, amusing, entertaining, witty. As for Mr. Pennell's pictures, they are beyond praise as an interpretation of the life and the architecture of the city. There are no less than 124 of these drawings, 26 of them being beautifully reproduced in color by a process that brings out the best characteristics of Mr. Pennell's art. In typography and outward appearance, the volume is worthy of its authors, with its handsome letter-press and its beautiful red and gold cover, designed by Mr. Pennell himself. Altogether, it is a volume to last, not merely for a year, but as long as there are devotees of the American metropolis.

A NEW GOLDEN TREASURY

In combining into one the two volumes of The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics, the Macmillan Company has done a real service to lovers of English poetry. Since the appearance of the first series in 1864, Professor Palgrave's collection has been the recognized standard. So undisputed and so universal, indeed, has its authority been that the very title Golden Treasury has been used for a series of English classics whose appearance is familiar to everyone.

The success of his work induced Professor Palgrave to carry on his task, and in 1897 a second series was published. The first volume included only poems written before 1850; the second, a new edition of which was published in 1906, is confined to the poetry of the second half of the nineteenth century. But the two are in reality one book, a real treasury of lyric poetry. The division into two series is the result of the long years consumed by Professor Palgrave in the arduous task of selection; otherwise, there is no reason for it. In uniting them in a volume still small enough to slip conveniently into the pocket, the Macmillan Company has made even more accessible the wealth the two treasures contain.

In appearance and contents the new book is the same as the two of which it is composed. The first series is still divided into four parts, designated from the poets who most give them their distinctive character, the Books of Shakespeare, Milton, Gray and Wordsworth, the second series being undivided. It is thus a complete record of the best of English lyrical poetry from the day when it ceases to be too archaic to be read for pleasure, down to our own generation. There have been many collections with a similar aim. None has ever approached the wide sympathy, the keen, unflinching discrimination, and deep scholarship that mark the work of Professor Palgrave.

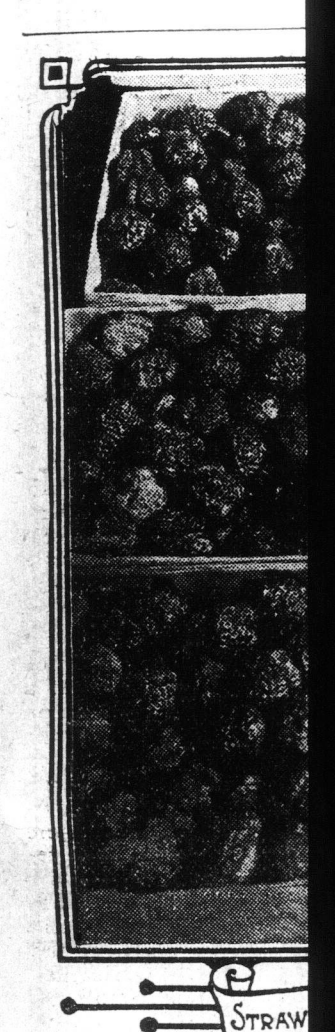
ROME AND AMERICA

Two important works on history published September 8 are among the first of the season's serious books. In The Roman Assemblies, Prof. G. W. Botsford presents the fruits of the most thorough study that has yet been made of a subject whose importance in government, politics and history can hardly be overestimated. The Roman popular assemblies were the basis of the Roman state. In treating them, therefore, Prof. Botsford is able to do much to illuminate the whole history of Rome. The second of the two new works is a compilation by Prof. C. A. Beard of readings illustrative of American government and politics. Selected with great care and discrimination, these readings cover a wide field. In recent years the value of original sources has made itself too apparent to need further discussion. Prof. Beard's Readings is an excellent example of how skilfully the new school of historians can use them.

Over 15,000 actors were walking the streets of New York going from office to office, seeking engagements in July. Each year the profession is becoming more crowded than ever, although about the same number of companies are sent out on the road. Each year hundreds of pupils have graduated from the schools of acting, and an equally large number join the profession without ever having gone through a dramatic school. How many thousands of professionals manage to exist from the end of one season to the beginning of another, is a subject that has given many statisticians of the theatre considerable thought. Even during the very flush of the season there are thousands of actors out of employment in New York. It would seem that the young man or young woman who has cast anxious eyes on the stage as a profession would hesitate long before taking up what is to many a precarious mode of earning their daily bread.

RU HOME-MADE TOOLS

One of the difficulties of amateur gardening in the laying of the garden arises from the lack of convenient tools. It is to have all one would wish, especially if one has but a limited space, and wishes to have a good garden and wishes to have it, therefore, become a good garden, as far as possible, other accessories. There are tools beyond the spade, a good reliable wheelbarrow, evolved by one's own ingenuity, the material already at hand.



Here is a picture of a variety of the variety of the varieties were grown at Glendova Bay, the property, who has fourteen acres kinds. These berries an old, and were picked on

pegs will be found more deduced by taking a long three inches in diameter it at a distance of a foot length. In the first hole, feet is fitted, the hole is enough for the peg to wedge the head of the peg between leave a shoulder for the extreme end having a prevent the pole slipping holes may be somewhat ing pegs do not need stakes at the head, and what at the end so that firmly, or it may have cured in the same way as tapered peg is the more In use the head peg the ground where the peg is to be made, the marking which corresponds with of the bed—three feet in feet in diameter—and the ground as the end circumference of the peg forms the centre of a circle should be removed a distance, according to the paths and these marked Nor is the marking out may be accomplished straight beds may also the stake at one corner of the other and marking figures on the pole.

An oval bed presents the amateur than most may be easily managed and two stakes. First, a meter of the bed desired in each side of the long distance from the edge as bed is to be a broad further the stakes are broader will be the oval six-foot-long oval is a foot from either end eleven feet wide—a very is made long enough stakes and reach to the one side only and tied