

TALE OF AN ANTIQUE RUG.

BY EDITH M. DOANE.

I am a Prayer Rug—an "Antique" rug, my master calls me—and I lie in a corner of the library before the shelves that hold his choicest books.

The morning sunshine envelopes me in a rich flood of yellow splendor; in the evening the blazing logs in the fireplace caress me with flickering shafts of golden light; at night I lie in the soft darkness and dream happily of the days of my youth.

Allah is good, I am content.

I was an old rug, worn smooth by the bare feet of the Faithful, even before I was taken from the Temple and brought to this strange country across the seas. For months I lay in dark, evil-smelling places, before that day when I found myself once more in the blessed sunlight, amid a babel of strange sights and sounds. The worshippers in this new temple swayed and jostled each other noisily—the Priest waved his arms madly. "Going—going—gone!" he cried. "Going—gone!"

Aside from the crowd, in the corner where I lay two men were standing. One talked earnestly to the other, who listened with certain embarrassment. "Tell her what you have told me," said the first. "Go home and tell her that you've made all kinds of an ass of yourself and you know it. Beg for forgiveness. Beg for one more chance. Beg for the boy's sake, to be allowed to try again."

The other man flushed dully. "I have not been home for weeks," he said. "I couldn't. I've done about all I could. I couldn't go from that other crowd to her—and the boy's sake."

"But you are done with all that now," protested the first eagerly. "You have had your fling and you've found it yields nothing but Dead Sea fruit in the end. It isn't too late to go back. She will forgive you."

"How can I ask her to go back?" said the other wearily. "Think of the grievous wrong—"

Just here I was taken up and carried over to the Priest, who held me aloft his arms while all the people craned their necks and jostled each other in the effort to get a better view.

"An Antique Chequerboard Prayer Rug," chanted the priest; "a sapphire on an opal ground. A rug that is to other rugs what rubies are to other precious stones—rarer, more brilliant, more costly. Notice the harmony of the contrasting colors—the scales of the borders—the splendor of the design. How much am I offering for this superb Antique Prayer Rug?"

Then the life of the shouts of the devout broke against the Priest's chant, and in its midst I found myself carried once more to a throne where the other men stood. They examined me carefully. The face of the one who had held back was flushed and eager. "This is the anniversary of our wedding day," he said to the other. "And I will do it. I will go now. I will take her this rug as a thought of the anniversary, and on it, where so many prayers for forgiveness have been offered, I will offer mine."

"Oh, Allah be merciful!" he added, under his breath. "So I went with him to his home and he let himself be gently with his wife. Key and turned softly to the library, and I told me before the fire. Then he touched a bell."

"Is Mrs. Wharton at home?" he asked the man who answered his ring, and his voice trembled in spite of his efforts to steady it. "No," he said respectfully. "Mrs. Wharton is not at home."

T. P. IN HIS ANECDOTAGE.

REMINISCENCES OF LORD BROUGHAM.

"Koppel," said Lord Wellesley to his aide-de-camp who had just published a book, "I have just read the title, 'A Personal Narrative'—what do you mean by a personal narrative?" When Koppel remained silent, unable to defend his title, Lord Wellesley turned to Lord Plunket, "Plunket, who should you say a 'personal narrative' means?" "My lord," replied Plunket, "you know we lawyers understand personal narrative as coming from real life. I fancy that some of the anecdotes which have come down to us from the days when party spirit was venomous are, in another sense, rather personal than real. No one would recognize the blustering Brougham of tradition, e.g., in the following mild sketch of him by John Taylor Coleridge, which I find in Lord Coleridge's recently published 'The Story of a Devonshire House,' a volume noticed in these columns the other day."

"THE MILDTEST-MANNERED MAN."

Here is what John Taylor Coleridge found Brougham: "I have no doubt," he writes to his brother Francis, "that you would find me much surprised to see or hear him. One always forms an idea of men of whom one has heard so much; and never did any man so little correspond to his pictures as I had drawn in my own mind. Instead of a bold, bristling, harsh man, he is excessively interesting, very respectful to the court, saying at times in a quiet manner very sarcastic things, and yet by no means giving one an impression of a sarcastic man. This does not seem to tally with Sydney Smith's description, but from him had designed, built, painted and embellished with a 'B' the card called after him, Sydney Smith rode to a friend, as the chancellor rode past in his new patent. 'There he goes; a 'B' outside and a 'wasp' within!'"

BROUGHAM AS A BOY.

It might be said that John Taylor Coleridge's picture of Brougham was painted in the days when he "was limping young ambition's ladder, lost by the foot, but, judging by another and earlier picture of the future chancellor, even the child was father of the man. Here is Lord Cockburn's first experience of Brougham as a boy in the high school, Edinburgh. "Here," says Lord Cockburn, "Brougham made his first public explosion. He absolutely dared day after day ever when disaffection may differ from the master, Luke Fraser, appeal to 70,000,000 against a few thous-

and strangers, who have planted themselves upon the ruins of their ancient dynasties, you will find how much safer it is to have won their hearts, and universally centered their attachment by a common interest in your system, than to rely upon 150,000 Sepoy swords, of excellent temper, but in doubtful hands."

OMNISCIENCE HIS FOIBLE.

Not the least characteristic story of Brougham is that related in the life of the great brewer, Sir Thomas Powell Buxton. Shortly after his appointment to the woolstack, Brougham, with some of the most distinguished men of the day—cabinet ministers and others—"beef-steak" dinner the whole party proceeded to inspect the works in the charge of a Scotch foreman, who was to explain each process. No sooner, however, had they got into the first room than Brougham waved aside the foreman with the dismissal, "Young man, I will save you the trouble you are about to undergo, as I understand the whole process as well, and can explain it to these gentlemen, as you."

The lord high chancellor proceeded, without further preface, to explain to Earl Grey and the other distinguished guests every stage of the process of brewing, never once, even by an accident being right in his position. His fellow-Sots, the foreman, listened open-mouthed, almost paralyzed at once by the volubility, by the impudence, and by the ignorance of the cleric, but he made up afterwards for his discreet silence by saying to his fellows, "Bride faith, sirs, but it made me hair stand on end to hear the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain tell in the Lord High Treasurer a long tale about meat and the brewing of it, and nae word of truth fra beggin' to end."

It made a thinker's man reflect what a terrible pass things must have come to when a minister could list tell, and another minister believe, his awful contrivances. Eh, sirs, nae barrel can be made that blatherin' child has got

"Elizabeth!" he cried. "You are surprised to see me here?" "Elizabeth!" he said again in dazed astonishment; then—"The boy? What is wrong with the boy?" he cried sharply.

She stopped abruptly and walked over to the fireplace, then turned and looked at him with proud, appealing eyes. "I have not money enough to educate the boy properly," she said simply, "and there is no one I could come to but you—his father."

He did not answer her, but with one quick step forward, took her hands in his. "Elizabeth!" he said, almost fiercely. "I love you—I want you!"

Trembling, she leaned against the table. "Love me? After all I did—the divorce—the boy—"

"The fault was mine. I loved you through it all. I have always loved you—I love you now!"

He looked searchingly at the sweet, averted face, then with a quick, happy movement, drew her close.

"It was not until afterward—that I knew how dearly I loved you," she said with a little catch, like a sob, in her voice.

That was the dawn of a new era. The old silence is gone and laughter and the soft sound of happy voices echo through the house. I am fond of all; the master with his merry laugh, the mistress with her soft, dark eyes and graceful ways—the boy, who brings in troops of his admiring friends to see me.

If I sometimes long for the days of my youth—for the silence of the Temple and the prayers of the Faithful, what would you?

Allah alone is perfect. I am content.

CAMEOS FROM THE CLASSICS

The Last Days of Pompeii—T. P.'s Weekly.

For this week's Cameo I give a passage from Bulwer Lytton's "The Last Days of Pompeii." The crowd is clashing for Arbaces to be flung to the lion, and he is defending himself.

"Hear me," answered Arbaces, rising calmly, but with agitation visible in his face. "This man came to threaten that he would make against me the charge he has now made, unless I would purchase his silence with half my fortune. I remember that I said, 'Pence there—let not the priest interrupt me! Noble pretor—and ye, O people! I was a stranger in the land—I knew myself innocent of crime—but the witness of a priest against me might yet destroy me. In my perplexity I desired him to the cell whence he has been released, and one pretence that he was the coffer-house of my gold, I resolved to detain him there until the fate of the true criminal was sealed, and his threats could avail no longer; but I meant no worse. I may have erred, but I am among ye will not acknowledge my guilt of self-preservation? Were I guilty, why was the witness of the priest silent at the trial? . . . For the rest, I throw myself on your laws. I demand their protection. Remove hence the witnesses of the accusation, and I will willingly meet and cheerfully abide by the decision of the legitimate tribunal. This is no place for further parley."

"He says right," said the pretor. "Hol guards—remove Arbaces—guard Calenus! Stand up, ye men, and you, sirs, for your accusation. Let the sports be resumed."

"What!" cried Calenus, turning round to the people, "Shall I be thus contemned? Shall the blood of Apollonides yet cry for vengeance? Shall justice be delayed, now that it may be frustrated hereafter? Shall the lion be cheated of his lawful prey? A god!—a god!—I feel the god rush to my lips! To the lion—to the lion with Arbaces!"

His exhausted frame could support no longer the force of his own will; he sank on the ground in strong convulsions—the foam gathered to his mouth—he was as a man indeed whom a supernatural power had entered. The people saw, and shuddered.

"It is a god that inspires the holy man!—To the lion with the Egyptian!"

With that cry up sprang on moved—thousands upon thousands! They rushed from the heights—they poured down in the direction of the Egyptian. In vain did the acclie command—vain did the pretor lift his voice and proclaim the law. The people had been already rendered savage by the exhibition of blood—they thirsted for more—their superstition was aided by their ferocity. Aroused—inflamed by the spectacle of their rulers, they forgot the authority of their laws. It was one of those dread popular convulsions common to crowds wholly ignorant, half free and half servile, and which the peculiar constitution of the Roman provinces so frequently exhibited. The power of the pretor was as a reed beneath the whirlwind; still, at his words the guards had drawn themselves along the lower benches, on which the upper classes sat separate from the vulgar. They made but a feeble barrier—the waves of the human sea halted for a moment, to enable Arbaces to count the exact moment of his doom!

In despair and in a terror which beat down even pride, he glanced his eyes over the rolling and rushing crowd—when, right above them, through the wide chasm which had been left in the valeria, he beheld a strange and awful apparition—he beheld—and his craft restored his courage!

He stretched his hand on high; over his lofty brow and royal features there came an expression of unutterable solemnity and command.

"Behold!" he shouted with a voice of thunder, which startled the roar of the crowd; "behold how the gods protect the guiltless! The fires of the avenging Orcus burst forth against the false witness of my accusers!"

The eyes of the crowd followed the gesture of the Egyptian, and behind, with ineffable display, a vast vapor shooting from the summit of Vesuvius in the form of a gigantic pine tree; the trunk, blackness—the branches, fire—a fire that shifted and wavered fiercely luminous, now a dull and dying red, that again blazed terrifically forth with intolerable glare!

th brewin' o'." That is an apt illustration of the wisdom of Sydney Smith's advice to a London curate, who had just accepted a country living: "Never talk of turnips; for if your parishioners discover you to be ignorant of turnips, they will infer you to be ignorant of everything."

READING HIS OWN OBITUARY.

A like vanity led Brougham to make a fool of himself and a distinguished party of visitors to the British Museum. Though all the officers of the museum were in attendance to explain its treasures, from MSS. to minerals, to the visitors, Brougham would allow himself to speak but himself. Where, however, Brougham's vanity took its highest flight and had its deepest fall was in his forgery of the report of his own death in order that he might have the pleasure of reading the flattery of the obituary notices in the press. Feeling that "death hath this also, that it opens the gate to good fame and extinguished envy," Brougham was assured that he would be extolled to the skies as the wisest, best and brightest ornament of his age. But to his extreme mortification the most important of these obituaries—that in the Times—was sternly and even severely just!

By the way, Brougham's positive and repeated repudiation of the letter announcing his death, dictated by himself, was little to his credit.

TWO OF A TRADE.

Brougham's letter to Macaulay's father, advising Zachary how to educate that extraordinary prodigy, Tom, made a great noise at the time. If it served his purpose, Brougham was certainly hoist with his own petard, for Macaulay always lashed his rival with jealous bitterness. Brougham, on his side, was not behindhand in his hatred of Macaulay, and it is amusing to hear of such a talker as the chancellor saying to the Duke of Wellington of Macaulay: "Melbourne would never have lost an ounce of wit with ten parrots, a chime of bells, and Lady W—"

The man who is trying to invent a new language should go out and let the bees sting him a few times.

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PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

ALL DWARFS IN PAMIR

LATE DISCOVERIES STARTLE THE WORLD.

The pigmies at present in England are giants compared with some of the tribes of natives who inhabit the wild, desolate and almost unknown Pamir plateau to the northwest of the Hindoo Kooch range of mountains in Central Asia. So great is the altitude of this great tableland that geographers refer to it as "the roof of the world." Few, indeed, are the travelers or explorers who have ever ventured upon its southern fringes, lying just beyond the northwest frontier of India.

But the scientific world is being startled by the news which is leaking out of the results of the explorations by the two Danish officers, Messrs. Olofsson and Philipsen, who have recently penetrated into some strange corners of this hitherto mysterious region. They have an astounding revelation to tell. But they have brought back with them over 300 photographs inconceivably proving what they say. In parts of the Pamirs, it appears, the people are not only all dwarfs, but the very animals of the forest, wild and domestic, are correspondingly diminutive in stature.

The full-grown men and women are rarely a yard high. Their donkeys and their horses, which in appearance are the size of small ponies, are about the size of lamb dogs. The bulls and cows—these little creatures—are no larger than a new-born European calf, and the sheep are about the size of small poodles. Tigers no larger than kittens are said to infest the hills.

Smaller and lower even in the human scale, however, than these Asiatic pigmies are some creatures which the natives of the great Congo basin in Africa call Kaleke, and will insist are men and not beasts.

The Kaleke are said to have very long hair, small, keen eyes, to be very white—never coming into towns—and only to be seen in the bush, where they sometimes try to hold converse with the natives.

Another race of dwarfs, discovered by a J. D. Sullivan on one of the tributaries of the Amazon, are a people remarkable chiefly for their ugliness. Their stomachs, which is distended in the back as well as in front, is out of all proportion to their tiny spindling

arms and legs. This is because of their habit of gorging. After a hunt they will eat like animals and then lie listlessly in the hot tropical sun for days till hunger again impels them to get more game.

In the same way among the wandering African pigmies a slain elephant becomes the site of a new camp until all its flesh is consumed, when the little men move off in search of a fresh quarry, which they blind before appearing to death by shooting poisoned arrows into their eyes. Individual pigmies, however, it is said, may also be encountered in the villages of the big negroes, where they are petted as curiosities.—Pearson's Weekly.

Red Cross Work for Trainmen.

The managers of the Erie Railroad are considering the requirement of its train crews to take instruction in "first aid to the injured." May it do so and may all other roads follow its example, thus preventing from absolute dissolution in the lives which they have not been efficient enough to guard against a railroad wreck which has witnessed the inferno of suffering there can have any notion of the mitigation of pain and salvation of life that might be given by the presence of some one possessing a knowledge of rudimentary surgery. Under certain conditions it is inevitable that hours will be lost and the time of a wreck and the arrival of the scene of skilled medical men. Were the train crews given some skill in bandaging wounds and staunching blood, a percentage of lives now sacrificed might be saved. There appears to be no diminution of the appalling loss of life from railroad accidents. The criminal economy of the railroad, the lack of a full sense of responsibility upon the part of the employees of the roads, and the recklessness of passengers combine to make a sum total that, annually, in America rivals in its list of dead and wounded that of a great battle. There is some glory in dying in battle, but only the engineer who gives his life for his passengers can, by any altruistic flight, consider it a privilege to be killed in a railroad wreck. One of the most hideous features of the time is the wanton indifference to human life which the railroads—not as individual members, but as bodies corporate—appear to feel. One of the minor mitigations would be the training of the passenger crews, as suggested, to take the first steps toward saving the lives of the injured.—The Reader.

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