

## MY LADY'S FLOWER.

The holly-hocks grow by the garden wall,  
Rose and garnet and white;  
The gold-hearted lilies, stately and tall,  
Waste their sweets on the night;  
The roses look over the garden-gate,  
But with none of those will my lady wait.

Deep hid in the heart of the tangled green,  
Prim and spry and sweet,  
Fringed petals close-set with dew-drops between,  
Growing thick at her feet;  
Hull in the shadows, she trembles and shrinks  
Nearer the border of clove-scented pinks.

When I hold her fast in the moonlight pale,  
True, and pure, and my own,  
And whisper a love's impassioned tale,  
Meet for her ear alone,  
The flower that I take from her perfumed hair  
Is one of the pinks that she loves to wear.

When one day my princess comes to her own,  
Shy and dainty and rare,  
And looks far abroad from her royal throne  
Over her blossoms fair,  
First of them all to do homage, methinks,  
Will be the same fragrant, soft-tinted pink.

And when at last I sleep under the sod,  
Silent and cold and still,  
And other feet walk in the paths I trod,  
And strange hands work their will,  
No roses must climb, no wild flowers wave,  
But fresh, dewy pinks bloom over my grave.

ALICE CORA HAMMOND

## BYRON'S FIRST LOVE.

If Byron ever were seriously in love, he was in love with Nature; and he retained throughout his life, from boyhood to old age, a strangely vivid tenderness of recollection for some of the earlier periods of his life, which had been spent in the country. Indeed, it would seem as if the pictures which he had seen in his boyhood had become, as it were, photographed upon his mental vision. So much was this the case that, as the kaleidoscope of his feverish life revolved, there came up, in oft-recurring sequence, glimpses of old days spent in one neighborhood. His heart was always among the hills of Aberdeenshire; and ever and anon, as his poetic muse sang the glories of classic shores, there breathed through the theme a sigh for the purple heather of the Scottish hills.

All through Byron's poems a truant thought runs back to this his first love. Contemplation of "the dark Lochnagar" had cast a weird spell around him. He had sat and mused at its base, and its solemn grandeur had awed his spirit. He was but a boy when he first saw the grim-looking mountain; and it, as regards height, it contrasted but poorly with the mountains upon which he afterwards gazed, yet, when the heavy rain-clouds had mantled round its head, or when the lagging snow had nestled in its crevices, or the purple of its heather bloom had given it holiday attire—in all its moods, and in all its garments, its majesty had won his love and veneration. In later years, when it might have been supposed that the scenes of his boyhood's gambols had been obliterated; when treading the classic ground of Greece, with all its nobility of antiquity, these old scenes crop up again, and he tells us how

The infant rapture still survives the boy,  
And Lochnagar with Ida looked on Troy.

By birth Byron belonged to the neighborhood of Lochnagar, for his biographer tells us that the poet, by his mother's side, claimed an ancestry as illustrious as any that Scotland could boast of—his mother, who was a Gordon of Gight, having been a descendant of that Sir William Gordon who was the third son of the Earl of Huntly by the daughter of James I. It was in 1790 that Byron's mother went to reside in Aberdeen, taking with her her infant son, the future poet. They lived in a house on Queen street in that city; thence they moved to Virginia street, and then found a residence on Broad street. There are some old inhabitants of Aberdeen who talk of this as of some old legend. Some can point to "Byron's House" in Broad street; and others have seen the desk whereon he carved his name in the old grammar school at which he was a pupil. But here the reference ends. He who sang so sweetly, and was, in his song, so faithful to the glad memories of his youthful days, had never had a poem sung to him in that cold northern city; and wonder sometimes asks—

Is he returned to dust,  
And has his country's granite naught to say?

It was in these early years of his life that the accident to his foot occurred which caused him a slight lameness for life, and, oddly enough, he had a boy companion living near him who had a like infirmity; and often, as the records of his life tell us, Byron would say to his friends, "Come and see the two laddies with the two clubfeet going up Broad street." There has always been a mystery hanging over the origin of Byron's lameness, but it is certain that he had an accident about this time. He had been taken up Deeside by his mother, and was quartered in a farmhouse near Ballater, a place which even then was looked upon as possessing health-giving air. Moore calls the place a "favourite resort for health and gaiety, about forty miles up the Dee from Aberdeen." If the village of Ballater afforded enough gaiety to satisfy its visitors in those days, the demands of the gay could not have been very great. From Ballater Byron had passed further inland to Braemar; and, while wandering among the romantic passes leading from the neighborhood of Invercauld toward the Linn of Dee, his love of adventure nearly cost him his life. As he was scrambling over the declivity that overhung a precipice,

some heather caught his foot, tripped him up, and gave him an ugly fall. Moore tells us the rest: "Already he was rolling downward, when the attendant luckily caught him and was just in time to save him from being killed."

It was in this district, then, that he fell in love with Nature, and that love he never forgot. Ah, there my young footsteps in infancy wandered,  
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;  
On chieftains long perished my memory ponder'd.  
As daily I strode through the pine-covered glade,  
I sought not my home till the day's dying glory  
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star:  
For fancy was cheered by traditional story,  
Disclosed by the natives of dark Lochnagar.

Byron, as we all know, was born in 1788, and in 1798, or only ten years later, his mother left Aberdeen, and went with her son to historical Newstead. It is true that he wrote an elegy on this place, but the marked way in which, in the midst of one of his longest poems, he harks back to the old familiar scenes of his boyhood is peculiarly significant. He was a mere boy when his mind began to be impressed with these romantic beauties of nature, yet time as it fled onward, and all the rovings of his life imprinting fresh pictures on his mind, failed to hide the heather and the hills. All of a sudden, as he writes, a gleam of the old time breaks in, and he exclaims—

As auld lang syne brings Scotland one and all,  
Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills and  
clear streams,  
The Dee, the Don, Balgownie's brig's black wall,  
All my boy's feeling, all my gentle dreams  
Of what I then dreamt, clothed in their own pall  
Like Balgownie's offspring, floating past me seem—  
My childhood in this childhood of mine:  
I care not—'tis a glimpse of auld lang syne.

Nothing that he saw on the river Dee seems to have escaped his memory. This "Balgownie's brig's black wall" is, however, a reference to a bridge spanning the Don, the sister river in the same county; and Byron had heard the legend attached to it, for in a note to his poem he says: "The Brig of Don, near the 'auld toon' of Aberdeen, with its one arch, and its black, deep salmon stream, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother's side. The saying, as recollected by me, was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age—

Brig of Balgownie, black's your wa'  
Wi' a wife's ae son, and a mare's ae foot,  
Down ye shall fa'!"

But the poet did not misquote; his memory was faithful to the letter. Thus, again, he deals with his Deeside haunts. He thinks of the hill of Morven—

When I roved, a young Highlander, o'er the dark  
heath,  
And climbed thy steep summit, O Morven, of snow

He saw in after years many a steep summit  
crested with everlasting snow, but these did not  
possess for him the same lingering charm.

Years have roll'd on, Lochnagar, since I left you,  
Years must elapse ere I tread you again,  
Nature of verdure and flowers has bereft you,  
Yet still you are dearer than Albion's plain.

Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!  
The steep frowning cliffs of dark Lochnagar!

Perhaps there was a somebody who had implanted in the poet's heart this lingering affection; and yet it could only have been a boy's love. At the age of eight he had fallen in love with one Mary Duff. "I remember," he writes, "our walks, and the happiness of sitting by Mary in the children's apartment at their house, not far from the Plainstones at Aberdeen, while her lesser sister, Helen, played with the doll, and we sat gravely making love in our own way." This is not forgotten in the after days, and finds its way into a current of song. It was but the simplicity of the boy's love—

Yet it could not be love, for I knew not the name—  
What passion can dwell in the heart of a child?

It was among the wilds of nature that he loved to stray; to rise with the dawn, and, with his dog by his side, as in the Byron memorial in Hyde Park,

From mountain to mountain I bounded along;  
I breasted the billows of the rising tide,  
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song.

Shortly after this, the Lord Byron to whose title he succeeded died. By this eccentric lord, the poet, when young, had always been spoken of as "the little boy who lives at Aberdeen." When he got the title he asked his mother whether she perceived any difference in him since he had been made a lord, as he perceived none himself. And we are told that, at school, when the master called him for the first time by his new title, he burst out crying! His early education was, of course, carried out in his northern home. At five years old he was at a day-school in Long Acre, a street in Aberdeen, till, as he writes in his diary, "I went to the Grammar School, where I threaded all the classes to the fourth, when I was recalled to England. Thus only his earliest days were spent among the scenes he so often recalls in his later life.

Byron was always proud of his Scotch blood and descent, and, describing himself, says—

But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred  
A whole one.

It is true that when the Scotch reviewers so severely criticized his work, he flung back at

them a literary anathema the force of which, perhaps, has never been equalled. But in the afterglow, when thoughts of "auld lang syne" again glimmer and shimmer before him, he repents of his anger and claims forgiveness—

And though, as you remember in a fit  
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,  
I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and wit—  
Which must be owned was sensitive and surly;  
Yet 'tis in vain such sallies to permit—  
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:  
I "scotched," not killed, the Scotchmen in my blood,  
And love the land of mountain and of flood.

Great, we repeat, is the store of memories that filled his heart in those brief years he spent in the wild districts of the Dee; and faithfully and devotedly he ever after worshipped at the shrine of his first love—the "dark Lochnagar." The vision never fades, even when he murmurs his last farewell—

Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred;  
Thou swift-flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!

## BROWNING'S "JOCOSERIA."

Mr. Browning's poetry never will attain a wide popularity, although a few of his shorter pieces have secured and will retain the attention of readers generally. In a letter to a friend written in 1868, he says: "I can have little doubt that my writing has been in the main too hard for many I should have been pleased to communicate with; but I never designedly tried to puzzle people, as some of my critics have supposed. On the other hand, I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar or a game of dominoes to an idle man; so, perhaps, on the whole I get my deserts and something over,—not a crowd, but a few I value more." In 1850, he had already achieved "Paracelsus," "Sordello," and "Aben Ezra." Since then, he has surpassed the obscurest of these in his "Fifine at the Fair." Good people who need a key to Tennyson's "In Memoriam" would need a special education to master some of these poems, to follow the subtlety of the thought, and to master the grotesque forms of its expression. Poetry, says Milton, should be "simple, sensuous and passionate." Poetry, as Mr. Browning understands it, is intricate, subtle and grotesque, but always passionate also. A more serious drawback to the general enjoyment of his poetry is its unpleasantness. While by no means a pessimist, Mr. Browning seems to have been influenced very profoundly by his vision of the darker side of life,—the moral shadows of the universe. His greatest work is the story of moral outrage culminating in brutal murder and ending in the execution of the criminal. The tragedies of human existence seem to fascinate him; and while he distinguishes himself from the cynic by the prominence he gives to goodness and his own profound reverence for it, he dwells more upon evil than is good either for himself or for his readers. This tendency seems to grow out of the influence of his early education among orthodox Dissenters in England. In his "Legend of Porcia," he concludes:

"Why I deliver this horrible verse?  
As the text of a sermon, which now I preach:  
Evil or good may be better or worse  
In the human heart; but the mixture of each  
Is a marvel and a curse.

"The candid incline to surmise of late  
That the Christian faith may be false, I find:  
For our Essays-and-Reviews debate  
Begins to tell on the public mind,  
And Colenso's words have weight:

"I still, to suppose it true, for my part  
See reasons and reasons; this, to begin:  
'Tis the faith that launched point-blank her dart  
At the heart of a lie,—taught original sin  
The corruption of man's heart."

It is Mr. Browning's inherited Puritanism that gives moral tone to his poetry and controls his selection of topics; and his combination of the art of the school of Shelley with the theology of the school of John Owen makes something unique in our literature.

His "Jocoseria" (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) illustrates his peculiarities as a thinker and an artist, and adds one great poem to the treasures his admirers prize so highly. It has in places all his obscurity. Take, for instance, the short piece called "Pambo." The hero enters a college class and asks the professor to expound him a psalm, that he may have wisdom for his life. The professor superciliously begins with the Thirty-Ninth: "I said I will look to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue;" when off goes "Pambo" without waiting for the comment. Years later, he comes back to tell the professor that he has found it a slow business to master that text. What is the moral?

"Brother, brother, I share the blame.  
Arcades sumus auctores,  
Darling, I keep my sunrise aim,  
Lack not the critic's flambeau,  
And look to my verse, yet much the same  
Offend with my tongue, like Pambo."

Which we take to mean that an earnest, practical man finds enough to occupy his life in the simplest command to moral rectitude, while the chatter of learned expositors upon the command is but waste of time. But all this might have been said more directly, and with not less dramatic effect.

The most noticeable pieces in the volume are an exceedingly unpleasant story, called "Donald," of human ingratitude to an animal, and a queer pseudo-rabbinical tale, called "Joelchau Hakkadosh." An old rabbi at the point of death accepts the gift of a year and three months

of life from two of his disciples, a poet and a soldier, to solve two of life's riddles. The time passes and he fails to find the solutions they ask, but his life being still further prolonged to their astonishment he finds the clue he seeks. The story is told beautifully, and enables Mr. Browning to put together his own philosophy in its two shapes,—the lesser nay, the greater yea

R. E. T.

## THE CRAB'S MISTAKE.

In the spring the crab makes the cardinal mistake of his life. Were it not for a seemingly insane desire to leave the mud in the bed of the river and to enjoy himself among his friends in the shallows, he might live to see a good old age secure from the follies of youth or the dip net of the crabber. Like the human family, however, he finds that his overtaxed system needs relaxation in the summer resorts; and, like his human friends, he is pretty sure to be sorry that he did not stay at home during the whole season. Late in April the crab throws prudence to the winds and swims out to shallow water, where the sun may shine down upon his delicately tinted shell. In a week he is exposed for sale in the city market.

The crabber's boat is a light open skiff, sixteen feet long and perhaps four feet wide and deep. It is fitted with four small water-tight compartments, which may be opened or closed by means of loosely fitting covers. These compartments are called "wells," and are used as gun-bags for the convenience of capturing crabs. They fill with water through augur holes in the bottom of the boat.

Our boat floats down with the tide, the auto-crat standing in the bow. In his hands is a dip-net, fastened to the end of a long pole, which serves the double purpose of propelling the boat and of reaching after crabs. The crabber stands like a statue, silent and still, with the long pole thrust out over the water. The river shines like a mirror upturned to the sun, and the pebbles and the shells on the bottom are as plainly to be seen as the pebbles and the shells on shore. But for the roving eyes of the crabber the bay seems asleep in the drowsy air. The boat trembles and rocks slightly, as the crabber's position is transformed into that of intense attention. Slowly the long pole moves out over the water until the hanging net disturbs the surface. Suddenly the crabber throws it from him with a splash, and as it rises to the boat dripping with water and stray strings of sea-grass, a crab is seen struggling in the net.

"Ha! a 'comer!'" exclaims the crabber. "He's a beauty, too."

A "comer," I am told, is a hard-shell crab that will be ready to shed his shell in a short time, probably in three days. After this preliminary state of development he becomes a "shedder," showing unmistakable signs that he will crawl out of his shell in a day or two. When the "comers" and the "shedders" are captured they are transferred from the "wells" in the crabber's boat to a "car," a sort of crabber's "Black Maria" or prison-van, and towed to the stockade, a big prison-pen made of stakes driven into the bed of the river a short distance from shore. In the stockade the crabs are under the care of a crabber, who makes daily inspections of the prisoners. After remaining in the pen a short time, the "shedder" becomes a "buster." In this stage of development he breaks open his shell at the point where the upper and under shells meet. He feels that he is getting too big for his old clothes, and that he ought to have a new spring outfit of the latest marine design. The sentinel at the stockade immediately seizes the ambitious crab in a dip-net and transfers him to a "car" for safe keeping.

In two or three hours the "buster" forsakes his old shell and ventures out into the world alone and becomes a soft crab. The change is so delightful and of such importance that the happy crab expands to twice his old size, and no doubt feels greatly surprised, as he looks at the discarded shell, that he ever lived in the old place with any degree of content. It would not be difficult to imagine that, as he gazes in amazement at the discarded shell and then at his own plump proportions, he involuntarily exclaims, "Well, did I ever live in that insignificant place?"

Whatever may be the soft crab's contempt for his old home, or whatever his ambition to make the best of his new state in life, he does not leave the immediate neighborhood of his old shell until he feels convinced that he can defend himself against attacks from hard crabs that have cannibalistic instincts. It is in this soft, fat condition that the crab is best fitted for the table, and it is in this stage of life that he is picked in flat wooden boxes and shipped to the New York markets.

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I know Hop Bitters will bear commendation honestly. All who use them confer upon them the highest encomiums, and give them credit for making cures—all the proprietors claim for them. I have kept them since they were first offered to the public. They took high rank from the first, and maintained it, and are more called for than all others combined. So long as they keep up their high reputation for purity and usefulness, I shall continue to recommend them—something I have never before done with any other patent medicine.

J. J. BABCOCK, M.D.