
RELATED THINGS

CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT

TO HALLEY'S COMET.

For The Public.

Celestial Traveler on a trackless way
That yields no trace of many million years,
Earth pigmies quake and harbor many fears,
For thy approach affrights them night and day.
Yet, over these doth ruthless Greed hold sway,
And on their misery, he grimly leers:
He wades waist-deep in mingled blood and tears,
In which they slave their bitter lives away.
For ages long their bondaged sires have bled
And groaned beneath this despot's iron heel;
Their offspring bear the cursed seed of dread
That unborn generations yet must feel:—
And these are they who fear one gaseous breath
May sweep them to the friendly arms of death!

MARY QUINLAN LAUGHLIN.

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THE MODERN CONQUEROR.

For The Public.

In the days of old when knights were bold and men were tried and true, 'twas an easy thing for a feudal king to swipe a province or two. With fire and sword this feudal lord would start in the morning light, and plunder and pillage a city or village, and get back home before night. For the pleasure of hearing the populace cheering, with his fleet he'd man the sea, and land with his host on a foreign coast and establish his sovereignty. My lord thought it witty to conquer a city and wipe it off the map; in a single day he'd move it away, leaving a yawning gap. 'Twas a saying trite that "Might makes right" in the days of long ago, and the feudal lord with the largest horde was the one who got the dough. A nery one like Napoleon had the whole world on the jump, but he got too gay and there came a day when he didn't have a trump.

If we look back on the beaten track and read the record through, these warriors bold in the days of old each met their Waterloo; these men who won fame, at some stage of the game ran up against the real thing; through some blundering yap they were caught in a trap and knocked clear out of the ring.

In these latter days men have other ways of doing the same old tricks; instead of a sword and a feudal horde, it's brains and "good politics." In the days of old when knights were bold the sword was the ruler's arm. In political life an insurgent knife now works far greater charm. A smooth politician whose growing ambition aspires to eminence high, gives ward-healers money, others hot air and honey—and lands the plum high and

dry. With smiling face and debonnaire grace instead of an armored host, he makes out a slate that captures a State, or a nation from coast-to-coast.

While we haven't the horde and the feudal lord to ring in the Waterloo game, still, in modern life a political knife puts 'em down and out just the same.

F. H. BARROW.

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A NATIONAL HERO GONE.

For The Public.

When Bjornstjerne Bjornson paid his tribute to death in Paris last Tuesday a picturesque personality was removed from the public arena. For more than half a century this representative of all that is best and noblest in the make up of the Scandinavian race has stood before the world as an author, a politician, an agitator and a character. Impulsive and pugnacious, strong and faithful to what he deemed his highest ideals, he has impressed his stamp on his people and nation for generations to come. If Norway to-day has an independent, genuinely national literature, expressive of what moves in the heart of hearts of the nation, if it has an indomitable self-consciousness and a full realization of its nationality as distinct from other nations, if it has a just pride of its own achievements, and if at last it enjoys national independence, it to a great extent, if not exclusively, owes it to the man who has just a few days ago left vacant the throne in the kingdom of intelligence, which he occupied so long.

But Bjornstjerne Bjornson is more than a national hero. His influence as an advocate of humanitarian principles on all fields of human activity, and especially his contributions to the great work of the pacification of the world through the substitution of arbitration for war in the settlement of international disputes, has been deeply felt both in America and Europe. And most of his many works have been translated into all modern languages and thus incorporated into the general literature of the world. They derive their greatest charm from their national flavor, masterly description of natural scenery, powerful delineation of character, and faithful and true representations of human passions, love, jealousy and hatred. While Bjornson was an original writer and created his own style, plowing his own furrow through the wide field of literature, still in some ways he reminds us of Charles Dickens. He has the same predilection for the humble, the lowly and the suffering, whose feelings and emotions he so well understood to voice, and he shares Dickens' hatred of oppression, abuses and unnecessary ills and wrongs, which can be removed by the application of just a little good will and common sense. Best known to English readers are his "Trust and Trial," "The Bridal March," "The

Fisher Lass," "A Gauntlet," and "In God's Way," which latter novel has a special interest to Unitarian readers, its hero being another well known Norwegian author, Kristofer Janson, who for many years worked as a missionary among his Americanized countrymen in our great Northwest. A republican in politics, Bjornson was a liberal in religion; and while not a confessed Unitarian and not connected with the distinctly Unitarian denomination, he was one of the great leaders of the liberal movements in the world "which, while not taking any specifically theological name, are in general agreement and hold friendly fellowship with Unitarians."

As a platform speaker Bjornson was masterful and accomplished. He was able to hold his audience spellbound for hours. His manly presence, his bland and pleasing voice, joined with his impressive and forceful thoughts and enlivened by his buoyant enthusiasm, left a never to be forgotten impression on his hearers. His lecture tours throughout Norway, Sweden and Denmark were also extended to this country, and everywhere he left behind him the impression of a character, a man back of his word, one of the few writers who really and actually proved his faith in his own ideals and ideas by living them, fighting for them and suffering for them.

When a great man like Bjornstjerne Bjornson leaves the stage the world feels its loss. But it also realizes even better than while he lived what it has gained through his life work. Bjornson has stood for honesty and character in politics, uprightness and righteousness in religion, faithfulness to principles in life, purity of morals and sacredness of family relations and the inviolability of the marriage tie, and last but not least for the realization of the Hope of the Nations—International Peace; and these are all ideas that will never die, but for ever sparkle like a jeweled laurel wreath around the temples of the immortalized fallen hero.

AXEL LUNDEBERG.

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BJORNSON'S VISIT TO AMERICA.

Lewis R. Larson in the Minneapolis Journal of May 1, Slightly Revised by the Author for The Public.

One of the pleasantest and most inspiring memories of my life is the recollection of the visit to Eau Claire, Wis., of Bjornstjerne Bjornson, in the latter part of the year 1880 or the early part of the year 1881, on the occasion of his trip to this country. I will not stop to fix the date, as that is not important. He came there on a lecturing tour. I was then living at that place. He made several addresses, all of which I heard. One was on Hans Nielson Hauge, a lay preacher, a severe critic of the state church, a church reformer, and one of Norway's greatest sons. I had a special

interest in that theme, because my parents were followers of Hauge. Bjornson, as is well known, was the son of a minister of the state church. I remember he gave Hauge credit for having wrought great good for Norway. To Bjornson, who no longer held to the doctrines of evangelical religion, Hauge, who was more evangelical even than the state church, seemed in that regard reactionary, but he was withal a great preacher of righteousness, and in that respect had Bjornson's sympathy and support. And, if I remember rightly after all these years, Bjornson did not emphasize his work for orthodoxy. Besides, Hauge's work made for democracy in church and state.

And above all else, Bjornson was a democrat, one of the world's greatest, worthy to rank alongside of his great contemporaries in other lands, Lincoln and Hugo, not to mention others. Democracy was the inspiration of all Bjornson said in story, poem, play, editorial or speech. Primarily he was neither novelist, poet, dramatist nor orator, though almost of the first rank as each. He was first of all an agitator for democracy. That was his vocation, of which any of his occupations, when not in a particular line of effort for democracy, was a mere incident of his life work. And he would at any time drop any occupation in which he was engaged, if at that time he thought he could do more for democracy in some other way. In 1859, just after being chosen manager of the Bergen theater, a political campaign coming on, he threw himself into it with the utmost zeal, speaking as no other Norwegian of his day could speak. That was not exceptional. It was the rule of his life. Any time in any place he believed he could do anything in the people's cause, he volunteered or responded to request. With every qualification for public office he never held any. Like Abraham Lincoln, he considered sentiment making the most important public service. That he performed indefatigably. He made thousands of speeches; and his communications to the newspapers on political questions would make a much greater mass of print than all his books. He did not limit his efforts for freedom to his own country. He had a passion for liberty. Any people struggling for liberty found in him a champion. Like Milton, he, too, could truly say of his use of his great powers:

In Liberty's defense, my noble task,
Of which all Europe sings from side to side.

He was a stalwart supporter of peace and international arbitration. He was blessed in this, that in his lifetime he saw great advancement of the causes he supported. And his beloved Norway he saw become independent and the freest country in Europe, unless it be Switzerland, with equal political rights for women and men, and a woman a member of the Storting, her king little more than the social head of the state and chosen by