

THE OLD SONGS.

These ragtime songs they're singin' now may be the proper thing. But they don't hit me like the songs you youngsters are used to sing.

RAILROADING BY WATER.

Last week the writer met an old-time railway friend in Kansas City, Mo., who resembled the ghost of a departed time, for he was believed to be dead for the past twenty-five years.

"You are only mistaken a little bit. I am Robert Benjamin, general roadmaster of the P. D. & Q. Railway, and you are thinking of Ben Benjamin, the old toper, who died in Lafayette, Indiana, a long time ago. Come up to the Centropolis and take dinner with me, and I will tell you all about my death and resurrection."

"After dinner, he immediately led me to his room, when I remarked: 'No preliminaries now; but pull the throttle wide open, for I'm dying to know all about your reformation and how it happens that you are not dead.'"

"Well, the reason that I am not dead is due entirely to a merciful God and my determination to reform, for, as you know, I have sounded the lowest base string of humbleness. Several evenings after you saw me suffering with the tremens the last time, I was sitting in a main street saloon and imagined I was dying for a drink of rum. The proprietor arose to close up for the night, and as I staggered for the door, he remarked to a wealthy patron who had not yet hit the rocky road: 'There goes a poor drunken fool who will be dead inside of two months.'"

"I was dying to curse God and die! My intense suffering partially subsided and I began to wonder why I had suffered through all this misery years. 'Must I continue to suffer on, and what would become of mother if I were dead? I knew she would go broken-hearted to a pauper's grave over the hill to the poorhouse. 'Never while God lives, I wailed to the night winds as I went reeling home to my angel mother and found her waiting and watching for me. 'The moment I entered our little dwelling, called home, she rose up in bed saying so kindly: 'Is that you, Robert? 'Yes, mother, it is your poor drunken boy; but I have drank my last glass, mother—I have drank my last glass. 'Mother believed I was telling the truth and was out of bed in a moment and putting an old battered coffee pot on the stove, saying: 'I will make you a good cup of hot coffee, and I know you will feel better. 'Oh, woman! woman! The world may print volumes on the heroes of San Juan Hill, but they should forever remain silent in thy presence! Thou goes to battle daily—not at the roll of the stirring drum and the trumpet that sings of fame—but to fight to the last for thy darling boy. Mother bathed my burning brow the same as when I was a child, and eagerly inquired: 'Yes, mother; God helping me, be my time here on earth long or short, I will never touch the accursed stuff again! 'She was on her knees all night and God bearkened. I have never drunk a drop of intoxicating liquor from that hour, but thickest critical points in my career was yet to come.

see the roadmaster of the P. D. & Q. Railway, who was expected in that morning on the pay car, and when it rolled into the depot I would surely have run away without speaking to him, when I happened to think of mother. I braced up and spoke to him; told him I was fast broke and out of a job, but would serve him faithfully and that I had no reputation to make as a railway man. He was an old-time Irishman and I imagined that he was a regular old chaw, but God bless his old heart, he was a first-class trackman and proved the best friend I ever had. He spoke kindly to me and said he needed a foreman and would give me a trial the next day when he had time to take me out on the road. The next morning proved the test of my life. The old man appeared on the platform a few minutes before the train was due to leave, and said: 'This is a terrible cold morning, let's step across Union Avenue to the Blossom House and take something to keep us warm.' 'Please excuse me, Mr. C., I don't care for anything; you step across and get your drink, and I will stay right here until you return,' I replied. 'What's the matter with you this cold morning; come on and have something; you are not a Prohibitionist, are you? 'I saw I was in for it and blurted out: 'Mr. C., I am as near a Prohibitionist as anything you could mention. I have drank more liquor than ever you have, but I can't drink and be a man. As I told you before, I have no reputation to make as a railway man, but if you give me a section to-day I will surely run it by water.' 'The old man didn't like it, and said I must be a funny railway man to refuse a drink on a day like this, and we boarded the train as she was pulling out. We dropped off at a little station some thirty miles from Kansas City, when the old man showed me around and gave me a section. The old man left on the next train, when I called the men up to the hand-car, and said: 'Men, I have been given charge over this section by Mr. C., and I propose to run it by water. I am called a good trackman, but if you can't work without drinking liquor you had better quit now, for I won't work a drunken gang of men.' 'The men stood around talking the matter over for a few moments, when one approached and said: 'It's pretty tough, boss, but we will try it and do the best we can.' 'That's all right,' I replied, 'we are sure to win.' 'The road was new; we were putting in rock ballast, and I don't believe there was a man in old Missouri could show me. I never left my men for an hour, and in the course of three months the old man began to come around quite frequently and notice my work, and he remarked to the men one day: 'That Prohibitionist is the best trackman on the road.' 'The men soon became reconciled to doing without their whiskey and worked like Trojans. They liked my style of putting up track, for I understood my business and didn't have them lifting against each other from morning till night. I had been putting in ballast for a year, when one morning the old man came rolling out from the city on a hand-car, and calling me to one side, inquired: 'Benjamin, did you ever run a yard? 'Yes, sir; I ran a large yard for several years. 'Well, I may have to send you to Kansas City. It is the best job I've got, pays \$75 per month, and my train, in-law, is running it at the present time, but I want to let him go or eventually lose my job. He is drunk half the time and I can't trust him. There are older men on the road who are entitled to this job, but you are the only foreman on the road who doesn't drink, and that yard must be run by water. There is a bad wreck down there now, and half the men are laying off drunk. Get on the car with me and come right in and look it over and see what you can do, for my job is in danger.' 'The men gathered around the old man, and said: 'Mr. C., if Bob goes we'd like to go along; we've become used to his way of working, and we don't believe he can get along without us.' 'The old man looked away across the big Muddy for a moment, then turning to me he said: 'You poor old ex-whiskey soaks, I don't blame you. Mr. Benjamin has made men out of you, and I will let you all come in just as soon as he gets things running by water.' 'The men gave a cheer and grabbed up their No. 2 Ames shovels. I couldn't tell you in a week how I worked and suffered for the first year to redeem that yard. At the end of two years it was in first-class condition, and most of the men were strictly temperate. Some ten years ago the old man went out with a wreck train one morning to pick up a wreck some thirty miles from the city, and through the misunderstanding of orders on account of a drunken operator, the work train met the fast freight on a high culvert. Some three or four of the work train men were killed, and the old man was found under the tank bruised and bleeding internally. I arrived at the wreck ten minutes before the old man died. He was propped up with cabbage onions and could scarcely articulate, but he knew me, and whispered: 'Benjamin, old man, I'm done for; this train was run by rum!' 'Three hours later I received a dispatch calling me to the general offices in Kansas City, where the superintendent handed me the following letter: 'To all whom it may concern: 'Mr. Robert Benjamin has been appointed roadmaster of the Third Division of the P. D. & Q. Railway, to take effect immediately. His orders must be obeyed accordingly. 'O. J. C. General Superintendent, P. D. & Q. Railway, Kansas City, Mo.' 'I've been roadmaster now for ten long years; mother has grown to be quite a little girl again, and I continue to run my division by water.' His eyes were swimming in tears, and as he arose to go he gave me a kindly smile, saying: 'We never miss the water till the well runs dry.'—Argentine Republic.

Thermometer at 90 Below. 'The coldest place on earth, inhabited by man is Verkhoyansk, above the arctic circle, in northeastern Siberia. The thermometer there drops to 90 degrees below zero in January, but sometimes rises to 26 above zero in the shade in July, dropping, however, to the freezing point on the warmest summer nights. The hottest place in the world is the interior of the great Sahara desert, in Africa, where the thermometer rises to 122 degrees. The wettest place is Greytown, Nicaragua, where the mean annual rainfall is 260 inches. The place of least rain is Port Nolloth in southern Africa, where less than an inch sometimes falls in a year.'

Girl Buys the Alamo.

Owner to be Reimbursed. Legislature Prepared to Approxiate \$75,000 to Save Scenery of Famous Fight.

To save the Alamo from desecration and rescue the historic ground from the greed of trade, a Texas girl—Miss Clara Driscoll—has spent \$75,000. Her action has so stirred the hearts of the people of Texas that a movement is under way to have the State reimburse her and turn the property over to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The recent Democratic State convention made the purchase of the Alamo a plank in its platform and the legislature is almost certain to pass such a bill by unanimous vote, says the Chicago Chronicle.

The people of Texas have been sadly negligent of their most precious relics. There is nothing in ancient or modern history to surpass the story of the Alamo, and considering the number of men engaged there probably was no more important battle fought in the nineteenth century than that of San Jacinto. Yet only the chapel of the Alamo belongs to the State, and there is practically nothing to mark the battlefield of San Jacinto, for it has been used as farm land for many years.

Of the original buildings only the chapel remains standing. The monastery fell to pieces long ago, and on the ground it occupied a grocery store stands to-day. Even the chapel for many years was used as a market. The State was prevailed upon to buy the Alamo as a whole for the saving of Miss Driscoll. Whether the Alamo property will pass the Legislature or not, the grocery store will come down and the hotel there will not be erected. In their place will be a replica of the old monastery, built on the ancient ruins, to serve as a Valhalla for Texas.

For years the Daughters of the Republic, descendants of the men who made the fight for Texas independence, have had vague hopes of some day seeing the Alamo saved for worthier purposes than it was put to, but the movement they started made little headway. Less than two years ago Miss Driscoll, returning home after a two years' trip abroad, returned to scenes of Europe and the East, was deeply impressed by the desecration of the historic scenes of her own country and her own State. She wrote a spirited article calling for a patriotic effort to restore the Alamo and it made such a stir throughout the State that the Daughters of the Republic sent a committee to her to see if she would head the work. She consented and a year ago last April formed the Alamo mission fund organization, of which she herself was president and treasurer.

Her work was only begun. The owner of the property had placed a valuation of \$75,000 on his land, a sum far beyond the organization or the Daughters of the Republic could command. But Miss Driscoll was not daunted. Without allowing her plan to be known, she went to the owner and asked for an option for the property. He asked \$5,000 for an option for a year, but Miss Driscoll wanted time to get her movement under way and finally paid \$500 down for an option of 30 days.

Several business men of San Antonio had heard of her attempts to obtain the mission and realized its possibilities as a business venture. They offered Miss Driscoll \$10,000 for the option for which she paid \$500 one month before, urging on her the consideration that a hotel on the famous site would be a splendid thing for the city of San Antonio.

On can find other sites for the finest hotel ever built, she said in rejecting their offer, 'but there is only one Alamo in the world.' But the 30-day option was running out and a few more hours would see it pass from her control. Of public funds there was still none. So Miss Driscoll drew her personal check for \$4,500 and thus had her amount for the full year. It was agreed that at the end of the year an additional \$30,000 was to be paid, and two short notes given for \$25,000 each.

Society took kindly to Miss Driscoll's plan, but the necessary funds accumulated slowly. When the year drew to a close it was found that only \$3,000 had been raised—not enough to pay Miss Driscoll the money she had advanced to secure the option. The women associated with Miss Driscoll were helpless. It looked as though all the money and all the effort was to be wasted. Miss Driscoll agreed with them it was too bad, and tried to comfort them by saying they had done their best and that posterity some day would recognize the courage and persistency of their efforts. Those who had labored hardest for the success of the project accepted the consolation with the best grace they could, and metaphorically speaking, turned their faces to the wall. It was not until the day after the year's option had expired that they learned to their surprised delight, that Miss Driscoll had added \$17,000 of her own money to the \$3,000 raised by them, had guaranteed the payment of the two notes aggregating \$50,000 and had saved the Alamo for Texas. It was last April that Miss Driscoll took title to the property, and since then, by taking up both the outstanding notes, she has made its preservation absolutely sure.

the Daughters of the Republic, and the society will at once set to work on the task of rebuilding the old monastery. The chapel is in a state of excellent preservation, but of the rest little but ruins or the old walls remain standing. Much of the original stonework, however, still litters the ground and will be used as far as possible in the reconstruction of the place into its original form.

Game and Fish Legislation.

A few days ago representatives of the leading organizations throughout the State interested in the protection of game and fish, met in conference at the rooms of the State Fisheries department in Harrisburg, to consider new legislation now pending in the general assembly. Frank representatives of the Blair county branch of the League of American Sportsmen who were present and took a prominent part in the proceedings of the session, the following facts were learned as to the result of the convention:

One of the most important matters of local interest which engaged the attention of the convention was the consideration of the bill drawn by Hon. W. F. Meahan, commissioner of fisheries, designed to check and remove the constantly growing menace of stream pollution by certain industries. The proposed bill, while conservative and not unduly drastic in its measures, was, after careful consideration by the convention, pronounced to be entirely effective, and received the enthusiastic endorsement of the delegates and their personal pledges to use every possible effort to secure its passage. Other legislation, designed to meet and remove existing weaknesses in the fish law of 1901, was also carefully considered and unanimously endorsed.

Urgent protests which were made before the State Game Commission by the delegates, against a number of the proposed changes in the present game law, and especially the enlargement and changing of the existing season on certain game animals and birds, were so far effective, that at a meeting of the senate game committee during the afternoon, the objection, five cents, nickel, and one cent for bronze. A person may buy a proof set of gold coins for the Mint for \$38.50 and a proof set of silver and minor coins for \$1.50. When the business of the mints is slack, medals may be struck from the dies furnished by individuals, public institutions and incorporated societies, at charges sufficient to cover the cost of the operation and the value of the metal.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Sung at Chopin's Deathbed.

As the great Chopin lay dying his soul was ushered out by the song of the beautiful Countess Delphine Potocka, who had been his dearest confidante and friend. The romance of their friendship, one of the sweetest in history, is related by Gustav Kobbe in the *Delicieux*. The last struggle in the life of the composer has often been described, and has been painted by Barrios, but it is so touching that one may well read another version of it. Mr. Kobbe writes:

'Then came what is, perhaps, the most touching scene that has been handed down to us from the lives of the great composers. When Delphine entered what was soon to be the death chamber, Chopin's sister Louise, and a few of his most intimate friends were gathered there. She took her place by Louise. When the dying man opened his eyes and saw her standing at the foot of his bed—all, slight, draped in white, resembling a beautiful angel, and mingling her tears with those of Louise—his lips moved and those nearest him, heaving over to catch his words, heard him ask that she would sing. 'Mastering her emotion by a strong effort of the will, she sang in a voice of bell-like purity the canticle to the Virgin attributed to Stradella—sang it so devoutly, so tenderly that the dying man, 'artist and lover of the beautiful to the very last, whispered in ecstasy: 'How exquisite! Again, again! 'Once more she sang—this time a psalm by Marcello. It was the hallowed hour of twilight. The dying day draped the scene in its mysterious shadows. Those at the bedside had sunk noiselessly on their seats with those of Louise's accompaniment of sobe floated the voice of Delphine like a melody from Heaven.'

Giant Stone on His Grave.

After a long search over the wilds of Dartmoor, a monolith—12 feet long, 4 feet wide, 2 feet 6 inches in thickness, and weighing six tons—which has defied the effacing fingers of time and tempest, has been found to stand at the head of Sir H. M. Stanley's grave at Pirbright.

Lady Stanley desired to obtain a stone 'fashioned by the ages, tempered and colored by time, and untouched by man.' Such a stone was discovered on a farm, lying recumbent on the borders of a natural roadway. Three of its faces had been exposed for uncounted generations.

The difficulties of its removal from Devonshire were considerable, but they were eventually overcome, and it now stands in the quiet village churchyard, a fitting tribute to the memory of the great explorer.

The inscription bears not only the name so familiar to Englishmen, but the words 'Bona Matari' ('the rock breaker') indicate the title he bore in Darkest Africa.

State Rich in Radium.

The astounding statement is made by Prof. John W. Scott, formerly a resident of Altoona, but now of Lloydsville, that millions of tons of the priceless radium exist in Blair county, and overlap into Centre and Huntingdon counties, and that in the future this will be a source of tremendous wealth to the people here.

Old and New Coins.

Interesting Facts About the Coinage at the Different Mints.

The director of the Mint is called on to answer such a wide range of questions concerning the values of old and new coins and medals that he has found it necessary to issue circulars covering matters of this sort. They tell some interesting questions facts. It appears that the Mint does not buy old coins or paper money, except some rare Colonial coins in fine condition, which are desired for the Mint cabinet. Minted or undercurrent United States gold and silver coin is purchased as bullion. The Mint has no pattern pieces for sale. The Government pays no premium for the return of its old coins or paper money. New coins cannot be struck until authorized by an act of Congress. The Mint supplies United States coins only and not of any past date. The \$50 gold piece and the half-dollar and quarter-dollar pieces in gold were struck by private parties on the California coast during the '49 period, and not by the United States Government.

The coinage of the following coins ceased in the year named: Half and one cent, copper, in 1857; one cent, nickel, 1864; half dime and three cents, silver, and two cents, bronze, in 1872; twenty cents, silver, 1878; trade dollars, 1893; one dollar and three dollars, gold, and three cents, nickel, in 1899. The Columbian half-dollar was coined in 1892, and the Isabella quarter, in 1893. The Lafayette dollar was struck in 1893. The date on the coin (1900) being that of the unveiling of the memorial.

There are certain markings on every United States coin that enable the place of its coinage to be located. Those struck at the Philadelphia Mint have no Mint mark, but those struck at all other Mints are distinguished by a small letter on the reverse, near the bottom of the same high office. For Charlotte, N. C., discontinued in 1833; D for Dahlonega, Ga., discontinued in 1861; G for New Orleans, and S for San Francisco. The only coins of the United States now authorized by law are: In gold, double eagle, eagle, half eagle, quarter eagle; in silver, half-dollar, quarter-dollar, and dime; in bronze, five cents, nickel, and one cent for proof sets. A person may buy a proof set of gold coins for the Mint for \$38.50 and a proof set of silver and minor coins for \$1.50. When the business of the mints is slack, medals may be struck from the dies furnished by individuals, public institutions and incorporated societies, at charges sufficient to cover the cost of the operation and the value of the metal.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Want a Chance?

Assembly of the Nobles of St. Petersburg Address Emperor Nicholas. Assure Him of Loyalty.

ST. PETERSBURG, February 14.—The assembly of the nobles of St. Petersburg, today adopted an address to Emperor Nicholas congratulating him on the birth of the heir to the throne and assuring him of the confidence of the nation. The address asserts that the union between the autocratic monarch and the nation is unshakable; by recent events the nation is abroad; it points out that officials and statesmen do not solve all the questions and begs his majesty to permit representatives of the whole people participating in the discussion and legislation on government measures, and says:

'We have met in troubled times. Foes are attacking us, their aim being to bring Russia to a shameful fate, and bring from her her distant territories and bring to naught the system of government which has been sanctioned for centuries. A way out of the difficulties must be found. We realize that every word addressed by your majesty in this painful hour is all weighted with grave responsibility. We are all witnesses to your majesty's efforts to secure the welfare of Russia. The decree of December 25 revived the hopes of your subjects, who saw therein the true salvation of the fatherland. This is not the first time dark clouds have lowered over Russia; but despite former efforts to shake the basis of the government the country became stronger and advanced proudly and peacefully along the path of progress. From union along an autocratic monarch and a devoted nation Russia has ever derived strength which neither the foreign foe nor trouble at home could exhaust.

'The nobility of St. Petersburg are convinced that this union is unshakable and must prevail. With the aid of God, your valiant troops and the noble efforts of their lives for the emperor and the fatherland, will crown the Russian arms with fresh glory, and troubles at home will cease.

'The whole nation awaits with eagerness the fulfillment of the imperial will, but officials and statesmen, of whatever rank and grade, cannot solve all the questions of the fatherland. Your forefathers hearkened unto the voice of Russians elected by the nation, and this custom, so far from weakening, strengthened the autocracy and aided it to attain its present greatness.

'Order now that elected representatives of the country may raise their voices to the throne and participate, in accordance with your sovereign direction in legislation and discussion of governmental measures. The nobles of St. Petersburg sincerely believe that, provided union of the throne and nation is supported by confidence on the part of the emperor, internal troubles will vanish and that all Russia will rise and serve the sovereign faithfully for the salvation of the country and the confusion of its enemies.'

The Pattison Family Memorial.

It was announced recently by the committee having charge of the Robert E. Pattison Fund that the contributions, now amounting to \$20,112, have been turned over to the Equitable Trust Company, as trustee for the wife and family of the former Governor of Pennsylvania, and that Mrs. Pattison asks to express her thanks to all the contributors.

Mrs. Pattison is to receive the income of the fund during her life, and portions of the principal are to be paid to her only upon her annual demand. Upon her death the money then remaining is to be paid over to the children, Miss Lavinia R. Pattison and Robert E. Pattison, Jr., a minor.

That was the Trouble. Cyril: 'You may spurn me, cruel one, but remember, I shall not always be a clerk at \$9 a week.' Marie: 'That's just the trouble. You may lose your job at any time.'

That New Bishop.

Inasmuch as the Rev. James Henry Darlington, D. D., of Brooklyn, who last week was elected Bishop of the Harrisburg diocese of the Protestant Episcopal church, will be bishop of all the Episcopal churches in Centre and adjoining counties, the following brief sketch of him will be appropriate at this time, inasmuch as he has announced that he will accept his election and enter upon the work of the bishopric shortly after Easter:

The Rev. James Henry Darlington, D. D., was born in Brooklyn 48 years ago. He was educated at the University of the City of New York and afterwards at Princeton, where he prepared himself for the ministry of the Presbyterian church. His whole professional career has been in the one parish of Christ church, Brooklyn, where he went as assistant in 1881, and succeeded to the rectorship in 1883. He is a preacher of more than average ability, and in the 22 years of his ministry has sent 22 young men of his own parish into the ministry. He is a competent musician and the president of a large musical society, is chaplain of the 47th regiment, is a member of the various clubs in Brooklyn, where his influence among men is marked. He is the author of one book—"Pastor and People," which has been favorably received.

The newly elected Bishop is well thought of by the congregations he has presided over as the following will testify: [Extracts from the speech of the Senior Warden of Christ Church, Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., at the Twentieth Anniversary of the Rev. James Henry Darlington, D. D., Ph. D., having been the Rector of that parish, showing his work there.]

'The confirmation classes have generally been among the largest in the diocese, if not the largest of all. At one time, a few years ago, the annual class numbered 114 members, a congregation in itself. Last year the class numbered 73, many of them adults. There was but one larger class in the city. Dr. Darlington's influence over men has been marked, as has been shown by his membership in various clubs, being President of the Auphion Musical Society for years and also eight years Chaplain of the Forty-seventh Regiment. Our fifth year book, in an article by the Rev. B. Oakley Baldwin, orate of St. Matthew's Church, Manhattan, shows that over twenty-two young men have entered holy orders from our church in twenty years of Dr. Darlington's ministry, being over one a year. There are at least two students preparing now for the same high office. During the past year, also, the Rev. Wm. S. Perry and the Rev. Henry C. Briggs, both lately Dutch Reformed ministers, have entered the church through our rector, being ordained but a few weeks ago to the Diaconate in the Garden City Cathedral.'

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