

ROUND THE TABLE.

It has been recognized for a long time that the Tell legend is merely one of the sun-myths, that the tyrant Gessler is the impersonation of night or of winter pierced by the arrows of the sun, and that Tell's skill as a steersman is only another of his attributes as Sun-God. A good account of the history of the legend will be found in Buchheim's introduction to his edition of Schiller's Tell. It is there remarked that the Tellenplatte (where the chapel stands, and on to which Tell is said to have leapt before delivering his shaft at the tyrant) was known as *ze Tellen* before the incident is said to have occurred, and that the hero's name (which philologists have endeavoured to connect with one or other of the Sun-God's names) was really derived from the place where the myth found a local habitation.

Further evidence in this direction is furnished in a recent paper in the *Preussische Jahrbuecher* (Sept., 1888, in which a Swiss, Herr Mehly, states that "Tell" in compound words indicating places is not uncommon in Canton Uri (e.g., Tellenruetti, Tellepfad, Tellenbach), and that it means either of two things, Fir or Creek. Again, in the same old Schwyzer dialect, "Sprung" means a steep hill, so that the "Tellen-sprung" which rises behind the Tellenplatte, really means the hill covered with firs, or the hill of the creek.

The association of the myth with this particular place seems to be reasonably explained by the mistranslation in comparatively recent times of Tellenprung into "Tell's Leap."

R. R. W.

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The Round Table is a most pliable and accommodating column. Hospitable, as every true Knight's table should be, and capable of providing a countless variety of dishes, and when the leaves are inserted of accommodating all noble guests to taste of the victuals to be discussed. Here, for instance, is the fare provided by some intellectual caterer, which might give to the column an academic air, savoring of examination papers, and unskilful answerings thereto. Question—What is thought? Now we must remark that we are not responsible for the accuracy of the observations that follow; their appropriateness is all that we have considered. Poems, good and bad, are incessantly snowing upon us, and we welcome this prose trifle of metaphysics as an indication of future prose articles to be contributed. The only drawback that we see in inserting the following is that the name must be withheld, owing to the impersonal character of an all-embracing Table that is no respecter of persons. By this time I hope the question propounded has been well considered by readers, so that the contributor's soliloquy may have an intelligent appreciation.

"All Thought," he unflippantly remarks, "must have its primary basis deep down in the nature of things; there must be an intimate relation, in fact, a perfect correspondency between things and their images in reflection. Out of these raw materials," (I don't like to interrupt this train of thought, but to avoid a foot-note I shall insert a parenthesis to remark that I think his imagery confused, in that we are left in agonized doubt as to what raw materials he refers to. Ed.) "raw materials are philosophies built, poems created, by subtlest blendings of the thought substance, which oftentimes by long assimilation in our nature gives birth to ideas the most remote, which seem to us divine promptings that have never been sullied in the atmosphere of objective reality. Yet Plato clinches the truth of his extasies by introducing without incongruity analogies from our most ordinary experience."

Although this prose-poem is sonnet-like in its shortness, it makes full compensation, you will observe, by the sublimity and profundity of its insight, and the very much hidden depths of its reasoning.

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Another contribution of an equally interesting nature is the *Japan Gazette*, received by a near relative of an editor from Garth Grafton. I shall not insert it all but some clippings from the sporting column will be of interest. The Athletic Sports of the Imperial University of Japan took place

on the 27th of October last. The committee was elected as follows:—Messrs. Kikuchi (chairman) Kanzaki, Shiraya, Yoshimura and Hattori. Judges:—Messrs. Yamaguchi and O'Kama. Starters:—Messrs. Kishi, Taneguchi and Yoshimura. The records are far from first-class.

Throwing Cricket Ball—1. Mr. Mointa, 79yds. 2ft. 1in. (It will be remembered that Crane threw 128yds. 10½ins.)

Hundred yards—1st. Mr. Akiyama, 11secs.

High Jump—Mr. Rinonye and Mr. Kubo, 4ft. 6in.

Putting Shot (14½lbs.)—1st. Mr. Moruma, 32 ft. 10in.

220 yards—1st. Mr. Matsubara, 27secs.

Long Jump—1st. Mr. Tagamiya, 15ft. 10ins.

Throwing Hammer—1st. Mr. Takeda, 92ft. 11ins.

440 Yards—1st. Mr. Rinonye, (20ft. start) 59.6secs.

880 Yards—1st. Mr. Nanita, 2mins. 26.8secs.

There were other events of less importance, and at the close the prizes were graciously presented by Princess Arisugawa Takehito.

A great many columns are devoted to horse-racing, and four cricket matches are recorded, played by English residents.

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The impressions of Toronto formed by Annie S. Swan, the popular Scottish authoress, during her recent visit, are eminently favourable. In an article in the *Christian Leader*, dealing with her tour and touching topics not unfamiliar to the columns of THE VARSITY, she says:

"The University itself, which is a power in the land, stands in its own beautiful grounds, which are open to the public. It is surrounded by venerable trees, which make a fine relief for its grey towers and turrets. 'The sweet girl-graduate' abounds in Toronto. There were three in the house in which I was staying; and a more charming trio it would be difficult to find.

"The Canadian girl is an interesting study. Bright, quick, clever, self-reliant, and yet wholly womanly. She filled me with admiration. She can discuss the latest phase of philosophy or science, or write a pungent criticism on 'Robert Elsmere' just as easily as she can bake her bread or raise her pie-crust. All her faculties are developed; her intellect and her heart are in the right place, and antagonistic (?) to each other. I have no hesitation in saying that the conversation of the educated women of this country is on a higher plane than in Scotland. *Gossip is tabooed*, and the servant question never comes up; and there is a singular broadmindedness and charity in judging others, which has been like a draught of mountain air to me. The 'higher education' will make better wives and mothers, and nobler women, because it broadens the mind, widens the sympathies and gives to the soul larger views of life."

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It may interest our readers to know that "Annie S. Swan" is the pen-name of a lady whose deep interest in matters educational everywhere is no doubt due to her intimate knowledge of, and close connection with, collegiate life in Edinburgh. Her testimony is valuable, and is all that is required to complete the vindication of the Canadian college girl.

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It has been ascertained that the poem "Dryburgh Abbey," published in THE VARSITY last year, is the work of Charles Swain. The poem is to be found in the "Fireside Encyclopedia of Poetry," the editor of which is Charles Henry T. Coates.

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The "Masque of Minstrels," by the Lockhart Brothers, has reached Toronto, and is for sale by Williamson & Co. A review of the work appeared in the *Empire* a month ago.

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Charles Dudley Warner has completed a long paper on Canada, which will appear in full in *Harper's* for March.

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T. J. W. Burgess, M.B., '70, has recently published in pamphlet form his interesting and useful paper on "How to study Botany," read before the Hamilton Scientific and Literary Society.