

Edmund C. Stedman's Reminiscences of the Dead Poet, Journalist and Traveler.

Edmund C. Stedman, the poet, gives the following reminiscences of the late Bayard Taylor in the New York Tribune.

"The causes which led to his death at this time," said Mr. Stedman, after a pause, "date back several years. When he returned from Europe then, he found his real estate and personal property largely depreciated and encumbered, and though near the age of fifty, he again found himself forced to tolerate hard work to support his family and position. It was this hard work, coupled with his resolute purpose, however, other work might engross him, to keep up his more serious contributions to permanent literature, that ultimately led to his death.

He took great pride in his home and broad acres at Kennett Square, Penn., his native place. He designed his own house, 'Cedar-croft,' and spent a great deal of money in its erection, and that with the 200 acres of land which he owned and had greatly improved, was a source of expense rather than income to him. He had a handsome competence when he went abroad, all of which he earned as a journalist, author and lecturer; never having earned any money except by his pen. He desired to maintain his property in Kennett Square, and he set to work immediately to pay off the debt. During the last four years he has accomplished this, his income amounting to from \$12,000 to \$18,000 a year, but he obtained it by very hard work. In fact, he had worked harder and accomplished more in that time than perhaps any other living literary man. He lectured each winter, in all sorts of weather, and in different parts of the country. He contributed largely to magazines and reviews, and never more brilliantly, besides doing a great amount of regular work for the Tribune. He came from a long-lived family, and his strength was very great, but he undertook too much. He did the work of two able-bodied men every day, and his health gave way under the great strain on one or two occasions. He was compelled to go to the White Sulphur Springs and other places for recuperation, but he forced himself to work again before he had fully recovered. During this time he wrote his last and most important poem, 'Prince Deukalion.' It was a source of great trial to himself and of regret to his friends that he was unable to go on with his 'Life of Goethe,' for which he had secured material during his last sojourn in Germany. The great trouble with him was his inability, owing to his excessive labors, to take sufficient social recreation. His enemies, very few in number, have falsely attempted to make a point against him on this account, charging him with excessive beer-drinking. It was his want of recreation and rest that killed him. He was forced to take some stimulus to support himself under exhausting labor, but he was not an excessive beer-drinker as has been charged, though what he did take may have helped to develop his disease.

"No man in the country could do so much journalistic work, and do it so well in a given time, as could Mr. Taylor. He was remarkable in brilliant-voiced and feats of literary criticism. As an illustration I might mention that about a year ago two large octavo volumes, containing poems by Victor Hugo, in the French, arrived by steamer and were placed in Mr. Taylor's hands on Thursday evening. For some reason it was desirable that the criticism should appear in the Tribune of the following Saturday, and of course the copy had to be in the printers' hands early on Friday night. Mr. Taylor's health was bad at the time, and he also had to in the meantime to deliver a lecture in Brooklyn and another in New York. He finished his review in time on Friday night, and it appeared in the Tribune the following morning, covering more than two-thirds of a page. It was equal to any of his literary criticisms, and surpassed any analysis of Hugo's genius that I have ever seen. One remarkable feature of the review was over a column of translation into English poetry from the original, including several lyrics and odes, so beautifully done that they seemed like original poems in the English.

"Mr. Taylor was a man of wide and thorough learning, and was a much more exact scholar than would be supposed, considering that he was never at college and spent a great deal of time in travel and observation. He had a smattering of all languages. He was familiar with Latin and Greek, spoke French well, and German like a native; he also conversed in Russian, Norse, Arabic, Italian, and knew something of modern Greek. His knowledge of Greek was increased by his classical feeling, which, as with Keats, amounted almost to a passion. He was a good botanist, and somewhat of a geologist, and was an established authority on geographical questions. He was greatly interested in all scientific studies.

"As a man he was a peer among his fellows. He was the most simple, generous-hearted man of letters I ever knew. He was the first literary man I met in New York, my acquaintance dating from the time he came and took me by the hand in 1860, after the publication of one of my articles. He was never so happy as when surrounded by his friends in his own house. He had unbounded hospitality, and made his house the center of literary life in the city. New York will greatly miss him, and just such a leader was needed to give encouragement to our literary life. He was accused sometimes of egotism, but he was not egotistical in the proper sense of the term. He was frank and outspoken, and showed his feelings plainly, which gave rise to that charge. He always denounced shams and humbugs, but I do not believe he ever did a mean act; and he never grew angry except on account of the meanness of others.

"His private letters, of which I have a great number, were far more delightful than his published ones. He was very careful in his published letters not to say anything that might wound the feelings of distinguished persons from whom he received hospitality abroad. His private letters are full of the most interesting anecdotes and conversations with leading authors and magistrates of other lands, and are charming in their clearness and esprit. His faults, and we all have them, were rather of a lovable nature. He cared most for his reputation as a poet, and his books on travel and novels were a secondary matter with him.

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About Diphtheria.

A New York World reporter has had the following interview with Professor Alfred L. Loomis on the subject of diphtheria:

"What is diphtheria?" "It is an infectious disease—that is, one capable of being transmitted from one person to another. Opinions further than this are divided about equally. Some hold that it is a purely local disease in which the throat only is concerned, while others claim that it is a disease of the whole system, the membrane or exudation in the throat being one of its expressions."

"What is your opinion?" "I believe diphtheria to be a disease of the whole system. In different epidemics the types differ. Sometimes you will find the throat affection to be the most severe, causing death by mechanical obstruction of the air passages; and, again, you will find that the constitutional symptoms, which are of a depressing and exhaustive nature, kill the patient before the exudation has advanced far."

"Is there any reason why diphtheria should be most prevalent in the winter season?" "Only that at the opening of winter people begin to shut themselves up in their houses and so surround themselves with imperfect hygienic conditions, and inhale more sewerage gas than ordinarily. Diphtheria is by no means a disease of cold climates, for it is found in tropical countries. There are atmospheric conditions that tend to make diphtheria epidemic, but what those conditions are is not readily understood. It is certain, however, that they have nothing to do with the change of the seasons."

"Is diphtheria very prevalent now?" "I have not found it so as yet this winter. And you cannot judge much as to the relative mortality of different seasons under given treatments, because at one time the disease takes on the exhaustive form and at another the deaths are largely from the obstruction to the air-passages."

"What is the best plan of treatment in your opinion?" "I work upon the principle that the diphtheritic membrane is the result of a very low grade of inflammation, and that when a higher degree of inflammation is set up around about the diphtheritic patches those patches are prevented from extending. This is found to be the fact in practice. I endeavor, therefore, to excite this higher degree of inflammation and I do this by causing the patient to inhale large quantities of the steam of pure water. Then, of course, I use local antiseptics, such as chlorate of potash, and for the constitutional trouble I give iron and the most nourishing food. Quinine I do not use much, as that is most valuable when there is a high temperature, and that is seldom found in diphtheria."

"What are you going to do about it?" Because the principles of physiological laws are not executed speedily, some fancy they are void. But when the system breaks down, and almost hopeless complications arise, which the family physician, by reason of his limited experience, fails to relieve, the pertinency of the above inquiry is apparent. Many remedies have been specially prepared for these cases, and many physicians are bidding for their patronage. As before making a purchase of land, a search is required, and the title carefully examined, so invalids should carefully investigate the claims of any physician offering to treat chronic diseases. Dr. Pierce's Medical Remedies are well known, and have effected many cures where eminent physicians have failed; yet to accommodate surgical and complicated cases, and those desirous of being relieved speedily, Dr. Pierce has created an elegant sanitarium, at a cost of nearly half a million dollars. No institution in the world offers advantages superior to those found in this establishment. Half a score of physicians are in attendance, several of whom have been prominently connected with leading American and European hospitals. Every improved facility for hastening a cure that is liberal and economical of money could secure can here be found. Before fully deciding where to go, address 'Invalids' and Tourists' Hotel, for circular.

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