

The Coming of Byron.

With Byron's advent the modern spirit in poetry was born and romantic sentimentality was laid low, according to the illustrious Danish critic, Dr. Georg Brandes, who recently published a notable volume under the title "Naturalem in England." A grand poet must be a rebel, Dr. Brandes declares, and while all of Byron's contemporaries were smitten with the fever of the French revolution they became resigned and turned back after putting their hands to the plow. After naming Wordsworth, Scott and Coleridge this critic says they may be barred or kicked out of the competition. Moore, Scott, Campbell, Keats and Landor are all dismissed as conservative and lacking the power of inspiring a multitude of other minds. Shelley breathed the very spirit of defiance, but died without coming into his kingdom. After Shelley's death Byron "arises and lifts up his mighty voice" to battle against political romanticism and political hypocrisy. Says Dr. Brandes:

European poetry was flowing on like a sluggish, smooth river; those who walked along its banks found little for the eye to rest on. At all once, as a continuation of the stream, appeared this man, Byron, which the ground so often gave way that it precipitated him in cataclysm from one level to another—till the eyes of the world were turned to that part of a river where its stream becomes a waterfall. Byron's poetry the river boiled and foamed, and the roar of his waters made music that mounted up to heaven. In its swirling fury it formed whirlpools, tore itself, and whatever came in its way, and the end undermined the very rock on which it stood. What language! What tones breaking the destitute silence of England! The political air rang with the shrill notes, for no word uttered by Lord Byron fell unheard to the ground. The fugitives, the banished, the oppressed, the conspirators, of every kind, and eyes fixed on the one man who stood up for the universal debasement of intelligence and character to a low standard, stood up, beautiful as an Apollo, brave as an Achilles, prouder than all the kings of Europe together. Free in his quality of English peer, from molestation everywhere, he made himself the mouthpiece of the dumb revolutionary indignation which was seething in the breasts of the best friends and lovers of Europe.

Byron's influence was electric. The seeds which he had sown broadcast fruited—from the dragon's teeth sprang armed men. The intellectual life of Russia, Poland, Germany, France and Spain, even the Slavonic nations, was aroused by Byron's verse. Exiled poets took up his war cry and made heroes of liberators. French romanticism and German liberalism are both direct descendants of Byron's naturalism.

American Influence in Cuba.

A Spanish view of Cuba's independent progress is given in a recent number of the Economist and Financier, published in Madrid. This paper discusses frankly the situation in Cuba now and under the old Spanish rule, which ended with American intervention in 1898. Figures are given to show that the revenues are now largely devoted to improvement of schools, roads and sanitation with marked results. In conclusion the article declares that Cuba had to escape from Spanish sway in order to fulfill her destiny among nations.

In connection with this Spanish view it is important to note that while Cuba is politically free to care for her own future she is still under the spell of outside influences. Many Cuban officials act upon the principle that the United States has acquired and will enforce a prior claim upon the trade of the island, just as Spain did before the liberation. This is a reflection upon the good faith and honor of the American people. Cuban legislators go so far as to assert that the support or rejection of certain measures favorable or unfavorable to the interests of the island will bring them into disfavor in this country. But the United States interested solely with the purpose of establishing in Cuba a free and self-respecting government, capable of "padding its own canoe."

The cotton acreage this year is placed by the department of agriculture at 25,120,000, a reduction of 8,610,000, or 11.4 per cent, from last year. This is a considerably smaller decrease than that estimated by the Southern Cotton association, which placed the reduction at about 18 per cent. If the yield this year shall prove the same per acre as last year, the crop will be about 12,000,000 bales.

A new anesthetic has recently been discovered in Japan. It is the juice of a plant growing in the empire and is said to be superior in effects to all other articles of the kind, producing a deep sleep of long duration. Had this discovery antedated 1904 the Japs might be charged with using it as "knockout" drops to befuddle the Russians.

That sleeping husband who was chased by his lawful spouse 2,000 miles must be a prize worth hanging on to. Possibly, though, the seal was put forth just to keep the other woman from having him.

Japan's Underworld. Since Japan has accomplished wonders in warfare without the usual modern byproduct of army scandals and a fire in the rear, the world has been led to believe that the island kingdom is an ideal land, socially and politically. Influential Japanese writing from patriotic motives and foreign observers seeing only the best face of things have presented rosy pictures of a society where drunkenness and kindred evils do not exist and where there are no strikes or social discontent. In a recent magazine article the other side is depicted by a Japanese socialist, Mr. Kichii Kaneko, who says in substance: The condition of the workmen in Japan is a most deplorable one. They are working generally twelve hours a day and receive from 12 to 20 sen (10 to 20 cents) a day, skilled laborers from 20 to 40 sen. Their earnings from 10 to 20 cents a day, skilled laborers receive but 10 sen per day. Japanese policemen get only 100 to 120 per cent. Carpenters earn 75 sen per day.

There were six serious strikes in Japan in six years, from 1890 to 1904, and Mr. Kaneko shows that his country is afflicted with the usual social ills and troubles incident to overpopulation and underproduction of staples. He has nothing complimentary to say of the Japanese government or of the officials who administer public affairs. Conditions are admitted to be "some-what better" than in Russia, but far behind those in England and the United States. To quote further:

The Japanese government system is the making of a system for the people, of the government of the few, of the nobles, of the titles and shows all of the features of the minkido. There is a strange line drawn in the society of Japan. It extends a little higher than the heads of the people, and once you get within this line you are assured of perfect safety all your life; your condition is insured for life; nobody can disturb you; no criticism will affect you. That is the line of the minkido, the title, the combats of the minkido. You can hope to prevail against a man within that line, no matter how incapable or unworthy he may be, you must be no longer safe.

The love of country and loyalty to the minkido, which are universally believed to be characteristic of the Japanese, namely actions of imagination. Being a man, Mr. Kaneko naturally makes the most of his argument, yet it would be strange if there is not some truth behind his allegations.

A Puny Empire on the Market.

Once more the residents of the Danish West Indies want Uncle Sam to buy up their puny empire and inject into it a little of the Yankee progress which has caught on in Cuba and Porto Rico. The Danes should have known a good thing when it came their way three years ago. This country then offered a cool \$5,000,000 for a domain that is costing Denmark the sum of \$20,000 every year to keep a-going. The deal was twice defeated in Denmark, and the suspicion is now inevitable that the Danes thought the price would go up as this country saw the possibility of other nations taking a hand.

Really, the Danish sales are of little value to any country. The best of the bunch, St. Thomas, produces nothing and only subsists because its fine harbor offers a refuge for ships to take on coal, water and provisions and exchange cargoes. St. Croix is fairly fertile and it produces nothing but sugar, and that is an unprofitable industry unless labor can be procured on exorbitant wages. The islands will doubtless drift to the control of the United States some day, but there seems to be no special reason now why this country should put up millions of good money merely to acquire a treasury deficit.

Rate laws are not confined to the United States nor to railway traffic. In Uganda, a dark corner of the African continent, the price of dusky brides has lately been fixed by law at \$3.23 each, "respective of beauty and accomplishments." The law was found necessary in order to stop the practice of cornering all the eligible maidens and selling them at exorbitant prices.

Five years after the tidal wave laid it desolate California finds itself protected by a new sea wall three miles long and seventeen feet above mean low tide. It is a massive structure, capable of warding off the heaviest currents. Few disasters so sweeping have been repaired so speedily and effectively.

Paul Morton got out of the cabinet in the nick of time. As an insurance magnate he can shut up shop every afternoon and go flirt with the sea breeze.

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A Big Success on Slender Capital.

Recently a man was selected for an important commission in one of the great municipalities of this country who began life with no capital beyond character and a good business handwriting. The salary of the new position is \$12,000 a year, and he may have a life tenure if he chooses. This incident might pass with hundreds of others of like nature but for a single feature of it, which carries a hint for young men starting in the world. There were no such aids as politics and personal "pull" behind this appointment. The selection was made for merit. The appointee has labored forty years in a narrow field in the strange city which he adopted as his home at the end of the war, where he served as a private soldier.

The traits which brought this man to the top and landed him some years ago in a \$10,000 commercial position were ceaseless industry and rugged honesty. He worked after office hours if the interests of the business demanded it without waiting to be asked. He investigated profits and losses on his own hook and when he found flaws in the methods of management pointed them out fearlessly. Men of this type are not loved by their fellow employees, and he had to fight his way. But he was always right and refused to compromise on any but true business principles. His first promotion was to the office of secretary of the corporation. Then he became vice president and finally president, which office he held when the city discovered in him the right man for a public commissioner. It is common nowadays to sneer at old-fashioned probity and declare that it doesn't pay or doesn't exist. On the contrary, probity is the keynote of every really successful career.

A Warning For Would-Be Swimmers. The hot season brought with it the inevitable swimming disasters, one of which serves to point a moral. Two young fellows set out to teach a novice how to swim. They used the ancient argument of primary instinct and in short told the youth that he must get into deep water and "strike out." The rest would be easy.

Having faith in instructors who had mastered the art, the youngster plunged from a boat into ten fathoms of water and, finding himself all at sea, of course struggled and screamed and came to the surface in a panic. His precceptors tried to rescue him, but he almost carried one of them down and finally sank to rise no more. The harrowing incident should be a lesson to all swimmers. A person who is frightened cannot learn to swim.

Fear of sinking causes the swimming novice to try to raise himself, and the effort only plunges him in deeper. Water has power to sustain the human body with but little effort aside, but the body must rest flat and be partly immersed. Position is everything to the swimmer, but the strokes are simple—that is, strokes enough to keep the body afloat and moving. It is true that a person must have a certain depth of water in order to swim. But unless he is accustomed to water and to deep wading, with rescuers at hand, he should not take the first lesson where it is more than breast deep. Whatever the depth, a total absence of fear is the first requisite in learning to swim.

The South Carolina State comes forward with a plea for the proper pronunciation by the nation at large of the name of the new battleship, South Carolina. It says, "Let the crew, from the captain down, be trained to say 'South Carol-ina.'" If the crew sets the pace the people will follow suit and abolish the "Carlina," and also the "Calce-niana," so harsh for ears that have regard for the historic significance of the name and the beauty of the full vowel sounds.

According to an effusive London paper, the boy king of Spain is a marvel of precocity and knows all about the law, loses his cabinet, understands mechanics and engineering, is an expert in military science, an all-around scientist, a political economist and

master of four foreign languages. The Kaiser should look to his laurels and his weapons too.

Americans who write letters of inquiry to the United States consuls are advised that they will greatly aid in quick dispatch of their business by making their communications in duplicate. The inquiries are often sent to third parties, and that necessitates making a copy at the consulate, where the clerical force is limited.

Assurance of the magnitude of the wheat crop in the United States this year comes from the department of agriculture, which places the yield at 720,000,000 bushels, a crop never exceeded except in 1901, when it was 748,000,000 bushels. The crop of 1904 was 637,000,000 bushels, the lowest in five years.

It is reckless indeed to offer advice to the new college graduates, but it will not be an unkindness to say the hint that there are some things worth knowing to be learned in the college of the world.

It is a mistake to suppose that "high finance" is confined to the United States. The latest details of the British war office scandal show that the next sum of \$35,000,000 disappeared from the army chest through graft and peculation during the Boer war.

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