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## CRITICISM.

BY J. A. ATTORNSON.

A little bird, whose heart was full of song,  
Perched on a bough and poured his notes along  
The summer air, so sweet that Zephyr staid  
While to listen, pensive as a maid;  
And lo, a mocking owl, whose cell was near,  
Forgot his rovers, and deigned to hear;  
But, wishing to be thought more wise than pleased,  
His load of learning thus he lightly eased:  
"Think not, vain singer, that your song is new;  
Three thousand years ago, in Greece, there flew  
And sang a bird, the counterpart of you!  
And who spend our hours in classic toil,  
And burrow deep in learning's misty soil,  
Know all about that ancient, bearded strain.  
So, sing new songs or never sing again!"  
The simple singer, innocent of art,  
Who only knew his song came from the heart,  
Made no reply, but looked his modest note;  
And flew, to sing from wisdom more remote;  
While Zephyr, swelling to a tempest howl  
At loss of song, smote the pedantic owl.

(For the Hearthstone.)

## MY NIGHT JOURNEYS.

BY W. H. FULLER.

Lying restless in a sleeping car of the Grand Trunk Railway, I recall some of the night journeys I have made in the course of a somewhat eventful life.

The earliest of which I have any recollection occurred more years ago than I like to confess, and is still fresh in my memory. I was between eight or nine years old and was about leaving home for the first time to go to a school in a remote part of Yorkshire. My misgivings about this, my first plunge into life, were greatly increased by the unfeeling behaviour of my elder brother Tom, who brought his naturally great powers of aggravation into a focus for my particular benefit. Poor Tom! he is now amid the reeds of the Indian jungles, but his merry voice seems ringing in my ears now, and in the semi-darkness of the car I fancy I can see his bright blue eyes brimming over with glee as I used to see them nearly forty years ago, when he was planning some more than usually attractive piece of mischief.

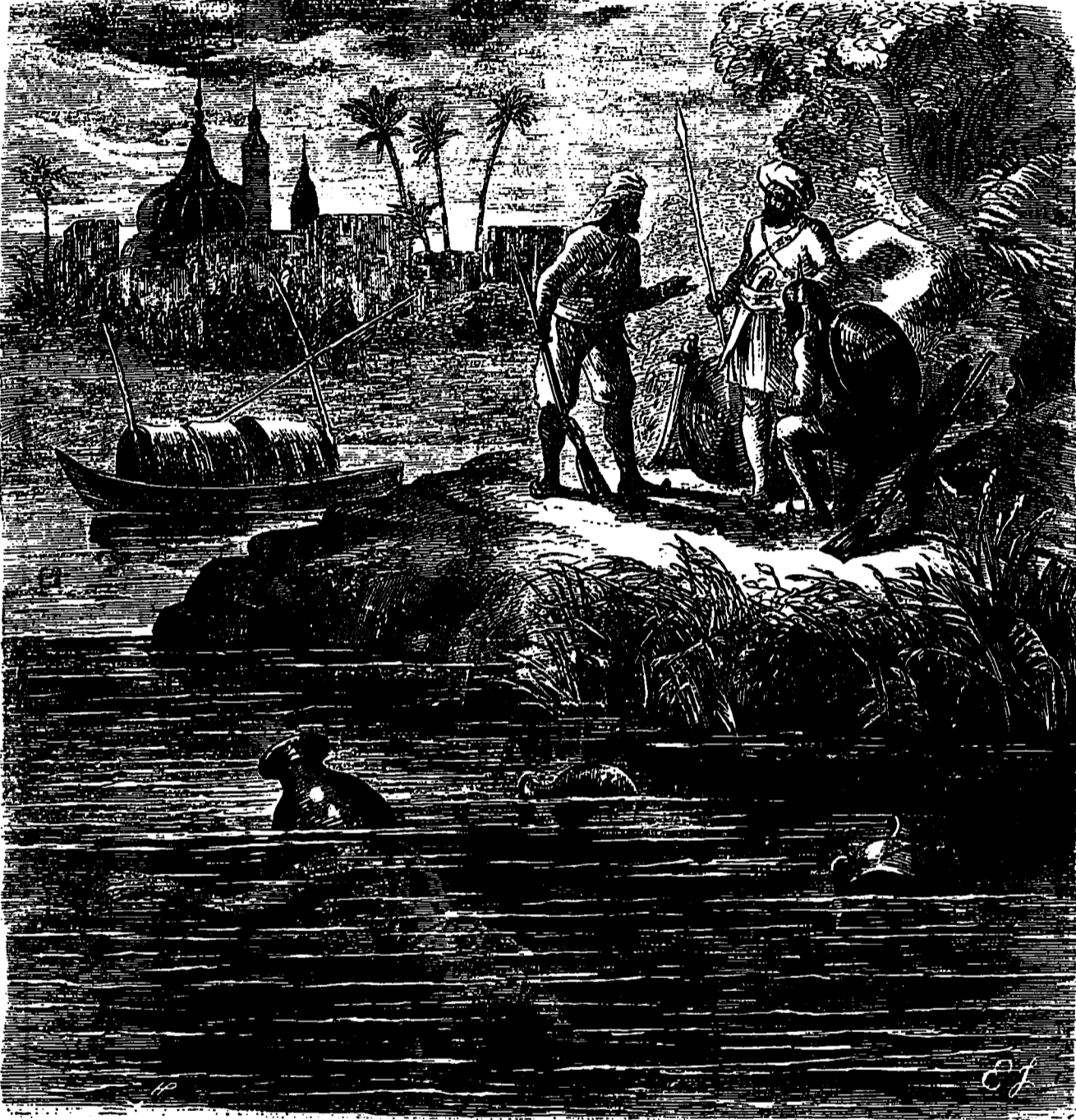
As soon as the domestic *ukase*, announcing my approaching banishment, was promulgated, Tom devoted himself to my service—he commenced by continuing the parental severity that could begeth a tender youngster like myself to the rude wilds of Yorkshire, and then, having acquired my confidence and become the recipient of my private sentiments on the subject, he began to draw upon his imagination for the most harrowing stories of the severities practiced at public schools generally, and those of Yorkshire in particular. He stated that "wallpings" was one of the established institutions, but of that he did not think much, as all schools were alike in that respect, although he had heard that the Yorkshire "wallpings" were particularly execrable; but what he thought most about was, that owing to the peculiarly isolated position of some of these Yorkshire schools, and the natural stinginess of the proprietors, the unfortunate inmates were frequently reduced to the greatest straits for want of sufficient nourishment, and that it was within his own knowledge that a new boy who was chubby—I was chubby—and of fair complexion, which I was—who had not been there long enough to get thin, had, during a season of great scarcity, been converted into Yorkshire pies for the support of his fellow pupils; a plausible tale being concocted to account to his parents for his disappearance.

Now I knew then, as well as I know now, that this was only an invention of Master Tom's; yet those horrible pies lay heavy on my mind and I could not shake off my misgiving, although in public I valiantly scouted the idea as a weak device of the enemy to frighten me. Tom was not slow to perceive my ill-concealed uneasiness, and neglected to increase it. He would handle me gently and solemnly about the region of the ribs &c., in the manner of Graciers when negotiating the purchase of fat oxen; he would then shake his head solemnly and suggest the propriety of a course of severe training in order to reduce all superfluous flesh, which otherwise might prove too strong a temptation to the Yorkshire cannibals, and lead to my being devoured before, as he forcibly expressed it, "I could say Jack Robinson."

It was the custom in our family on each succeeding Saturday, to place upon the domestic banquet table, a gigantic meat pie; which was popularly supposed to contain all the nutrients scrapes of the previous week. No words of mine can adequately describe the expression of Tom's countenance whenever this libagitation pie made its appearance. The cannibalistic leer with which he would regard me always sufficed effectually to take away my appetite, and bring about affectionate maternal questions as to the cause of my indisposition, with terrific hints as to the necessity of a pill at night, or opium salts in the morning.

At length the fatal day arrived, and I mounted the coach on my dreaded journey, with Tom's parting injunction "whatever I did not to allow myself to get fat," ringing in my ears. My mother and sisters were waving affectionate farewells from the drawing room balcony, while the irrepressible Tom was obstinately weeping into a remarkably small handkerchief on the doorstep.

It was quite dark when the coach drew up at a bye road, leading across a desolate looking moor, where I was to alight. A chaise cart, in charge of a weird looking old man, was waiting to receive me. I scrambled down from the coach, the guard deposited my trunk by the roadside, and before I had time to take breath the coach was whirling away in the distance with the Guard's horn playing a merry tune,



"I FOUND TO MY HORROR THAT THE CURRENT WAS DRIFTING ME DIRECTLY ON TO THE GHAT."

which to me sounded as dismal as a funeral dirge.

I was sadly low spirited, all through my journey had that horrible pie story been present to my mind and I had been unable to divest myself of the idea that there might possibly be some foundation for it, and I therefore looked with much anxiety at my escort, hoping to glean some small grain of comfort from their personal appearance.

And horse and man been of even moderate fitness, I might have comforted myself with the idea that times were prosperous and provisions plentiful in the Yorkshire wilds; but alas! even in the fast fading light I could see that the ribs of the wretched quadruped in the cart were developed with alarming prominence while the personal of the driver was ill calculated to reassure my perturbed mind. He was an old withered looking man whose shoulders were bent and rounded till they almost gave him the appearance of being humpbacked; his nose was hooked and his chin prominent and he had a peculiar way of mumbling or champing his teeth which was decidedly ogreish, and made me fancy that he was already in imagination revelling on the titbits of my tender young carcase. His first remark did not tend to allay my apprehensions; "well youngsters" he said in his broad Yorkshire dialect, "the beest a ploomp un; dang my bootsins if the beest as round as a dooplun" and the old man nodded and champed in so suggestive a manner, that from sheer fright I shivered till the brass buttons, with which my new jacket was plentifully decorated, tinkled like a peal of fairy sleigh bells.

My perturbation was so evident that the old man with the remark "why lad thee beest cold," lifted me into the cart and bidding me wrap myself up in an old rug that lay on the seat, mounted stiffly to my side and drove away down the road.

I had now worked myself up to such a pitch of excited terror that I was unable to reply, except by chattering of the teeth, to the remarks of my driver who kindly enough endeavored to cheer me up, and attributing my discomfort to the cold persisted in ill-named allusions to my unfortunate superabundance of flesh, which in his opinion ought to have kept me warmer. For three weary hours did I sit by that old man's side in an agony of fear which, unfounded and ridiculous as it now appears, was as vivid and real an emotion as any I have ever experienced.

Unfounded it was in truth, for old "Peter" under his rugged and unimpressing exterior, concealed as tender a heart as ever beat in human breast, while the school itself was as easy going an establishment as school boys could desire; and the commissariat, though coarse, was plentiful to a fault. Ere many days had passed I could laugh to myself at my absurd misgivings, but I do not think the recollection of that ride will ever be entirely erased from my memory, and every time I see a pork pie I recall vividly the terrors of my first night journey.

Five years afterwards when leaving the same school, I had rather a curious night ride. A railroad depot had been opened at a village about six miles distance from our school and the old coach had been driven off the road. From this bye station I took my departure by the night mail on my way home. I arrived late at the station owing to a delay on the road caused by the old horse—the same of course, now a Methusalem among quadrupeds—casting a shoe—the train had already arrived and the porter hurriedly pushed me into a first class carriage, replying to the angry remonstrance of the only inmate by saying "there's no time Sir—the young gentleman want mind your smoking I desay," and almost before I had time to get myself the train was moving off. I took my place in the farthest corner of the carriage and glanced at my fellow traveller who had so vehemently objected to my intrusion. He was a short built man with a profuse black beard and moustache; he wore a cloth travelling cap pulled low down over his forehead and was muffled in a loose overcoat—his eyes expressed so intense a degree of anger as he glared at me that despite my schoolboy impudence, I felt considerably abashed, and heartily wished I had been placed in some other compartment.

In reply to my polite intimation, that I hoped he would go on smoking; he turned away with a muttered curse, so I curled myself up in my corner and feeling very drowsy composed myself for a nap. I had been dozing for some time, when I became conscious that my companion had risen from his seat and was leaning over me; I felt his hot breath on my cheek, but impelled by some instinct for which I could not account, I remained passive, with my eyes closed, breathing regularly as though still sleep-

ing. After listening nearly a minute to my long drawn respiration, he retired stealthily to his own end of the carriage; greatly to my relief, as I could not have kept up the deception many moments longer. I lay quite for a while and then looked cautiously out of the corner of my eye—the metamorphosis in my companion was so strange and unexpected that I could not suppress a slight start which caused him to look quickly round. With a startled gasp and a restless motion of my arms, I turned over on my seat and again feigned to be sleeping soundly. I was now really frightened and the half hour during which I lay passive seemed to be an age. Unable any longer to keep up the deception I sat up with as good an assumption as I could summon of being tired and only half awake.

In place of the black whiskered and ferocious looking individual I had first seen, I now found a smooth faced venerable looking old gentleman with long white hair, and broad brimmed hat, and a pair of large gold spectacles.

Had I not seen him in the act of changing his disguise I should probably not have had the least suspicion of his identity, but as it was, I at once recognized the anxious suspicious look in his eyes as he made benevolent enquiries whether I was fatigued, and how long I had been asleep. Replying to his enquiries drowsily and asking with a tolerable assumption of innocence, "when the other gentleman got out," I feigned to resume my slumber and was much relieved when we reached the junction at which I was to alight where I found my father waiting for me.

As we drove from the station I told my father of my adventure—he seemed considerably impressed by it, and, diverging from our direct road, he called in at the police station where he had an interview with the Inspector. His story caused some commotion, for the Inspector came running out hastily to the cab in which I had remained seated and questioned me closely as to the appearance of my quondam acquaintance. As we left I saw him driving off rapidly to the railway station, and I afterwards learnt that my unintentional espionage had led to the capture of a defaulting cashier who would otherwise have got clear off with his ill-gotten plunder.

That was a memorable night journey when

on my first overland trip to India I missed the usual caravan from Calcutta, and started, with only a single Bedouin Arab, across the Desert to catch the steamer at Suoz! I have often been impressed with the desolation of the ruined cities of the East, and once I thought that nothing could equal the dreary blankness of a Western prairie after the fire had devoured its verdure, and left nothing but a vast expanse of blackened earth behind it; but never did I experience such an utter and overwhelming sense of loneliness as when we stopped to water our horses at the one single brackish well on the route, and I saw in the moonlight on every side as far as the eye could reach

"Boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

In these days the traveller runs across the Desert by railroad, with as little romance as in journeying from London to Birmingham. But of all my night journeys there was one which has left an indelible impression behind it, and even now it often recurs to me in my dreams, and I wake up with the cold sweat of terror pouring down my face.

It was during the time of the Indian mutiny—that time which no Anglo-Indian recalls without a thrill of horror! The outbreak had just commenced and I was the junior officer of a detachment left to guard the station of Ferozshagar. The station was a small one on the banks of the Ganga and, besides the regiment usually stationed there, was only occupied by the District Collector and a few European and Eurasian families connected with the civil service. The main body of the regiment had marched to join the column of General Outram then advancing towards Delhi, and we were left with some thirty or forty European and Sikh soldiers to protect the women and children of the station. Although it was known that several of the disaffected regiments would in all probability pass at no great distance from us, it was not thought that they would be likely to turn aside to plunder a station of so little importance, but would press on with all speed towards Delhi with a view to reaching the city before access was closed by the English troops. Notwithstanding this opinion in which my Major and myself shared, we neglected no precaution for the safety of our precious charge. All the residents of the station were brought into the Collector's house, which we strengthened and fortified in the best way we could, making loopholes for musketry at every suitable point and protecting every exposed window by piling mattresses therein. The house was an old building of considerable size which had been formerly occupied by some wealthy native, and subsequently altered to suit European tastes and requirements. It was therefore stronger and more substantial than the more modern dwellings, but quite inadequate to resist, for more than a few hours, the attack even of the lightest field pieces. Water we had in abundance as the back of the house almost overhung the river to which a flight of steps led from the lower floor, forming a landing place for boats, several of which lay moored at the steps; but provisions were sadly deficient although we had secured all the supplies on which we could possibly lay our hands. The station bazaar market had been deserted by the natives and only those who are acquainted with Indian life and know the utter dependence of the European on the Native for the commonest necessities of life, will be able to appreciate the difficulty with which we collected even our scanty supply.

When, therefore, just before sunset, about a week after we had finished our preparations, the alarm was given that a considerable body of mutineers was approaching the station, although surprised at their appearance, we had no reason to reproach ourselves for having neglected any precaution. The enemy, about six hundred in number, came on yelling and shouting like demons. The bulk of the mutineers was the British army, and were armed with the fugitive muskets; but they had lost every remnant of discipline. Nothing was more remarkable during the whole episode of the Indian mutiny than the rapidity with which these highly trained native troops relapsed into a mere disorganized mass of marauders when released from the control of their European officers.

As they approached, we looked anxiously to see if they had any artillery with them, but to our great relief we could not detect any. They made a pretty vigorous attempt to carry our little fortress by assault, but were easily driven back by our spirited fire, and speedily retired, leaving some dozen of their number on the ground.

Fortunately, our house stood in an isolated position, and there was little, if any, cover within musket shot. This rendered our sentry duties much easier, and relieved us from any fear of a surprise. Our chief dread was lost the enemy should obtain artillery, or falling that, that they would turn the attack into a regular siege and starve us out. It was, therefore, with much misgiving that I saw in the early dawn of the next morning that they had posted a strong line of pickets round our fortress, just out of shot, while the main body had encamped at the nearest *ghat*, some half mile down the river.

I will not attempt to describe the hardships endured by our little garrison during the week of suffering that followed, nor the patient, uncomplaining fortitude with which even the faintest and weakest bore their unaccustomed privations. Our provisions were now dotted out, but sufficient quantities to keep body and soul together, and we had to face the startling fact that three days more would see the supply entirely exhausted. My senior officer had ordered sent out a Sikh in the forlorn hope of obtaining assistance, but the unfortunate man had been captured by the rebels and tortured to death with the most horrible atrocities in front of our fortress. Escape by way of the land exit was barred by the line of pickets, and by the river a boat would have to run the gauntlet of the main body of the mutineers encamped only a few hundred yards