

FIFTY TO-DAY.

[The following lines written for the Leeds dale (Pa.) "R." are from the pen of Mrs. A. R. James, of New Britain, Pa.]

Fifty to-day! How the years go by Both with cares and joys well strewn. There's an infant's cry, the shout of a boy; And next, a man full grown.

The parents, who guided our childhood's steps, Have long since been laid away; There are children still to brighten our home, But we are the old folks to-day.

Yes, the years go swiftly and silently on; Some full of sorrow and pain; And some, so full of hope and joy They make us young again. "But God is God to the sorrowing, By night as well as by day," And our tears shall be dried forever When he wipeth them all away.

And if another year we see Roll in the ages past, May there be no sad repetitions For joys that could not last; May there be no painful heart throbs For the golden days mispent, Or base ingratitude to God For any mercy sent.

We are getting along to the time of life When childish sports and ways Are only memories of the past— Of early, happier days— We are getting along where the rosy tints Of life are not so bright, Where the "orb of day" has turned to meet The coming hours of night.

For the hours of night will surely come; The sun will sink to rest, But to rise again with a new-born light, Flooding mountain and ocean crest, 'Tis a beautiful sight when the King of day Drops the sable mantle of night, More gorgeous tho', when at midday The monarch is clothed with light; But grander far when the purple tints Soften the crim on his brow, And white, fleecy clouds enhance the scene As they float away in the blue.

So it is with the life that has nobly borne The burden and heat of the day, For the soul has grown purer and fairer to see, Tho' the body has gone to decay. Oh! may it be ours to resemble the sun In his glorious onward way; And the night of our life be the best of our life Tho' we've had a long bright day.

Outwitting the Brigands.

It was on such a morning as we fog-nurtured islanders seldom witness at home, that I stood upon the deck of the good steamer Coumoundorous, watching the nearing shores of the Pireus, which, as all the world knows or should know, is the port of the classic city of Athens. The beautiful unclouded sky; the bright outline of the sun-bathed coast; the air laden with the scent of the distant Hymettus; the far eminence with the grand old Acropolis standing out white and bold in the clear atmosphere; and close at hand the moldering tomb of Themistocles—all combined to arouse such poetic fancies in my mind that I forgot for the moment the prosaic business upon which I had come. The screaming engine of the busy little railway which carries the traveler from the Pireus to Athens, soon reminded me, however, that I was accredited with a mission from a London Greek firm to their friends in the Attic city; and I was soon whirling over the sacred ground.

Where history stives to every road a page! We passed the monuments of those doughty champions of the War of Independence. K. Raisakakis and Miaulis, and many other objects of interest; and after a ride of three or four miles I found myself at my destination.

After a few days I certainly had a very pleasant time of it, the few hours work each day acting only as a stimulus to my varied pleasures; and, having examined the Acropolis and lunched by the fallen pillar of Jupiter, seated myself in the ruins of the Pnyx—whence Demosthenes declaimed and Pericles evolved his plans—I looked around, like Alexander, for more worlds to conquer.

I thereupon consulted my genial but unwashed host, Kyrie Antonio Pericles Pappademetracopoulos—who, although Plato was to him a text-book and the sayings of Socrates as familiar as the story of Tom and Harry to an English schoolboy, was always as dirty as a sweep—upon the propriety of betaking myself to where

The mountains look on Marathon, And Marathon looks on the sea.

For one might as well go to Egypt without visiting the Pyramids, or to Rome without entering St. Peter's, as to "do" Greece and leave Marathon unexplored. And when my host tried to dissuade me by assuring me that a Greek gentleman's ear had been sent a fortnight before by the brigands to his obstinate relatives, to hurry the negotiations for his ransom, it so roused my blood that I vowed I would go if I returned as close cropped as an English terrier. So away we started—myself and Themistocles, the son of mine host, a sallow, unshaven youth, dirtier than his father—mounted upon two high-spirited donkeys, our revolvers well primed and our commissariat well stocked.

"Adios Kyrie!" shouted my I can named host as we cantered off. "Never fear," I replied, waving my revolver defiantly, and feeling that I should be greatly disappointed if the rascals did not show themselves.

On we went, enjoying the scenery and holding a hybrid conversation—he in broken English and I in sadly mutilated Greek—until in the excitement of the ride and the glorious panoramas constantly unfolding itself to our view I entirely forgot that there

were such beings as brigands in existence.

"Now," said I to Themistocles, after a ride of some hours, during which my appetite had become unpleasantly sharpened, "let us look about for a spot where we can bivouac in comfort."

We soon found a delightful place, sheltered all round, save where through a small opening we obtained a view of a charming landscape. Dismounting and allowing our animals to refresh themselves on the grass, we soon made havoc of the good things which had brought, I was lying upon my back smoking a cigarette after the meal, gazing dreamily at the blue firmament, and, being too lazy to rise, had called on Themistocles to pass the bottle.

"Has the fellow gone to sleep?" thought I, still indisposed to turn my head. "Themistocles!"

But Themistocles heard me not; and when I raise myself upon my elbow I saw him standing, as if struck dumb and motionless with fear, staring upon the opening. Instinctively I leaped up and clutched my revolver; but before I took a step the cause of Themistocles' fear became apparent; and three shaggy forms behind three blunderbusses aimed direct at me made me fully aware that I was in the presence of those scourges of Greece, the brigands! But oh! what a metamorphosis! Where were the natty green jackets with silver buttons, the plumed hats and the tout ensemble of the brigands of my youth of the operas and the picture books? Three ragged, disreputable-looking figures, clad in greasy sheepskins and dirty clothes, unkempt, unshaven, took the place of those tinselled heroes, and with stern gestures and muttered threats ordered us to follow them. My first thought was resistance, but when I showed the slightest signs the three bell-mouthed muskets were bent toward me, and I felt that the odds were too many, and, determined to wait events, grimly submitted to be led down the mountain by our unsavory guides.

At last, after winding through ravines and hollows, across glens and over mountain paths innumerable, his most unpleasant journey ended by our guides calling a halt as we gained the summit of an eminence surrounded by trees and tall rocks, forming an extraordinary natural fortress. Beneath our feet, in a deep ravine, with seemingly but one outlet, and excellently sheltered by overhanging foliage, was the camp of the brigands; and here we found the rest of the shaggy ruffians—with the exception of one who stood sentinel—enjoying their siesta with indolent content.

A shrill whistle soon brought the rascals to their feet; and rushing up to meet us, they displayed a dozen of as unfavorable specimens of the human race as could well be found. Seizing our asses by their bridles they relieved our captors and led us down the ravine; and having roughly assisted us to dismount, brought us into the presence of the chief of the band.

"Bravo, lads! excellent!" he shouted, as his sparkling eyes bent upon us in delight; and after a cursory examination we were conducted, amid the excited gesticulations of the brigands, and without undue ceremony, into a dark cavern within the ravine.

"Shiver my main tops!" exclaimed a voice as I groped my way in; "they might give us seamore, the vagabonds, and not land us in this lubberly creek; and now they are showing more craft in to anchor!"

"Haul in, Jack, old chum," answered the other; "we must make the best of a bad job, mate."

To say that my heart leaped to my mouth at hearing such unexpected words and finding myself in the company of my own countrymen would no more than describe the cheering sensation that thrilled through me.

"What cheer, mates?" I cried in the darkness. Answering exclamations of astonishment greeted my words; and in a few minutes our stories were told, and I learned that my new-found friends were the Captain and the supercargo of a ship then lying in the port of the Pireus, who, seeking a like object, had met with a similar fate to my own.

"And now," said Captain Jack Jenkins, "how are we to get out of this scrape? If I had Tim and Joe and Black Tom, each with a cutlass and a barking-iron here, we'd soon make a passage, I'd warrant!"

"That's all very well," said Will Johnson, the supercargo; "but we haven't. If I'd had the opportunity given me, I'd guarantee—"

Whatever the supercargo was about to say was cut short by the advent of two shock-heads at the little opening of our prison, and two harsh voices calling us—as my guide Themistocles informed us—to partake of a feast; for we learned afterward that the chief, in commemoration of having made such a good haul, had decided to allow us, his prisoners, to partake of the general festivity. But as a preliminary, we had to undergo an examination as to our capability of paying the anticipated ransoms. First, we were relieved of our watches and rings, the Captain using language rather too

strong for translation to these lines, to the great amusement of his tormentors, who, with similar gesticulations to his, endeavored to imitate the sound of the Captain's words, which, of course, only added to his wrath and their hilarity.

"You uncombed, dirty-faced vagabonds!" he shouted, "if I had a few of you aboard the Annie Martin I'd twist your ugly heads over the yard-arm in the twinkling of a jiffy!"

Of course, they only laughed the louder at his impotent rage, and I thought it quite as well that they did not understand the language in which he gave it vent.

The operation of stripping us of our valuables gave me an opportunity to observe the appearance of my companions Captain Jenkins was the beau-ideal of an English seaman. In age about 35, of a large and robust build, a face broad, manly and bearded, and limbs such as would delight a sculptor to copy. His height was nearly six feet, and he had an air of command about him which was doubtless bred of his occupation. The supercargo, Will Johnson, was perhaps ten years younger; nearly as tall as his friend, strong and active; and take us all together—for I am of no mean stature myself—we were three men who, under any circumstances, would be no disgrace to our country; and if any opportunity should arise for an attempt at an escape I felt certain that we should give as good an account of ourselves as any scratch three, here or there.

Having satisfied themselves of the value of my late father's watch, which I parted from with some emotion, and of the intrinsic worth of the Captain's gold chronometer, as well as the supercargo's watch and diamond ring, we were interrogated, through Themistocles, as to our means. For myself, the name of the firm I was traveling for acted with a talismanic effect upon them, and I was immediately assessed—notwithstanding my protestations—at three hundred pounds. At this price, too, the Captain's freedom was valued; while the unfortunate supercargo—whose business they persisted in confounding with that of owner of the cargo and ship—was unanimously voted to be worth twice our ransom. Having arranged this matter to their own satisfaction, if not to ours, we were told to sit down and enjoy our selves with what appetite we could muster.

The smell of the roast lamb and the freshly-baked meal-cakes, however, soon aroused pleasant sensations, and dimmed for a time the memory of our griefs; more especially so as, under the apparent certainty of obtaining his booty, the chief condescended to be quite patronizing toward us, carving the joints himself for us, and delicately handing on the point of a dagger our several portions. After we had satisfied our hunger with the more solid viands we were regaled with dried fruits as dessert, and a large jar of a peculiar sherry colored, but bad-tasting, wine of a resinous flavor—which Themistocles described as the common wine of the country—was brought in and set down in the midst of us. This we took them we could not drink, and the chief very generously ordered us a couple of bottles from his own particular store, doubtless the proceeds of raid upon some well-to-do householder.

Will Johnson after a time managed to ingratiate himself in the favor of our shaggy host and his friends by his genial happy manner and frank bearing, favoring the company with many remarks, which, translated by Themistocles, evidently pleased them. When, too, by slight-of-hand—in which he was an adept—he performed some simple tricks, and gave them a music-hall song with a rollicking chorus, and wound up with a horn-pipe accompanied by the Captain with a pocket-comb and a piece of paper, the general enthusiasm knew no bounds, and the beetle-browed vagabonds laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks.

Will now became on such excellent terms with them all that he proceeded to take some freedom with them; and when he snatched the horn from the cup-bearer, and installed himself in that official's place, lading the wine out of the wide mouthed jar and handing it round, to the company, his triumph was complete.

"For heaven's sake!" said he, as he passed us, "don't take any of this stuff, and don't drink much of your own."

"Never fear," said Jenkins, making a wry face; "one taste is sufficient." And so Will went round with the cup, making a comical remark to this one, and a grimace at that, until the chief—evidently fearing from their hilarity that they were taking too much—ordered them to desist from drinking and return to their several duties.

Meanwhile, we were sent back into our dungeon, with a sentinel stationed at the opening. "Not a word," whispered Will, as we settled down in our prison. "Here's something, Captain," he continued, "that belongs to you."

"Why," said the Captain in reply,

as Will handed him the article mentioned, "this is a stopper out of my medicine chest."

"To be sure it is, Jack," returned Will; "and I must apologize for the liberty of taking your laudanum phial; but my confounded back-tooth was so painful on board the ship last night that I got up and took it, and luckily forgot to return it this morning. You must debit me with the bottle and its contents, for I dropped them both into the vagabonds' win jar!"

"What!" we all exclaimed in a breath.

"Now, stop your clappers!" continued the supercargo. "Jack, you know I'm not bad at sleight-of-hand tricks. Well, in the first place, having contrived to secrete the bottle while the blackguards were relieving me of my valuables, and then having attained the position of waiter, what was easier than to wriggle the bottle down my sleeve, whip out the stopper, and drop the lot into their swipes; giving the bottle a crack and stirring the laudanum up, every time I dipped the horn into it!"

"Bravo, Will!" cried the Captain, seizing his hand and giving it a hearty shake. "If that's the case, we're safe; for the black-faced rascals won't wake up for a dozen hours, I'll be bound. There! our guard has dropped off already!"

And sure enough, the drowsy ruffian had planted himself right across the opening and was snoring loudly.

"Now for it!" cried the impetuous Jack Jenkins, rising.

"Hold hard!" said Will. "Let them get well off."

"So, settling ourselves down for half an hour we talked the matter over. At the end of this time we sent the trembling Themistocles to see how things were outside; and after peeping over the prostrate sentinel he gave us to understand that they were all sleeping except three, and they were retiring to the further end of the ravine, and would in a minute be out of sight.

"Capital!" said Will, with suppressed excitement. "Now, each take a pistol and a cutlass from the fellows and follow me."

One after another we stepped across the sleeping brigand at the entrance, Will relieving him of his pistol, dirk and blunderbuss, while the captain and I stood by ready to give him his quietus at the slightest sign of his waking. Then the four of us, gliding like ghosts, assisted ourselves to whatever weapons we could most easily lay hands upon; and, as Themistocles was not of much use for fighting, we gave him the bag containing our valuables—which we found by the side of the sleeping chief—as well as several spare pistols to carry. Picking our way without speaking a word, we advanced toward the open end of the ravine, and just as we turned around a jutting piece of rock we saw the three sentinels, seemingly in earnest conversation.

"Halt," whispered Will. "Now for a rush!" and each singling out his man and clutching his rifle by the barrel—for we avoided the noise of shooting—we sprang forward. Almost simultaneously, and before the enemy had time to observe us we were upon them, and three rifle-stocks descended upon three shock heads with such force that two of the fellows dropped like stones. The stock of my rifle glanced off the hard head of the antagonist and crashed against the rock. With a stifled cry he turned, but in an instant my hand was upon his throat, and the sound died in his gullet, while with the strength of desperation I dashed his head against the wall-like rock, and after a struggle, in which he wounded me with his dagger, he fell from my grasp, apparently lifeless.

"Now," said the captain, "where are the donkeys? Come, Greeky!" he cried to Themistocles; "bear a hand!" and, looking around, we espied our four animals just as we left them, but with a brigand sitting by them. Here was an unlooked for rencontre! He was fully a hundred yards off, and to get at him we would have to cross a small plateau.

"Leave him to me!" cried Jenkins; preparing to rush forward. But under the advice of the supercargo he stopped. We could have picked him off easily, but dared not for the noise of the rifles.

"Hang it!" impatiently muttered Jenkins, "we shall be trapped again, after all;" and without further parley the impetuous fellow started off, running on the tips of his toes with a drawn cutlass in one hand and a pistol in the other. Just as he was within a few yards of the brigand the latter turned round, and seeing how matters stood made for his rifle, which was leaning against a tree a few yards off; but a revolver hurled deftly by Will Johnson—for we had all followed—catching him directly in the face so effectually stopped his progress that he fell stunned to the ground.

"You persist in doing all the work," said Jenkins as we came up to him. "But quick, lads; off we go!" and in a moment we were on our asses, and under the guidance of our

Greek companion, were making with break-neck speed for Athens. Up hill, down dale, on we went for a couple of hours without stopping or meeting a human being; then, just as we were about to cross the summit of mountain at which we had arrived, a harmless-looking peasant wished us "good-day," and was about to pass on.

"Seize him!" cried Themistocles; "he's a scout."

So seize him we did, for caution's sake; and as there were no trees near, we tied his hands and legs together, and left him begging for mercy. But there was no mercy in us, more especially as Themistocles explained that there was such a curious and mysterious connection between the brigands and villagers that it was by no means unlikely—had we allowed him to go free—he would have hied to the nearest village and roused a swarm of semi-brigands about us.

Having traveled for four hours, and as our asses could scarcely get along for fatigue, we called a halt; and, after resting ourselves and watering our animals, we continued our journey until late at night we reached Athens, where, round the hospitable board of our host, we soon forgot our troubles.—Chambers' Journal.

The Fashions.

Stylish Trimmings.

In the trimmings of this season the two extremes of utility or elegance are at once observable, and this is as it should be. A walking toilette does not demand the elegance of garniture deemed necessary for a dress to be worn at a reception or ball, while the medium between the two would be equally undesirable for either purpose. The cloth or stuff gown is nowadays combined with some contrasting material, decorated with braid or ornamented with self-trimmings; while laces, soft chenille fringes, embroideries or pearl fringes are allowed to run riot on the evening costume. In the softened light of the drawing-room the latter look as if they were direct importations from fairy-land, while in the day time and under the bold gaze of theseun they seem conspicuous and one is tempted to say, tawdry. By the way, that word "tawdry" is derived from St. Audrey, at which place fairs were held, where bargain-seeking dames were induced to buy worthless things because they were cheap. Practically, St. Audrey's still exists, and the same results follow all purchases made there—i. e., dissatisfaction. The old saying that "nothing is cheap unless one wants it," is as true to-day as when some wise body first originated it.

On cloth costumes braid garniture is still most favored. A few such costumes are trimmed with rows of velvet ribbon, the use of which will doubtless be greater in the future. Soutache, Hercules and tubular braid are all in use, the preference being given to the first two. With the soutache either elaborate designs or plain lines are followed, but with the Hercules a fancy is noted for architectural effects in large outlines upon plain skirts. The drapery is then ornamented with plain rows of braid, and the basque with braided cuffs and revers. A costume under this style is of the brightest terracotta cloth; the braiding reaches quite to the knees, and is done with black Hercules braid.

Influence of a Name.

When one reflects how much of a man's success in life depends upon his name—how ridiculous he may be made by being called Peter Potter or Loveland Snooks—it is really sad that parents pay so little attention to the effect of their choice upon the future of their children. They will register their first born as Muggins Macopheron, if they happen to have a rich uncle who boasts Muggins as his surname; they will spoil a pretty patronymic by christening their child Jeremiah Seymour or Aminabab Clifford; they will even turn him out anonymously upon the world with such an apology for a cognomen as John Smith or William Jones, Patrick O'Brian, or Angus Cameron. And yet a little fancy or a little care might make an endless difference to his future life. I have known a man whose whole career was embittered and darkened by the culpable cruelty of his parents in christening him Barnabas. He was naturally known as Barabbus from his school days onward and only the force of great innate integrity can possibly have saved him from finally turning out a robber and a cut-throat. As it was, he refused knighthood as a colonial judge, because he could not bear the idea of being addressed as Sir Barnabas.

Demorest for February is one of the brightest of the leading magazines of the country. It is filled with the choicest gems in the literary casket of modern literature. Selections are choice, and the illustrations are handsome and appropriate to the St. Valentine season.—National Union, Phila.

The coat tall tation is the latest. —A winked coat tall with dusty toe marks means "I have spoken to your father."

Pious Reflections.

The greatest pleasure of life is loving; the greatest pleasure, content; the greatest possession, health; the greatest ease, sleep; and the greatest medicine, a true friend.

All we want in Christ we shall find in Christ. If we want little we shall find little, if we want much, we shall find much; and if in utter helplessness we cast our all on Christ, He will be to us the whole treasury of God.

Faithful prayer always implies correlative exertion; and no man can ask honestly and hopefully to be delivered from temptation, unless he has himself honestly and firmly determined to do the best he can to keep out of it.

Do not wade far out into the dangerous sea of this world's comfort.—Take what the good God provides you but say of it, "It is aseth away, for indeed it is but a temporary supply for temporary need." Never suffer your goods to become your God.

Talleyrand's Advice.

In these days there is much said about reforming christianity, or possibly of putting it aside altogether, and replacing it with what is called "The Religion of Humanity." The suggestions are not novel. The religion of Christ had scarcely made its way in the world before men were ready with improvements of its methods and substitutions for its doctrines.

But christianity still lives, and few, save students of ecclesiastical history, can recall the scores of its imitations.

The theophilanthropist Larevellere-Lepeaux once confided to Talleyrand his chagrin. He had labored to bring into vogue a sort of improved christianity, which should be both a benevolent and a rational religion.

With expressions of mortification he admitted that he had failed, for the skeptical age would have nothing to do with his improved religion.

"What, my friend, shall I do?" he mournfully asked.

The wily ex-bishop and diplomat politely condescended with the disappointed reformer. He hardly knew, he said, what to advise in a matter so difficult as the improvement of christianity. "Still," said he, after a moment's pause, and with a smile, "there is one plan you might try."

"I recommend to you," he said, "to be crucified for mankind, and to rise again on the third day!"

It was a lightning flash, and the reformer stood, at least for the moment, awed and reverent before the stupendous fact suggested by the great diplomat.

What is Plagiarism?

What is plagiarism? Among all the questions connected with literary criticism there is, perhaps, none to which it is more difficult to give a satisfactory answer. Of course it is easy enough to define plagiarism in the abstract as a form of theft, the things stolen being thoughts, phrases, images and the like; the difficulty is to decide whether in this or in that case the offense has really been committed. Sometimes the evidence for the accuser may be obviously too crushing to be set aside; such as when a sermon or an essay or a poem which professes to be the work of one man is discovered to be identical, sentence for sentence and word for word, with the previous work of somebody else. In such a case it is tolerably clear that deliberate "conveyance." Pistel loved to describe it, must have been practiced by preacher or essayist, or poet No. 2. Literature is, however, full of duplicates, the existence of which cannot by any means be so readily explained. Some thoughts have a trick of turning up again and again in the same kind of dress, and, though sometimes the similarity of costume is so marked as to strongly suggest a suspicion of literary larceny, the kindly critic is generally free to believe either that the reproduction has been unconscious—a vague reminiscence having been mistaken for an original idea—or that the correspondence is altogether fortuitous, and that two minds have hit not only upon the same thought, but the same form of expression, while working in entire independence of each other.

O, blessed health! thou art above all gold and treasure; 'tis thou who enlargest the soul; and openest all its powers to receive instruction, and to relish virtue. He that has thee, has little more to wish for; and he that is so wretched as to want thee, wants everything with thee.—Sicrna.

CURRIED CHICKEN.—Cut a chicken in pieces; put the pieces in a stewpan with one onion, in which you put a clove. Add some white broth, sufficient to cover the pieces. The chicken being cooked, make your sauce with the broth. Beat two pinches of curry with two yolks of eggs and a table spoonful of cream, and thicken your sauce. Arrange your chicken on a plate with a border of rice. You can, if you like, mix the rice with the stew. Some people prefer it.