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FAMOUS HYMN WRITERS

TWO OF THEM WHO LIVE PLEASANTLY AT NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Mr. Albert Midlane's "There's a Friend For Little Children"—Its Author's Views of Children Past and Present—Mrs. Jeannina Luke, Who Wrote "I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old," in Her 91st Year.

Mr. Albert Midlane, author of the children's favorite hymn, "There's a Friend for Little Children," was visited by a representative of Lloyd's Weekly News (London) at his pleasant home in Newport, Isle of Wight. He was hale and hearty, and much happier for his visit to London, which had resulted in his being freed from all financial difficulty. The venerable hymn writer produced a handsome gold medal, which he said was presented to him at the City Temple in recognition of his work through the ministry of sacred song. It is inscribed, "A sweet singer in Israel," and is surmounted by a crown and a miniature representation of an open Bible, and it further conveys the intimation, "For distinguishing service to the Sunday School." Mr. Midlane went on to state, in his easy style, that a choir of trained children's voices sang his hymn, "There's a Friend," and at the close he had to shake hands with the dear children.

"How many hymns have you written in the course of your long life?" was asked. He replied, "about 730, 315 of which appear in my little book, entitled 'The Bright Blue Sky.'" In the preface Mr. Midlane thus expresses his aim: "These hymns are written for the glory of Him who is, indeed, 'The Children's Friend,' and at whose feet this tribute of song is laid."

Mr. Midlane, in reply to a question respecting his most famous hymn, said: "I have heard of the children singing 'In Gaelic, Italian, German, in the language of the natives of Bechuanaland (whatever that may be), and also, what is a great joy to me, I have received an account of the little Japs in Yokohama singing the hymn, and I am told that they greatly enjoy it."

"I once saw the late Rev. Chas. Haddon Spurgeon in his own home, and after we had been discussing some points of doctrine, on which we were compelled to differ, he was engaged upon the interview by placing a hand upon each of my shoulders and looking me straight in the face, he said in his deep, kindly voice, 'It isn't a wide gulf that separates us—farewell.'"

"On one occasion I saw the late Dr. Parker in the vestry at the City Temple at the close of one of the services. He said, 'I would sooner have been the author of your children's hymn than the preacher of the most eloquent sermon. At best, a sermon reaches only a limited number, but your hymn has gone the wide world over.'"

"I first began writing hymns when I was twelve years old, and I wrote under the signature of 'Little Albert' the penny magazines. "What is your opinion of child-life to-day compared with your early days?"

"Oh," he remarked, "there appears to be a deplorable lack of reverence. It seems to me that the children in the early days of my life were kept under more parental control. Disclosure under parental control. Of course, I recognize that we live in a very different age, competition is much keener, and so forth; still, I cannot help thinking there is far too much time spent in the pursuit of pleasure. Life is not regarded so seriously as it ought to be."

In conclusion Mr. Midlane said he was grateful that his health still permitted him to conduct services on Sunday at the Mission Hall, and he added that he had been a Sunday school teacher for over sixty years, and that if spared until Jan. 23, 1905, he would be 80 years of age. "On March 20, 1901, we celebrated our golden wedding, and now my partner and I have lived together 53 years—53 years of connubial bliss."

Mrs. Jeannina Luke. The authoress of the favorite children's hymn, "I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old," was visited the other day at her pleasant home in Newport, Isle of Wight. A representative of Lloyd's found the lady, who is in her 91st year, well and cheerful, though her lot is lonely, as she has survived her husband and all her children. She is gentle and refined, and speaks with a clear, musical voice. Her face lights up with the sunniest of smiles when she is talking about the work which lies nearest her heart—the work of foreign missions. On this subject Mrs. Luke is an enthusiast. In her early days she longed to engage in it.

"When I wrote the hymn in 1841, to which you have referred I was intending to enter the mission field," she said. "At this time I attended the Normal Infant School in Gray's Inn Road, and it was there I first heard the air to which my hymn is sung. In 1843 I married a Congregational minister, and went to Chester street Congregational Church, Leicester square, a church which is historically associated with the coming of the Huguenots as French refugees to the city of London. When I was quite young I was a prolific writer of verse, but as soon as I came to read good poetry I was so disgusted with my efforts that I threw the verses away."

In answer to a question, Mrs. Luke said: "I attend the Congregational Church on Sunday morning, when it is fine, I go in a lady-chair. I can hear the minister best in his prayers. I suppose it is because he is more deliberate. I have sometimes thought I should have to get some kind of ear trumpet for the sermon, but I don't really think I shall, because it must be a little disconcerting to the minister," she laughingly remarked. "How do the little folks of to-day

HUMOR AT SCHOOL

Henry J. Barber, M.A., Compiler Some Excellent Exercises of British Children's Unconscious and Ready Wit.

The following are examples of schoolboy wit, though whether conscious or unconscious one cannot say:

"Boys," asked a master in a history lesson, "what was the Great Revolution?" And one young prodigy answered: "Why, it was when William of Orange turned round, sir!"

An equally smart answer was given by a boy who was observed by his teacher to have sketched a railway engine on his slate: "Why don't you draw the carriages, too?" inquired the teacher. "Oh, the engine draws them," responded the boy.

Lessons on elementary science (a favorite subject in many of our schools) often evoke answers of a very unscientific nature. The governor of a school in Brixton had given a lesson on the different parts of a flower, external and internal, viz., the leaves, petals, stamens, pistil, ovary, etc.

V.C. HERO.

How the Green Was Won in Somaliland by Lieut. Smith.

For conspicuous bravery in Somaliland, the King has conferred the coveted Victoria Cross on Lieut. Clement Leslie Smith of the Cornwall's Light Infantry. Thrilling indeed was the act that won the cross. Hospital Assistant Bahamat Ali was hit early in the fight with the dervishes at Jidballi on Jan. 10. Lieut. Smith and Dr. Welland went out to his assistance and endeavored to bring him down with a bullet on his head. But Ali was killed, and his two brave would-be rescuers were surrounded by the enemy.

Helping the doctor on to his horse, Lieut. Smith turned his head to the lines of safety. Fate was against the two; the beast went down with a crash. A passing mule was caught. There was another attempt to mount; the mule was killed.

Then Dr. Welland was speared, but his dauntless companion stood by him to the end, pouring the contents of his revolver into the surrounding foe.

"I was much astonished to find he had escaped with his life," reported Lieut. Stevens to the major-general.

Inmate's Legacy to a Workhouse.

At a recent meeting of the Birmingham Board of Guardians it was announced that a legacy worth £150, had been left to them by an inmate of the workhouse infirmary. This bald but interesting announcement has, on inquiry, ripened into quite a singular story.

The testator is a man of culture. Years ago he was a prosperous merchant, and executed large orders for helmets for the army; indeed, he once fashioned a Life Guards helmet for the King. He spent a good deal of time in traveling on the Continent and was an ardent student of French literature. He was, however, something of a misanthrope, and lost touch with all his relatives and friends. Of late years he has earned his living as a metal worker, but failing health and lack of energy caused him to trade in leave him.

Lying neglected in a squalid lodging, the thought came to him a few weeks ago that he would be much better off in the workhouse infirmary, and a messenger was sent to the relieving officer. The official immediately decided that there was a suitable case for admission, and, incoherently muttering his feelings of gratitude, the old man was removed to the institution. The following day he called on the relieving officer, and handed to him his will, legally drawn up leaving to the Guardians the deplorable metal shop, with its plant and fittings, his books, and a sum of money, the whole of which, it is estimated, will result in £250 being available.

The old man told the relieving officer that he was very comfortable where he was, and that he wanted to pay for the comforts he was receiving during the few brief weeks which remained for him.

Mary Queen of Scots' Belles.

Few dead-and-gone sovereigns are more liberally represented by relics than Mary Queen of Scots, whose harp was so keenly bid for at Edinburgh on a recent Saturday. At Newby Hall one may see the massive four-poster in which she slept for two nights at Nappa, the historic site of the Hall. In London, is treasured a pair of hawking-gloves presented by the Queen to Lord Scrope, her jailer at Bolton Castle. A few years ago Sir James Naesmyth presented to the Peabody Museum a hawk's lure, of which she was a devotee.

At Oxford is preserved a once her property, a dainty lace glove, embroidered with silver wire and decorated with flowers worked in varicolored silks; at Dunrobin Castle is a cast of her face; and at Hardwick Hall are tapestries of her working.

The Duke of Devonshire has a pane of glass taken from an old hall at Buxton on which the unhappy Queen had scratched these lines: "Burton, farewell; no more perhaps my feet Thy famous tepid streams shall ever greet."

In an old opated house near Alfreton is another pane, on which she inscribed this sad legend: "Trop heuruse en toi; Malheureuse en moi."—Westminster Gazette.

The Earliest World's Fair.

In the centuries before the nineteenth the nearest approach to an international exhibition appears to have been the Frankfurt fairs of the sixteenth century. Henry Estienne, the scholar, describes this institution as "the epitome of all the markets of the world." But it is from an event within the memory of many people now living that the fairs at Philadelphia, Chicago, Buffalo and St. Louis trace their genealogy. The mother of all such displays was the exhibition held in a palace of glass in Hyde Park, London, in 1851. It exhibited its existence to the Prince Consort, and was enormously successful from every point of view.

WHAT THE KING CANNOT DO.

Reservations of the Royal Prerogative in England.

It is a prevalent and popular notion that the power possessed by the monarch is absolute and almost without limitation. This is a fallacy, as the following facts will attest, says The London Hour Glass. The privileges and powers relegated to royalty are manifold and peculiar, but there are certain things that a king may not do.

While it is quite within the province of the royal prerogative to dispose of the entire army or navy, and also to declare war without consulting anybody, yet our King could not utilize a penny of the public funds without permission from Parliament. However excellent and beneficent his motive may be, for so doing, the King is debarred from communicating with any of his loyal subjects, and the same limitation prohibits him from accepting gifts from any of his people, except in cases where the offering is presented through the medium of an officer of the state or an intimate friend of His Majesty. After an individual has been elected by his constituents to take his seat in the British House at Westminster it is not in the power of the King himself to prevent the member from occupying his place in that august assembly.

Of his own royal prerogative King Edward possesses full power to pardon a murderer, even after he has been found guilty and sentenced to death by the representative of the law. Yet, by a curious statute of one of the Georges, the King is prevented from exhibiting mercy or grace to a willful Sabbath breaker. To render every new law absolute and irrevocable the royal autograph must be invariably attached thereto, nor is His Majesty ever permitted to discharge this duty by proxy. Even the salaries of the King's servants are fixed by state officials, and he cannot raise the salary of his own butler except by permission or out of his own private purse.

King can do no wrong is obviously the view taken by his counselors, for by the laws that hedge the throne no person can take action against His Majesty, and he cannot be arrested by the emissaries of the law on any pretext whatever.

Details of a terrible encounter with a lion in Mashonaland are to hand by the last mail from South Africa. An Englishman named Nicholson, accompanied by his Zulu servant, sighted the animal lying on top of a stony ridge. With a view to testing the theory that a lion will, if boldly approached, turn tail and run, Mr. Nicholson advanced until he was about ten yards from the ridge, while his Zulu made a flank movement. As the lion was about to spring, Mr. Nicholson sent a bullet from his Snider rifle into the lion's shoulder, and right through its body, the other yards from the lion.

With an angry roar of pain, the beast sprang, and a blow from the lion's paw sent Mr. Nicholson rolling down the slope some twenty feet. On rising, he witnessed a display of extraordinary pluck on the part of Job, his Zulu servant. With the least hesitation, the native, carrying a shield and two assegais, came straight for the great brute, and when it sprang at him, received it on the shield, and thrust an assegai into its chest. But Job fell, though fortunately under his shield. Mr. Nicholson then jumped to the rescue. Drawing out his clasp-knife he severed the tendons of one of the lion's hind legs, and once more the lion attacked him, and threw him clean over his head. Then it turned upon the Zulu, but Mr. Nicholson succeeded in cutting the tendons of the other hind leg. This completely disabled the brute, which raved and roared till Job, who had been roughly mauled and was covered with blood, gave it the coup de grace with two thrusts of his assegai. The plucky Zulu had to undergo repairs; Mr. Nicholson was only slightly damaged.

Such Is Fame. When Sir Wemyss Reid, whose father was a Congregational minister in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was arranging to go up to London to try his luck in journalism, an old friend of his father's came to warn him against the venture. "Thomas," his father's adviser, "ah'm sorry to hear that you want to go to London, and to take this writing in the papers. It'll bring you no good, my lad. I mind there was a very decent friend of mine, and Mr. Forster, the friend of the Sidle. He had a lad, but like you; and nothing would serve him but he must go away to London to be educated, 'as he called it; and when he got educated he wouldn't come back to his father's business. He would do nothing but write, and write, and write; and at last he went back again to London, and left his poor old father all alone and I've never heard tell of that laddie since." Thus was the fame of John Forster, the author of "The Life of Goldsmith," and the destined biographer of Charles Dickens cherished in his native town!

He Knew Him. A British officer who had served in India tells the following story: In a certain campaign against the Afridis a number of the natives themselves took sides with the British, fighting their own people. An Afridi with their own detachment stood one morning behind a rock, hopping about with great activity, and firing shot after shot at a figure dim in the distance.

"Can't you hit that man?" said the officer, drawing near.

"I see him, but he is hard to hit. He is, sir, hardest man to hit I know."

"Oh," said the officer, "you don't know him, do you?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I know rascal well. 'Who is he?' the other asked.

"The Afridi fired another shot at the distant figure. Then he replied: 'Old rascal—he my father.'"

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GOING WEST

No. 1 No. 8

Brockville (leave) 9.40 a.m. 4.20 p.m.

Lyn (Jct. G.T.R.) 9.55 " 4.35 "

Lyn 10.00 " 4.36 "

Seeleys 10.08 " 4.42 "

Forthton 10.20 " 4.52 "

Elbe 10.25 " 4.57 "

Athens 10.37 " 5.04 "

Soperton 10.55 " 5.21 "

Lyndhurst 11.02 " 5.28 "

Delta 11.10 " 5.34 "

Elgin 11.28 " 5.47 "

Forfar 11.35 " 5.53 "

Crosby 11.42 " 5.58 "

Newboro 11.55 " 6.08 "

Westport (arrive) 12.10 " 6.20 "

GOING EAST

No. 2 No. 4

Westport (leave) 7.00 a.m. 8.30 p.m.

Newboro 7.12 " 8.45 "

Crosby 7.22 " 8.55 "

Forfar 7.28 " 9.01 "

Elgin 7.33 " 9.07 "

Delta 7.46 " 9.27 "

Lyndhurst 7.52 " 9.33 "

Soperton 7.59 " 9.40 "

Athens 8.16 " 9.54 "

Elbe 8.22 " 9.59 "

Forthton 8.28 " 9.56 "

Seeleys 8.38 " 9.58 "

Lyn 8.45 " 9.55 "

Lyn (Jct. G.T.R.) 8.55 " 9.55 "

Brockville (arrive) 9.00 " 9.00 "

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