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STUDENT'S CORNER.

This column will be open for the publication of questions, answers, discussions and original articles of an educational and literary character. Our readers who are or have been students are requested to contribute.

Shakespeare's Art

MISS A. I. SILVERWOOD.

Shakespeare was in the true sense an artist and on every line of his writings there is the impress of a master mind. To him was due the credit of bringing to perfection the art of drama writing, for he was the first dramatist who knew perfectly how to bring together a multitude of persons and ideas and blend them into a harmonious whole. His characters belong to an age long gone by, but, like the paintings and sculptures of the old masters, they are so true to nature that they will have a charm for the generations yet to come as great as they have had for men and women of the past.

Shakespeare was not only a great artist, but he was at the same time a wise and learned teacher. His broad mind grasped the problems of social, moral and political reforms as few others did. By means of his historic dramas he contrasted the defects of tyrannical government with the good results that follow a wise and just rule. He showed how kings may gain the love or hatred of their subjects. In fact he gave a forecast of all the great reforms which have since taken place in the England to which he was so loyal.

That Shakespeare was a sincere lover of his country is plain from the expressions of patriotism found in his historic dramas. John of Ghaunt in speaking of England calls her:—

"This other Eden, demi-paradise, This fortress built by nature for herself Against infection and the hand of war, This happy breed of men, this little world, This precious stone set in a silver sea."

When the Duke of Hereford hears of his banishment he breaks out passionately:

Then England's ground farewell; sweet soil adieu, My mother and my nurse that bears me yet, Where'er I wander boast of this. I cannot banish, yet a trueborn Englishman.

Such expressions as these shall live and be remembered so long as England has a literature.

But Shakespeare has taught by other means beside his historic dramas. He has held up to scorn and ridicule, the baser qualities of men and women, while in striking contrast to these are characters whose virtues call forth our admiration. Then, also, the poet was a philosopher whose wise maxims have been translated into many languages. We have all become familiar with such quotations as "Earthly power doth then show likest God's when mercy seasons justice." "To thine own self be true and it must follow as the night, the day thou canst not then be false to any man."

The poet chose his words from the language of all classes. He was familiar with the terms of the professions, the sciences and arts, with the language of the farm, the garden and the cottage, as well as that of the courts and the parliament. He played with words as a child would play with sticks throwing them together in the most peculiar and fantastic forms. At times he broke out into the most voluble flow of words, expanding and beautifying what would otherwise be but commonplace. At other times he showed a power almost unsurpassed of expressing great thought in few words. A whole "Essay on Man" is contained in the sentence—"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and reason, how express and admirable; in action, how like an angel; in apprehension, how like a god!"

Shakespeare has been called the soul of wit. His writings are glowing with a humor that sparkles out in witty sallies and play upon words. But there is a deeper humor of which the great dramatist has proved himself to be the master—that of sarcasm and irony. A striking example of this is found in The Merchant of Venice, where Portia says of one of her suitors, "Heaven made him and therefore let him pass for a man."

But perhaps Shakespeare's greatest strength as a writer lay in his powers of creation and imagery. He seems to have studied man as a whole, and embodied all the qualities peculiar to him in characters created from his own

imagination. Very few of his characters were taken from nature and yet we feel that they are in essence natural. One would think that the souls of one thousand men and women had entered into his own that he might be able to picture their innermost feelings from personal experience.

His great powers of imagination enabled him to see resemblances in objects where others would never think of looking for any. His metaphors are often built on such frail threads that we wonder how the poet ever discovered the connection. Who but he could write such a passage as:

"Night's candles are burnt out and jocund day Stands tip-toe on the misty mountain tops."

Coleridge has said of Shakespeare that he had an oceanic mind. When we consider his wonderful powers of imagination, his delicacy of perception, his vast vocabulary and command of language we are led to agree with the great critic. Our wonder grows when we consider that all this genius and labor was spent, not establishing fame, but in earning bread for his family. We do not know if any monument stands on the grave of Shakespeare, but we do know that without realizing it he built for himself a grand monument, a model of which is found in the majority of English-speaking homes in the form of a copy of his writings.

News of the Week

—Fred Sweetman, a boy fifteen years of age, was run over by a waggon loaded with gravel last Thursday evening on the second concession of Goefield South, near Kingsville, and instantly killed. He, with two companions, were on the load and were playing catch by tossing an apple back and forth. He lost his balance and before the waggon could be stopped the wheels passed over his chest, killing him. Only about five years ago another boy in the same family was killed by a waggon in a similar way.

—A statement of the terms of the will of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt has been given out. It shows that the fortune is estimated at \$70,000,000. Alfred Gwynn Vanderbilt will get about \$50,000,000. He thus becomes the head of the family. The will gives Cornelius Vanderbilt about \$1,500,000. It gives to each of his remaining brothers and sisters about \$7,500,000. Alfred, of course, not included. Alfred Gwynn Vanderbilt gives his brother, Cornelius, enough of his inheritance to make his fortune equal to that of the other members, namely \$7,500,000. Senator Depew says that Cornelius has accepted this arrangement in the spirit in which it was offered. Mrs. Vanderbilt is given both the New York and Newport family residences, \$2,000,000 in cash, and an income of \$250,000 during her lifetime. Chauncey M. Depew is left \$200,000. There are a large number of charitable bequests; \$100,000 is given to the Young Men's Christian Association of New York city; \$400,000 to St. Bartholomew's church; 100,000 to Yale University; \$50,000 to St. Luke's Hospital; \$50,000 to the Missionary fund of the Protestant Episcopal church.

—Into one another crashed two heavy freight trains on the main line of the G. T. R. two miles west of Port Hope last Friday night about 11 o'clock. Both trains were drawn by the new big "moguis" and running at a good speed so that the shock must have been tremendous. The tracks on which the engines met was straight and nearly level with a fifteen or twenty foot embankment. The engines striking exactly head on, neither left the tracks. The forward trucks were buried in the roadbed and the powerful machines were in a twinkling a mass of scrap iron. The monster bars of steel were bent, twisted and broken like wire, and the rails under the engines were twisted so that it would be hard to recognize what their use had been. The mass of wreckage included cutters, buggies, wheat, flour, canned tomatoes, and other commodities. The tomatoes were thrown on top of the engines, and though battered, very few of the cans lost their contents. There was a lot of empty oil tanks and a number of empty boxcars. Over twenty cars were piled in a confused heap on and about the track. Some of the cars were not so badly wrecked but that they could be drawn back to Newtonville or Port Hope stations. A telegraph operator was established under the roof of a car propped against the fence and was sending messages as required. A large force of men were at once put to work to clear the wreck and save the goods, and mogul engines were put to work on each end to pull the cars and wreckage out of the way. The big wrecking plant with the steam derrick was sent up about 3 o'clock. Meanwhile the passenger trains of the main line took the Midland, running via Lindsay, all about three hours behind time. The crew of the east bound train saw the other coming, jumped, cleared the embankments and all escaped injury.

The west bound crew had a curve ahead of them and their view of the track was screened by a row of willow trees. They were not so fortunate, and were all more or less injured. The following are the names of those who were injured on the train going west:—Ed. Miller, driver, residence, East Toronto, badly scalded; was taken to the hospital in Toronto; William Bowler, fireman, a young Englishman, who had only been a week on the road, badly injured about the head, jaw broken and scalded, not expected to live and is now lying at Christopher's hotel; Charles Amey, brakeman, Belleville, badly injured; Charles Morrison, brakeman, home in Belleville, sent to the hospital there.

District Notes

—Huntsville, Muskoka, has a population of 2021. It is to be incorporated as a town.

—When the 10.15 train steamed into Orillia on Thursday evening last it was found that the rear sleeping car was on fire. The fire had spread all through the car, which was quickly drawn under the large tank, a hole out in the roof and the water turned on. The car was soon flooded, but not before a great deal of damage was done.

—Hamilton capitalists are to build a mammoth hotel at Wrenshaw's Point, Lake Rosseau, Muskoka. It will be ready by July 15, 1900. The hotel will contain 250 bedrooms, and will be three stories high. A special feature of the lower floor will be the huge plate glass windows that will give an unobstructed view of the scenery for miles around. It will be nearly fire-proof, and lighted by electricity throughout.

—The Orillia Times says:—Tropical fruit grown in Orillia is a luxury indeed, but a fact nevertheless. Mr. J. S. Gray, gardener at the asylum, has succeeded in growing bananas in the hot houses of that institution, and yesterday sent to this office a couple of fine, full ripe specimens. They were large, solid, and delicious flavor, rather thinner in the skin than the imported fruit. The tree is five years old and blossomed in April, the first fruit maturing two weeks ago. Mr. Gray also has a number of year old plants and will still further experiment in the growing of semi-tropical fruits.

—Mr. Willis Cotton, son of Constable Cotton of Orillia, was the victim of a shooting accident on the morning of Thanksgiving day, which it was expected for a time would prove fatal. The young man in company with his brother, went out to their uncle's, Mr. Silas Locke, near Rugby, on Wednesday night, and the next morning started out for a ravine near the house where game was plentiful. They had one rifle between them and after one shot had been fired, Willis took the gun and discharged it, when the weapon exploded at the breach, several pieces of metal striking the young man in the face, and knocking him senseless. It was at first thought he was fatally hurt, but at the end of an hour he revived, and was immediately brought home, and medical aid procured. His escape from instant death is all the more remarkable from the fact that a large piece of metal struck him squarely between the eyes, barely missing his eyeball.

Handsome War Maps Free

Canadians are showing a keen interest in the Transvaal war. The "Family Herald and Weekly Star," of Montreal, have placed their readers in a position to intelligently understand the situation by sending each reader of that great paper a handsome colored map with complete information regarding all points mentioned in despatches. This map will be followed up by another to be issued by the "Family Herald and Weekly Star" to its readers at the close of the present troubles; a comparison of the two will clearly show what Great Britain has gained by the war. "Family Herald" subscribers will no doubt appreciate the publishers' generosity, which cost, it is said, thousands of dollars. The "Family Herald" seems never to forget their subscribers. It is no wonder they have such a large number.

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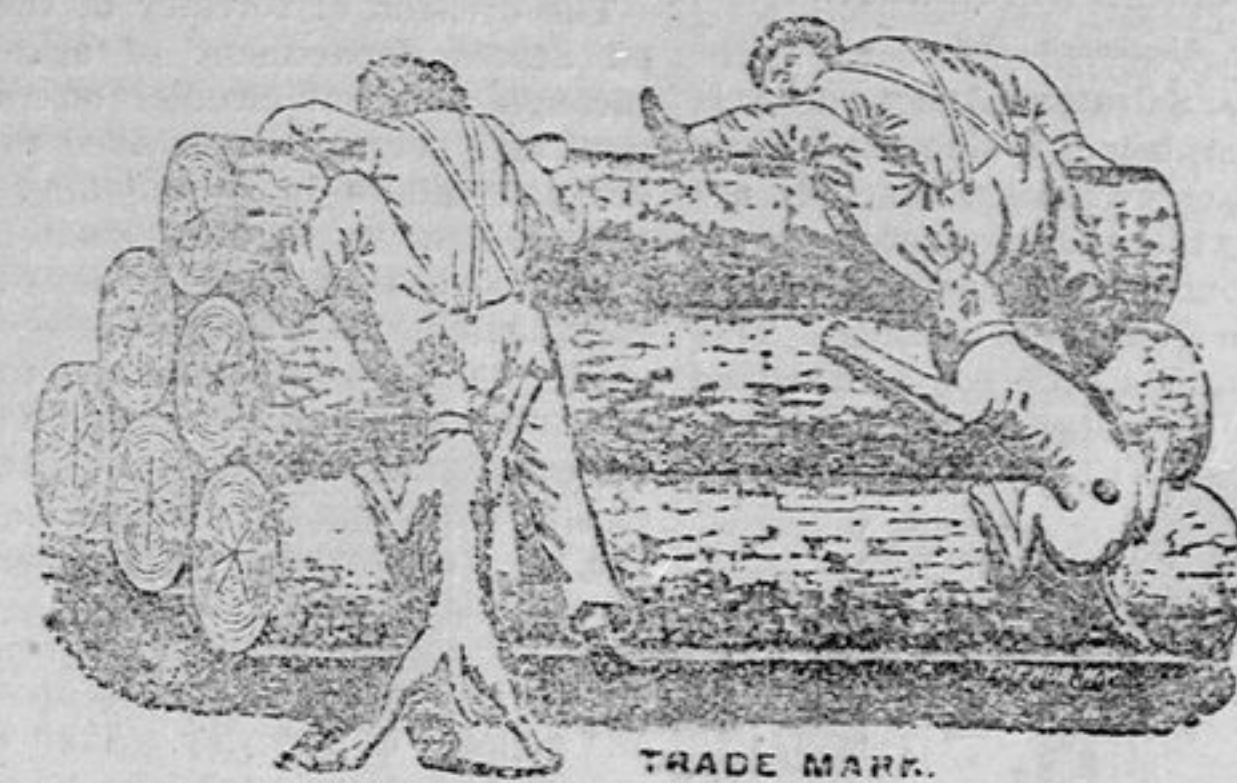
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