

ACROSS THE WHEAT.

You ask me for the sweetest sound mine ears have ever heard?  
A sweeter than the ripples' plash or trilling of a bird,  
Than tapping of the raindrops upon the roof at night,  
Than the sighing of the pine trees on yonder mountain height;  
And I tell you these are tender, yet never quite so sweet  
As the murmur and the cadence of the wind across the wheat.

Have you watched the golden billows in a sunlit sea of grain,  
Ere yet the reaper bound the sheaves to fill the creaking wain?  
Have you thought how snow and tempest and the bitter winter cold,  
Were but the guardian angels the next year's bread to hold,  
A precious thing, unharmed by the turmoil of the sky,  
Just waiting, growing, silently, until the storms went by?

O! have you lifted up your heart to Him who loves us all,  
And listens, through the angel-songs, if but a sparrow fall?  
And then, thus thinking of His hand, what symphony so sweet  
As the music in the long refrain, the wind across the wheat?

It hath its dulcet echoes from many a lullaby,  
Where the cradled babe is hushed 'neath the mother's loving eye.

It hath its heaven-promise, as sure as Heaven's throne,  
That He who sent the manna will ever feed His own;  
And, though an atom only, 'mid the countless hosts who share  
The Maker's never-ceasing watch, the Father's deathless care,

Do you wonder when it sings me this, there's nothing half so sweet  
Beneath the circling planets, as the wind across the wheat?

—Margaret E. Sangster.

SIR DANIEL WILSON AND THE FREEDOM OF EDINBURGH.

THE freedom of Edinburgh was, on 20th August, with the usual ceremony, conferred on Sir Daniel Wilson. In closing his scholarly and eloquent speech, in acknowledgment of the honour, Sir Daniel said "that he had returned from a part of the empire which was under the rule of the same loved sovereign as themselves, and it might not be out of place to refer to a feeling in England connected with recent political events in Canada, that there was some inclination in the brightest and best among the colonial dependencies of England to detach herself from the mother-land and join the neighbouring States. Nothing could be further from the truth. (Applause.) Let them not be deceived by the cries originating in the throes of a contested election and the aims of rival factions to cast a charge of disloyalty upon their opponents for the mere purpose of the victory at the polls. There was no disposition on the part of Canadians to forfeit what they felt as earnest a pride as Britons themselves felt in their connection with the loved mother-land, and their share in all the pride and glory that belonged to the history of the past and the triumphs of the present. It was their pride that they were still within the compass of the British Empire. There was no disposition to displace the imperial standard upon the historical ramparts of Quebec, but, on the contrary, the intensest sense of shame at the very idea of the possibility of such a thing. It was still the pride of every Canadian that the language of Chatham was his mother's tongue and Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own." (Applause.)

THE LAST EGYPTIAN DISCOVERY.

A DISCOVERY made by Mr. Flinders Petrie includes, it is stated in the *Times*, three pages of the lost play of Euripides, the "Antiope" (which is quoted by Plato in the "Gorgias," by Longinus and others), also long passages from the "Phaedo" of Plato, and a large number of other literary fragments, besides wills and private letters of very ancient date. These treasures come from Gurob in the Fayoum:—

"It occurred to Mr. Petrie that the mummy cases there were not made of wood, as in the cemetery at Hawara, from which he has brought other precious possessions to England, but of a sort of carton or papiermaché, made of layers of papyrus, torn into small pieces and stuck together. Without knowing that the Egyptologist Letronne had pointed to this as a possible source of discovery some sixty years ago, Mr. Petrie thought that he detected writing on some of the scraps of papyrus, and 'forthwith attempted the difficult task of separating and cleansing the various fragments.' Only a comparatively few had escaped the destroying influence of lime, glue and other substances; but patience and ingenuity on Mr. Petrie's part first, and then on that of Dr. Mahaffy, Professor Sayce and others, have brought about this brilliant result."

It is by Professor Mahaffy, of Dublin, that the publication of a transcript, etc., of the papyri has been made. The deciphering, he says, was begun at Oxford during the last Long Vacation by Professor Sayce and himself, and their interpretations have since been canvassed and confirmed by many scholars. Professor Mahaffy says:—

"Seldom has it fallen to the lot of modern scholars to spend such days as we spent together at Oxford in the Long Vacation of 1890; poring all day, while the sun shone, over these faint and fragmentary records; discussing in the evening the stray lights we had found and their possible significance. Gradually pieces of Platonic dialogue emerged, which presently we determined to be the "Phaedo," then a leaf of a tragic poem, identified beyond question as the "Antiope" of Euripides; and with these were many legal or official documents with dates which arrested and surprised us."

It was these last that really fixed the dates of the others, and the surprise and excitement of the investigators are to be understood from the fact that these dates gave, not the reigns of the later Ptolemies or the Roman Emperors, but the earliest Kings of the dynasty, the immediate successors of Alexander, the men of the middle of the third century B.C. :—

"As the handwriting showed the literary texts to be of an even earlier date than the official documents, it followed (says the *Times*) that for the first time modern scholars had before them transcripts of Plato and Euripides dating from a period almost contemporary with those writers themselves. Considering that all our actual texts are based upon manuscripts that are not only post-Alexandrian, but, in nearly every case, late mediæval, the importance of a discovery which takes us at one bound back across many centuries can hardly be exaggerated."

As to the "Antiope," the drama deals with the sufferings and the reinstatement of Antiope, the mother of Amphion, the founder of Thebes, and the fragments now recovered are from the last act, describing the capture of King Lycus, the persecutor of Antiope, by her sons. Many of the lines are extremely fragmentary, but enough material remains to have enabled Dr. Mahaffy and his colleagues and critics to present an intelligible text, extending over more than a hundred lines. Next in importance are the fragments which Mr. Sayce was the first to identify as portions of the "Phaedo" of Plato, very carefully and beautifully written, and covering four or five pages of an ordinary modern text:—

"As this manuscript is certainly far earlier than the Alexandrian recension on which all our modern texts are based, the differences between it and them cannot fail to throw a most important and somewhat painful light upon the way in which that recension of the classical Greek writers was habitually made. They confirm the suspicion which many modern scholars have entertained, and upon which Mr. Rutherford has acted in his ingenious edition of the 'Fourth Book of Thucydides,' that the original texts were regularly 'improved' and touched up by rhetorical editors in Alexandria in accordance with their own theories of style."

Then follow certain very scanty but most important fragments from poets and other writers, among which the most curious is a passage, consisting entirely of the beginnings and ends of hexameter lines, which have been conclusively identified by Mr. Bury, of Dublin, as a portion of the Eleventh Book of the "Iliad." The importance of this passage lies in the fact that out of the thirty-five lines there are five that do not exist in our received text; that is to say, five that were rejected by Aristarchus and the other grammarians. As to the remaining fragments, they contain a whole series of wills, drawn up in official form and duly attested, dealing with the property of the Greek soldiers settled in this district under the earliest Ptolemies. Besides showing, with their precise references to the kings and queens, the priests and priestesses, the date of the literary fragments, they throw a vivid light upon the social system of the time:—

"Of themselves they almost enable us to reconstruct for ourselves the little world of Northern Egypt under this Macedonian dynasty. They introduce us to the veterans who fought under Ptolemy Philadelphus (260 B.C.) and Ptolemy Euergetes (15 years later), settled upon rich farms in what was called the Arsinoitic Nome, in obedience to the policy of those kings, which was at once to reward their soldiers and to Hellenise Egypt. Their names, their regiments, their personal descriptions are all given."—*Church Guardian* (Eng.).

THE RED CEDAR OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THIS species of tree (*Touya gigantea*), which grows extensively on the Canadian Pacific slope, comes next in importance after the Douglas fir, but the time is rapidly approaching when it will be fully as well known and appreciated, both in home and foreign markets, as the latter. For inside finish the British Columbia cedar is unequalled in colour and beauty of grain, and some handsome and striking effects can be produced by the use of this wood. To-day some of the most palatial residences in Canada and the Eastern States are finished in British Columbia red cedar, and with excellent effect. It is susceptible of a high polish, which, apart from its rare and beautiful grain, makes it all the more valuable for panel work and ceiling. It is durable beyond belief, and is exceptionally easy to work. In common uses it is manufactured into doors, sashes and shingles, and an extensive market has been found in the North West Territories and the eastern provinces for these lines, and the demand is constantly growing. Shingles cut from red cedar are absolutely free from knots, and they neither curl, warp, nor split, and dampness has little perceptible effect on them. For the same reason the wood

is particularly adapted to the manufacture of sashes and doors. Fort Nesqually, built in 1841, was covered with split cedar shingles, which are still sound. Roofs laid thirty years ago in Westminster, Vancouver, and for many years covered with moss, have never leaked, and appear little the worse for wear. The red cedar has always been in great favour with the Indians, who hollow their canoes out of the wood because it is so light, splits so true and works easily. The early inhabitants of Queen Charlotte Islands built their houses from red cedar, they being able, even with the rude tools then in use among them, to split the logs to any thickness required. It is an invaluable timber for the many purposes mentioned, and it is bound to extend until it is found on every market—*Colonies and India*.

A BOSTON woman thus writes of Kipling in the *Boston Transcript*: "Mr. Kipling's manner in conversation reminds one strongly of his style in writing—there is a certain indescribable terseness and humour in all that he says. Best of all, however, is the entire freedom from conceit and egotism. It is of Rudyard Kipling the man, not of Rudyard Kipling the author, of whom you think as you talk with him. A new novel by Mr. Kipling, written in collaboration with a young American, now resident in London, is soon to be published as a serial in an American magazine."

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