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POETRY.

ON THE BIRTH OF A PRINCE.

JANUARY 8, 1864.

"Welcome! a thousand welcomes to thee, lady!
Leave thou thy country and thy father's house,
And find a hundred-fold home, mother, country,
In this our sea-girt isle, fair Alexandra!"

With joyful lips and thorough heartiness,
A few bright months ago this day we sang,
Again we chant it with increased delight,
And iterate the thousand welcomes given.

Swift speeds the time, a course of beauteous
Sixty, virtue, dignity, affection, love!
Such mark the monarch's court, and make our palace
So snug English—homes and castles too.

How swiftly speed the months!
With merry laden!

With judgment also—thus high Heaven decrees,
The nations sorely tried; oppression, strong;
And wars and warfare run their spreading fear
In councils sage and cabinets of power.

And yet amid the evils of the age,
Our island home is kept in quietness:
The poor, unblest, her rich men liberal—
The refuge still of men oppressed—the friend
Of truth, of commerce, and of world-wide peace!

How swift the months have sped!
The merry bells,

The cannon's roar, the trumpet's thrilling blast,
Processions gay, the song, the feast, the mirth,
The happy holiday of late June March,
Were freshly cherished still in memory,
When, lo! o'er Britain flashes far and wide,
On mystic lightning's tell tale wires—

"A Prince is born! it lives! its mother lives!"
Our cities, towns, and hamlets catch the news.

At once the bells triumphant peal again,
Clang forth all jubilant, while myriads learn—
"A Prince is born! it lives! its mother lives!"

That hour, ten thousand thousand hearts exclaim,
In prayer sublimely real, simple—
"God save the Prince! God save our Alexandra!
God save the Father! and God save the Queen!"

Welcome, young Prince—a sire's, a mother's joy,
Our Sovereign Lady's boast, a nation's hope!

Welcome! and, sooth, may every princely grace
(The type our ever-mourning, departed Albert)
Be thine, dear child. May health and life and
honour—

A Prince-like honour, and a Christian's lion—
Crown all thy days and make them glorious,
Thy parents' solace and thy country's safeguard.

WILLIAM BYROM, Liverpool.

German Confederation.

The German Confederation contains a population of 45,013,034 inhabitants, and has also the command, for all purposes in which it is anything less unanimous, of the 28,000,000 of non-German subjects of Austria and Prussia. Directly or indirectly it can control the services of upwards of 70,000,000 of subjects or allies for almost any object on which the German people and Governments are tolerably well agreed. The army of the Confederation amounts to 553,028 men and can easily be raised to a million by the co-operation of Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, and the smaller States. So vast a population, possessed of such numerous and gallant armies, and occupying a position in the centre of Europe, would, if thoroughly united, be the first power in Europe, and would overrun, with very little trouble, a small State like Denmark, and that in defiance of all foreign aid. But the divisions and jealousies of the German Confederation are so deep and incurable as to render that body a very inefficient instrument even for the purposes of national defence, and so feeble for purposes of attack as to give even Denmark, with its poor 2,000,000 of Danish inhabitants, a fair chance of success in a contest with the German Confederation.

So incurable are the divisions of the German Confederation, that no sooner is one source of discord closed than another bursts open. The permanent cause of the weakness of the Confederation is the jealousy of the two great German States, Austria and Prussia. The Austrian Government, with its 36,000,000 of subjects, its Imperial dignity, and its connection with the ancient emperors of Germany, can scarcely endure the equality and still less the superiority sometimes asserted by Prussia. On the other hand, Prussia, with its 18,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 14,000,000 are German, its leadership amongst the Protestant Powers of Germany, and the spirit and enterprise of its people, is still more impatient of the ascendancy of Austria. This quality, as it is called, in the leadership of the German Confederation, is the permanent cause of the divisions and the weakness of the Confederation. But, for the first time for many years, Austria and Prussia are agreed on the great national question, namely, that of the policy to be adopted towards Denmark; and

under these circumstances Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Baden, and others of the smaller States, entirely separate themselves from both Austria and Prussia, form a combination of their own, outvote the two great Powers at the Diet of the Confederation, and inaugurate a new national policy. The result is that Austria and Prussia declare that they will no longer act along with the smaller Powers of Germany in this matter, but will act for themselves, as members of the great union of five nations—France, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia—which attempted to settle this question in 1852, and will have to complete the settlement in 1864.

The separation of Austria and Prussia from the smaller German Powers deprives the Danish dispute of the greater part of its importance; for even if the smaller German States force on a collision with Denmark, it will soon be brought to a close. The Danes, in their strongly fortified positions, are quite able to hold their ground against the Austrians, Hanoverians, and Saxons, and by acting purely on the defensive will deprive Austria and Prussia of all excuse for interfering in the fray.—*Liverpool Mercury.*

The Real Object of the Danes, the Germans, and the Neutral Powers.

As far as we are able to judge, the real objects at which the Danes, the German Confederation, the Governments of Austria and Prussia, and the Governments of England, France, and Russia, are aiming at the present moment are as follows:—

The Danes are struggling to maintain the integrity and independence of their country, and as men engaged in such a struggle are entitled to the warm sympathy of all independent nations. Unfortunately, however, they are also struggling to escape from the obligation of some very unpleasant engagements which were forced upon them ten or twelve years ago, at a time of great national difficulty. The wish of the Danes to unite Schleswig with Denmark under one Parliament to effect the union of the Parliaments of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and it is difficult to see how Denmark is to exist as an independent State without that union. But two things were necessary in bringing about the union of England and Scotland, and afterwards of Ireland, namely, the agreement of the Parliaments of the two countries. This was at last obtained, but only after great difficulties, after bloody wars and insurrections, and after the employment of an enormous amount of bribery and corruption. Unfortunately the Danes have not been able up to the present time to obtain the assent of the people of Schleswig to the union which the late King of Denmark decreed, and without that consent the union, however desirable, is wanting in legality.

This would under ordinary circumstances have been merely a matter of arrangement between the Danish Government and the Schleswigers, but unfortunately the late King of Denmark allowed himself to be persuaded or frightened into a pledge, on behalf of the Danish Government, that no legislative union should be effected between Denmark and Schleswig. The Danes, feeling the enormous difficulties of this engagement, wish to escape from it, but the Germans demand their "pound of flesh," and are prepared to take it by force.

The German Confederation is not satisfied with insisting on the perpetual disunion of the Danish monarchy. It also avails itself of this dispute to put forward the claim of a German Prince to absorb one half the territory and one half the subjects of Denmark. The Danes are determined to fight to the last rather than submit to the dismemberment of the monarchy; and it is understood that the British Government is determined to stand by the Danes at all risks if any such dismemberment should be attempted.

The Governments of Austria and Prussia, whatever their secret feelings may be, profess to have a totally different object in view from that of dismemberment. They insist that the Danish Government shall give up the proposed legislative union of Denmark and Schleswig, but profess to be altogether opposed to the dismemberment of the Danish monarchy. Austria and Prussia are themselves pained by a double danger. They must do something to pacify the fiercely excited feelings of their own German subjects and to maintain their position as leaders of the whole German nation; but they will not willingly rush into a war for the dismemberment of Denmark at the risk of being also involved in a war with England and probably with France. The Emperor of the French has distinctly warned the Germans that any attempt to dismember Denmark will excite an angry feeling in France against Germany and sympathy with the Danes, and it is perfectly well known that the English Government entertains the same feeling still more strongly. At the present moment a struggle between the Danes and the Austrians and the Prussians

seems almost inevitable, but it will not necessarily lead to a war in which England will take part unless Austria and Prussia should attempt to dismember the Danish territory. We believe that the Austrian and Prussian Governments know too well how completely such a war would place them at the mercy of France to enter upon it.

The course which the English Government has taken during the whole of this dispute has been to urge the Danes to fulfil all their engagements respecting Schleswig, and, on the other hand, to urge the Germans not to raise any new questions. A new question having arisen accidentally, owing to the extinction of the old line of the Danish kings and the claims of the house of Augustenburg, the object of the English Government has been to have it referred to the great Powers of Europe.—*Liverpool Mercury.*

Twenty Minutes Too Late.

I am an old man now, and have retired from the profession; but at the time when the incident I am about to relate occurred, I had just entered it, and was going the circuit for the second time. Through the kindness of a well known member of the circuit who had conceived a liking for me, I was entrusted with two or three briefs on my first journey; and in consequence of one of these I met with an old gentleman named Dowding, living in Gloucester. The case in which I was concerned for him was a suit to recover a debt contracted by his son then under age, and though the amount sought to be recovered was not large, yet, if he had been condemned to pay it, it would lead to the prosecution of similar claims by other tradesmen which would have ruined him. Tho' there is always a natural tendency on the part of a jury of tradesmen to give effect to the claim of a brother-tradesman, I was fortunate enough to get a verdict in favor of my client. A case of this kind is one not to be remembered long, even by a newly-fledged barrister, accompanied, though it was, by the kind congratulations of some members of the circuit on my speech; and until I returned to Gloucester, I had forgotten all about Mr. Dowding.

Having a relative at Longhope, I went there the day before the assizes began, and being tired I went straight to the lodgings I had engaged, with the intention of going to bed early. My lodgings were the same I had occupied the preceding assizes; and when I reached them, I found a white-haired old gentleman waiting for me, whom I had some difficulty at first in recognizing as my old client, Mr. Dowding. The poor man began to cry as soon as he saw me; and this, with his evident feebleness—for he failed in several attempts he made to rise from his chair to meet me—excited my sympathy for his distress so strongly, that my fatigue was forgotten, and I felt eager to hear what had caused it. Wishing to come to the point as soon as possible, I said: "I am afraid your son is in some way the cause of your distress."

"Yes, my dear young friend, he is; but my poor boy is innocent of the crime they charge him with. I am sure he is—I trust in God he is."

"You seem to have a doubt yourself on the point. What is the charge? Is he in prison, and do you want me to defend him?"

"That is what I have come here to ask you to do."

"Very well. What is he charged with?"

"A most dreadful crime; for which, if he is convicted, he will certainly be executed."

Here he broke down again, and burst into a terrible fit of crying and sobbing, during which I could understand little of what he tried to say beyond the words mother, sister, broken-hearted, shame, disgrace, and so on. Seeing that he held in his hand a roll of paper, I thought it probable that this would give me the information I wanted; I therefore took it from him, and opened it.

"Yes," said he, "you will find it all there, I made him write it, and give it to me, that it might be ready for you when you arrived. Here is also an order that will admit you to his cell as early as you like in the morning."

"Thank you. How do you propose to get home?"

"I shall walk. I feel better now that I have seen you."

I went with him to the street door, shook hands, and then went back to my room to read his son's statement. Thus it ran:

"On the evening of the 21st I met Esther Leversedge, at the corner of Copley's Lane, and we walked down by the farm and across the fields to her house. I had often met her before, but had never gone home with her, on account of her father, who had a bad name in the neighborhood, owing to his idleness and bad disposition. Till this evening, I had resolutely refused her invitations to get foot in her house; but when we reached it, she assured me so positively that her fa-

ther was out, and would not return till late, that I let myself be persuaded to go in and sit down a little while. When I entered I fully intended to stay only a few minutes; but the time flew so rapidly that it was between ten and eleven o'clock when I got up to go. I was saying good bye to Esther, when we heard the garden wicket fall to, and she directly said it was her father. She was as fearful of the consequences if he saw me there as I was, or at least she seemed to be. There was no way of leaving the house without meeting him, and if I had had time to think, I should have left by that way, and met him in the open air; but before I could think of myself, Esther had opened the back door and pushed me into the wood-house, telling me that her father was sure to go to bed directly, and then she would let me out. As soon as I was left alone, I felt angry and vexed that I had suffered myself to be shut in; but being there, I thought it would only be staying a few minutes, and then I could get away without exposing her to her father's anger. There was a heap of faggots in the shed, and I got up on the top of these to be more out of the way in case he should come there for anything. A minute or two afterwards he came with a light and pulled a tub from one corner, and then took a pail and went outside and brought it back full of water. He had a smock frock on, very white and clean, which he stripped off, and laid on the wood, and underneath this he wore a dark fustian coat. He first poured the water into the tub, and then drew out of his coat-pocket a hammer, the barrel of a gun and then the stock. The gun and stock he laid on one side, the hammer he threw into the tub, and then took off his coat, and put that into the water too, and began washing it. From where I was crouching, I could distinctly see that the water became red as he washed; and the stain on his hands which I thought was dirt, changed to a bright red before being washed off altogether.

Terrified by what I saw, and knowing that I had no right to be where I was, I tried to draw back further into the darkness, and in doing this I made a slight noise which caused him to look up. He saw me directly and the surprise seemed to deprive him of his faculties for an instant, but this was only momentary, for before I could offer any explanation, he caught up a hatchet used in chopping the wood, and began climbing towards me with such a savage expression in his face that I knew he meant to murder me.

I shouted for Esther, knowing that I could expect help from no other person, there being no cottage near, and she rushed in and caught her father by the arm. He tried all he could to shake her off by means of blows and force, but she held him so tightly that, if she had caught his right arm instead of his left, I should have had time to come to her assistance; as it was, I could not approach him without the certainty of being cut down. I thought her prayers had some effect upon him, and I tried to increase this by promising not to say a word of what I had seen. He considered for a minute, then threw the hatchet into a corner and told me to come down. I did as he bade me, supposing he meant to let me go; but the moment I put my foot on the ground, he struck me several blows in the face, and then dragged me into his daughter's bedroom and locked me in, and left me there about half an hour. When he came to fetch me out, he had his hat on and his white smock frock. He told me to come with him. My face was all bloody, and being in the dark all this time, it run down on the front of my clothes without my knowing it. I thought he was going to take me to my father; and being afraid of frightening my mother and sisters, I begged him at least to let me wash my face and hands, which he refused with many oaths; and taking hold of me by the arm, he made me go with him across the fields to the London road.

After walking along this road in the direction of Gloucester four or five hundred yards, we came to a part of it which had on one side a narrow strip of land, on which a few trees grew, and a little underwood. Leversedge walked in haste, still holding me by the arm, and searched about for a few minutes; I was horrified to find that what he was looking for was a dead body. The dress showed it was the body of a laboring man, apparently a waggoner, for there was a long whip lying near him, such as they use. I could see the white face and half closed eyes which reflected the moonlight, but I could not recognise it, though I felt sure I had seen it before. Leaving the body where it lay, Leversedge went on with me in the direction of Gloucester, and I now began to form an idea of what he intended to do with me. Just after we got into the city we came up with a carrier's waggon. The horses were standing still, and I heard the people wondering what had become of the driver. Leversedge pushed me into the midst of them and said: "You will never see the driver any more, but here is his murderer."

The people shrunk away from us, but I was recognized directly. I protested as earnestly as I could that I was innocent, and charged those present to the appearance of my clothes, and contrasted them with his own, so that none seemed to believe what I said, and four of them fetched the constable, who locked me up. I was taken before the justice, and they committed me to prison, to take my trial at the assizes for the murder of the waggoner."

I was myself disposed to accept the prisoner's statement in spite of its improbabilities, but it was quite clear that the only chance of getting a jury to do so was by producing Esther Leversedge in court, and her giving evidence in support of it. I turned over the deposition again and again, but I could not find hers among them; and on enquiring about the omission, I learned that her attendance at the examination before the justice had not been enforced, and consequently she had not been examined at all.

I sent for the constable into whose custody Dowding had been given, and according to him, nobody who had seen the two men on the night of the murder had any doubt about the prisoner's guilt. He owed money to nearly every tradesman in town, and he knew as well as everybody else, that the carrier was in the habit of bringing money from London to people in Gloucester; it was therefore natural that he should try to get it by robbery and violence. I directed this official to provide for the attendance of Esther Leversedge at the trial, promising him a reasonable remuneration for his trouble and expense.

The trial was not likely to come on before the afternoon of the succeeding day; but the duration of a trial can never be reckoned on with any degree of certainty, and it so happened that Dowding's case was called on three or four hours sooner than was expected. I had heard nothing of Esther Leversedge, and I was about to make application for the postponement of the trial till the next assizes on account of the absence of the only person who could give evidence in favour of the prisoner, when I caught sight of the constable I had sent in search of her. He nodded in reply to my look, and at the same time placed a slip of paper in my hand, on which was written, "I have got her."

The trial went on, and as it proceeded, it was not difficult to see that the evidence for the prosecution was telling fearfully against the prisoner, in the opinions of the jurymen. I cross-examined Leversedge with such severity that even the judge seemed to think I was abusing the privilege of counsel, but the fellow had too long a time to think over his tale to be shaken now. The case for the prosecution was soon closed, and that for the defence occupied the court but a very little while. All that I had to urge was the statement made by the prisoner previous to his commitment, the notoriously bad character of the principal witness, and the greater probability that a man of his strength and ferocity was the murderer than that the crime was committed by a comparatively weak youth like the prisoner at the bar, without accomplices, and without, so far as had been ascertained, even a weapon.

There was the usual stir and excitement in the court when an interesting witness is called, when Esther Leversedge took her place in the witness box. I think I was never more surprised at the personal appearance of anybody. She was a bold, coarse looking woman, considerably older than the prisoner, who, as I have said, was of a very prepossessing appearance, and with that degree of refinement in the expression of his countenance which indicates a man of some education. When called upon to give her evidence, she declared she had none to give. I questioned her on the prisoner's statement, but she utterly denied that she had met him on the night in question, or, in short, that there was one word of truth in what he had said respecting her. I was completely astounded at finding that I had only called a witness to strengthen the case against my client, and I looked at him annoyed and angry that he should have deceived me with such falsehoods; but there was an expression of such intense astonishment in his face, that I wanted no further evidence to prove to me that his tale was true. By a gesture I called the attention of the Jury to this, and after asking the witness a few more questions, with the view of eliciting from her that she made these denials out of regard for or through fear of her father, and failing to get satisfactory answers, I dismissed her.

I need not describe the remainder of what took place. The summing up of the judge showed that he was not entirely without doubt as to the prisoner's guilt; but when the jury had given a verdict of guilty, he told them previous to condemnation that he concurred in their verdict, and ordered the accused for execution with the usual formalities.

(Continued on Fourth Page.)

