

Still Another Chapter in the Noted Shelley Love Affairs.

What is heralded as "the most notable literary find of recent years," but is generally accepted as of much less importance, is given to the public in the pages of the New York Times March 12. It consists of a series of love letters that passed between John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," and Mrs. Mary Woolstonecraft Shelley, the widow of the poet Shelley. These letters are a part of a collection of Payne's manuscripts soon to come under the auctioneer's hammer in Philadelphia, and they reveal a curious literary romance. Mrs. Shelley, it appears, rejected the suit of "John," but, in doing so, disclosed her affection for a more eminent American author—Washington Irving. "She was unmoved by another poet," says a writer in the San Francisco Argonaut (March 29), "but, allured by a plain writer of prose." Thus, he adds, are "the eyes of the literary world again directed to the exceptional, if not unique, story of the loves of the Shelleys." To continue the narrative: "Payne—poet, dramatist and actor—was in London in May, June and July, 1825. He met the lovely

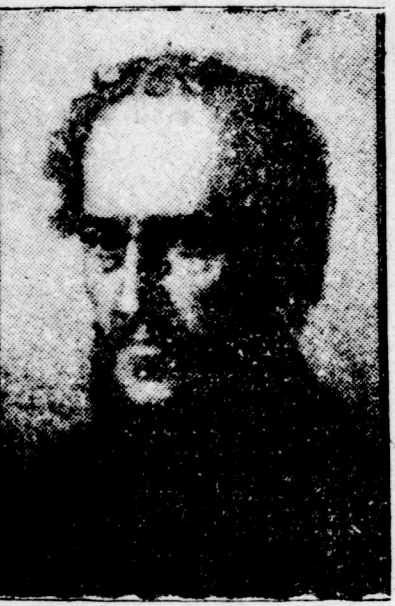
marks, shrewdly, 'a box would be preferable.' Payne, in his next, incloses orders for the box, and promises more tickets. Then he proceeds in praise of his fair correspondent. "You are perfectly estimable—certainly more universally so than any one I have ever seen." And in reply to this from Mrs. Shelley she signs herself "Always your sincere friend—and does not forget to ask for tickets. Payne replies that the manager of King's Theater is under some pledge about orders on Saturday, but still sends three and hopes to get six. He also sends four for "Faustus." In her next note, Mrs. Shelley says she is ready to go to anything but "Otello." Payne, in his next, sends four tickets, and Mrs. Shelley, in the letter following, asks for four more, and closes with the cryptic sentence: "My heart aches this morning, though neither ice nor softer flame occasions it—and as yet I am faithful to W. I."

So the letters run—tickets and Washington Irving the themes of Mrs. Shelley's love and Mrs. Shelley the theme of Payne's. The part of the record in which is most warmly expressed Mrs. Shelley's regard for Irving is a con-



MARY SHELLEY.

Whose correspondence with Payne reveals her affection for Washington Irving.

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE.
An unsuccessful suitor of Mrs. Shelley.

widow of Shelley, and conceived for her a warm but generous passion. It soon became clear, however, that she, on her part, sought him only that she might learn more about Payne's friend Irving. Her letters are full of requests for more theater tickets and inquiries about "the American author." Payne's are full of protest of friendship and affection. But when he found that he was supplanted by Irving—whom, however, she had never seen—he did a thing which, if generous, certainly was not in accord with the practice of ardent and whole-souled lovers. He sent to Irving all Mary Shelley's letters—including copies of his own which he had kept—saying: "I do not ask you to fall in love, but I should even feel a little proud of myself if you thought the lady worthy of that distinction." But Irving was coy. It does not appear that he ever called upon the lady who so much desired to meet him. He was truer to his only and early love, Matilda Hoffman, than the author of "Frankenstein" to her dead poet husband.

The letters of the poet's wife, in the judgment of the same writer, are "highly interesting," not because they "have any noticeable literary beauty," or are distinguished for intensity of passion, but rather, on the contrary, because they "reveal that she who had been the inspiration of the pale poet's most lovely songs, and who, it has been for long alleged, was brought by grief at his death to an early grave, had, in fact, a soul not far above theater tickets, and was quite willing to permit herself to be consoled by the blandishments of a living lover." We quote further:

"In the very first letter from Mrs. Shelley to Payne there is an interesting inquiry about his 'American friend.' Payne, who was rather an ardent epistle, Mrs. Shelley thanks him for his regard, but does not forget to say that she would like to see 'Virginia' acted. 'By the by,' she re-

versation, Payne writes that she said 'she longed for friendship with Irving,' and when Payne rallied her upon being in love, 'at first she fired.' Whereupon Payne wrote: 'What! Would you make a plaything of Mr. I?' And then she seems to have desisted from her denial of the soft impeachment."

That this correspondence furnishes something of an anti-climax to the "heavenly history" of Mary Shelley, the writer in The Argonaut feels compelled to admit. He says in conclusion: "Shelley eloped with Mary, and the twin were accompanied by an elder sister, who was also desperately in love with the poet—so desperately that she threatened to kill herself, if left behind. . . . Despite Shelley's several loves, it was Mary Woolstonecraft who was the true mate of his gentle spirit. Their love endured to the end. Their relations, like those of the Brownings, have for a hundred years inspired young hearts. . . . Mary Shelley, sorrowfully waiting for death to lay her by the side of her beloved, has been held to be as poetic a figure as Isabella by her husband. . . . 'beloved,' she wrote after his death, 'the year has a new name from any thou knowest. When spring arrives, leaves that you never saw will shadow the ground, and flowers you never beheld will star it, and the grass will be another growth. Thy name is added to the list which makes the world hold in her age, and proud of what has been. Time, with slow but unwearying feet, guides her to the goal that thou hast reached, and I, her unhappy child, am advanced still nearer the hour when my earthly dress shall repose near thee, beneath the tomb of Cestus.'"

"Yes, it is distinctly disappointing to learn that she wrote these impassioned words was only a few years later to be enamored of Washington Irving, then 42 and inclined to fat."—The Literary Digest.

ENCROACHMENTS OF OLD OCEAN

DEVASTATING ADVANCE OF THE SEA ON THE EAST COAST OF ENGLAND.

Waves Are Beating and Constantly Tearing Away the Land—Towns Endangered.

That the almost despairing cry of the unfortunate owners of land on the east coast of England falls on sympathetic ears goes without saying. The condition of affairs—especially where towns such as Lowestoft are threatened—is simply appalling, and if the general ruin and devastating advance of the sea could be stayed by state aid, or any other aid, it might be well to agitate for immediate grants of money.

But the question of the greatest moment is this: Do we at present know enough of the conditions to justify a vast expenditure?

The theory has recently been advanced by an expert that in situations where the material is of a soft and easily eroded nature for a considerable depth below low water level, and where also the sea's advance is noticed to be steady and continuous, no protective measures executed on the visible shore between high and low water marks will necessarily afford permanent protection, because the erosion going on below low-water level

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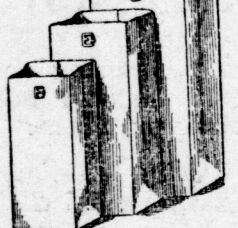
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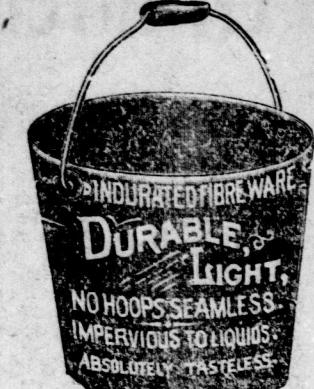
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CHARACTERISTIC OF MOUNTAIN GOATS

BEARDED LIKE OLDEN PROPHETS AND HAVE AN EVIL EYE—HOW TO APPROACH THEM.

From a point nearly 7,000 feet below an observer with a good glass occasionally may make out against the rock shelf a something which looks not unlike a white rabbit sitting upon its haunches. In reality it is an ancient Billy, roughly speaking, as big as two fine rams, and bearded like a prophet. His shaggy white coat knows neither spot nor curl, his dagger-like horns are ebony black and his topaz eyes have in them that cold, inscrutable expression, something of which we see in the eyes of an eagle and a snake.

They are marvels, these thought-concealing yellow eyes. Perchance they kindle a more baleful light, when love's lamp flares and a snowy robed rival is stamping and snorting only ten yards away. It may be they soften when a limber-legged kid avenges against the paternal ribs or rams his over-sized head through the paternal whiskers. But these things I doubt for the tozaz itself is not colder or more unchanging than the windows of the soul of a husky mountain Billy. Because he knows, or thinks he



Minard's Liniment Cures Burns, etc.

knows, that no enemy will come down upon him, all his precautions are directed against possibilities from below. I fancy, too, that he trusts almost entirely to his eyes, that his nose lacks that wonderful keenness characteristic of the deer tribe and that his ears play little part in the protective game. This latter is merely surmise, based upon the fact that the worst noise a still hunter would be apt to make would be the rattle of a displaced stone, which is a thing the goats often hear and doubtless thoroughly understand.

When one's object of pursuit is an animal which dwells far up the mountains, which keeps a pretty close watch upon all visible lower territory, but seldom bothers its head about what may be going on above and behind, one's wisest plan of campaign, naturally, is a flanking movement, followed by an attack from above—illustrated Sporting News.

NO CAUSE OF DOUBT. Two girls cling to the strap in the trolley car from custom, and while doing so talked fast also from custom.

"Have you ever had your fortune told?" asked the elder of the girls of her companion.

"Never!" was the emphatic answer, while a blush betrayed the mendacity of the speaker.

"Well, I went to a fortune teller once, but it left in a trolley car," said the girl who had asked the question.

"You are to marry, of course?" "Of course." The fortune teller described to me as the man I was to marry one who would have the seat next to me on the left in a trolley car."

"How long ago did you say it was since you were told this?" "Inquired the friend, with sarcastic emphasis.

"Five years."

"And I suppose you will keep on believing the prophecy?"

"I have no reason to doubt it," was the quiet answer.

"Not after five years?"

"No man has sat next to me on the left," explained the other, "for I have never had a seat."—Philadelphia Ledger.

COTTON-GROWING.

As we can get no precise information from the fiscal controversialists to assure us that we may regard Great Britain's affluence as firmly established

we are driven to forming independent conclusions. For an example of the foolishness of the theory that only bankrupts need be anxious about the future, we need only glance at the present state of the cotton industry. It in decades of past prosperity its leaders had recognized plain facts, and had taken steps to encourage the growth of cotton outside the domain of the American gambler, the past few months would have been much more comfortably spent in Lancashire.—Traction and Transmission.

There are in Paris something like one thousand co-operative cabs plying supplied by 16 to 18 co-operative cab yards, which are now in a flourishing condition, some of them very large and substantial undertakings. The men in this service net on the average about sixty cents a day above the outside cabman's rate of compensation.

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