

POETRY IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

The Following Essay was Read Before a Recent Meeting of the Robert E. Lee Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy, by Mrs. J. P. Sullivan.

If one has a liking for patient research and an unlimited amount of time to indulge in such a profitable pastime, I know of no subject within the range of ancient or modern literature that offers such a boundless field for exercise than "Poetry in South Carolina." After wrestling with the topic for several days, I am forced to the conclusion that the limitless area of the aforesaid field is only exceeded by its utter barrenness and sterility. And to write an essay on poetry in South Carolina is a task similar in kind to preparing a thesis on the growth of vegetation in the desert of Sahara.

Poetry in South Carolina is conspicuous by its absence. It need not be inferred that the Palmetto State has nothing to offer to the shrine of the Muses, for we have had poets and even now we have a few versifiers, but when you garner and examine the great harvest of rhyme which has been handed down to us through the centuries, we must confess, if we criticize justly and sincerely, that South Carolina is lamentably deficient in imaginative composition. It is an unpleasant truth, but a fact nevertheless.

Macaulay has said that as civilization advances, poetry must necessarily decline, and there is a world of consolation in that for we practical unimaginative South Carolinians. With the learned and brilliant Macaulay sustaining us, we may take the position that civilization in South Carolina has always been of such a high order, so advanced on the scale of the centuries, that poetry paled in the glare and dragged out a wretched existence, without sympathy and without appreciation. No doubt the critics would laugh us to scorn for taking such a position, but we are in desperate straits and there is no alternative left us but to play the role of the five persons told of in Scripture, who were invited to the wedding feast. "And they all with one accord began to make excuses." We must do likewise.

Perhaps the only poets worthy of the name, whom South Carolina has produced, are Henry Timrod and Paul Hamilton Hayne. And if one desires to read a life in which the bitter largely pre-dominated over the sweet; where the wailing discord of sorrow and disappointment sounds unceasingly, one has only to read the biography of these two unfortunate victims of genius unappreciated. I refer more especially to Timrod than to Hayne. It is said of the former that he died of starvation, but this statement has been repeatedly denied. Any way, he suffered as few men have, and to one of his refined, sensitive nature the agony was intensified. Think of Timrod taking one of his treasured volumes of verse to the baker and exchanging it for bread; yet it is said this incident actually occurred. This sounds unpleasant, and it may be charged that I am departing from my subject, but I do not think it out of place for me to introduce some facts to show why there has been a dearth of poetry in South Carolina. The struggles of the unappreciated genius are always pitiful and never fail to excite compassion when it is too late to render assistance. We laud Timrod now and sing his praises with loud acclaim, but we let him die for the lack of wholesome sustenance. Some years ago an effort was made to raise a monument to his memory, and an enthusiastic admirer wrote to Sydney Lanier for a fitting epitaph to inscribe on it. This is what Mr. Lanier wrote: "He asked for bread and ye gave him a stone." That was sufficient; the story of poor Timrod's life was told in that brief sentence, and bitter, biting reproach breathed through every word. Timrod was a prolific writer, and some of his work gives evidence of undue haste and lack of careful preparation. Hunted down at all times by the wolf of poverty, he could not afford to wait for inspiration, but under the spur and whip of necessity his jaded imagination and weary brain were taxed unceasingly. But occasionally Timrod sounds a deeper note and we are charmed by a certain ineffable sweetness, a haunting strain of melody divine, which sets us to thinking that—

"Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream."

But Timrod has not been very kindly treated by writers of American literature. Although his name is casually mentioned, no catalogue of his work appears, nor his poetry more than passing notice. His ode on "The Decoration of Confederate Graves" and his splendid poems on "Sunset" have been most favorably received in some quarters, but he has

failed to strike a responsive chord in the heart of the great reading public and his verse is rarely read nowadays. I hope to see a revival of interest and appreciation taken in his work.

Better known than Timrod, but still comparatively a stranger to the literary world, is Paul H. Hayne. Though more fortunately situated than Timrod from a pecuniary standpoint, nevertheless Hayne suffered keenly and his lines were not laid in pleasant places. Had he been born in Boston, or near some center of culture, he would have received that sympathy and appreciation which are a veritable elixir of life to the man of genius. But while he wrote his limpid verse, South Carolina was being racked and tortured by the abolition of slavery, and later on the din of war filled the land with horrid clamor, and we had little time to delve into literature or lionize the makers thereof. Hayne, however, has written some poetry that will compare favorably with what Matthew Arnold terms "the best things that have been thought and said in the world." His ode to "Sleep," especially those lines where he says,

"Come woo me here amid these flowery charms;
Breathe on my eyelids; press thy odorous lips
Close to mine own; enwreath me in
thine arms,
And cloud my spirit with thy sweet
ecstasy."

Hayne's sonnets have also won the deserved praise of the critics, and his poem on "The Pestilence," written during the prevalence of yellow fever in Charleston in 1858, has received the warmest commendation at the hands of scholars and men of letters. But like Timrod, few take the trouble to study his work nowadays and a volume of his verse is not often seen in the average library.

Outside of these two poets, however, South Carolina has no other name whom she can boast of with pride. It is said that the secret ambition of William Gilmore Simms was to win recognition as a writer of verse, but he is best known as the author of "The Partisan," "The Spy" and other interesting novels, with the revolutionary war as a background. It may be well to ask, at this juncture, what has the future in store for "Poetry in South Carolina?" Is there a golden age ahead of us? Can we confidently look forward to a revival of imaginative composition and watch hopefully for the dawn of a second Elizabethan era? We must confess that the outlook is not very encouraging when we contemplate the questions of some of our modern versifiers. I trust that I shall not be accused of taking a pessimistic view of Poetry in South Carolina. There is really very little of it which we have reason to feel thankful and nothing is gained by exalting what is manifestly devoid of merit. The poetry of Timrod and Hayne can be read with profit and pleasure, and their work deserves more attention than is now paid it. We must cling to these two, for they offer consolation for past failures and kindle hope for a future that is big with possibilities. Without making any glowing predictions, or indulging in common-place auguries, we may fervently trust with Pope, that "God will yet bestow on us a proper muse, whose strong opinion Heaven can not bound."

Political Appeal.

"Gentlemen," shouted the rural (Republican) candidate for constable when it came his turn to talk at the great political roundup preceding election. "I'm no hand to brag. Some of my enemies has charged me with permittin' prisoners to escape, with favorin' my friends and makin' mistakes in the servin' of papers while I held the office I'm seekin' to fill another term. All I got to say is that I done the best I could, and that I kin do better now I've got my hand in."

"Gentlemen, I'm ready to stand or fall by my record. Look what this grand and glorious country has done since you made me your constable, two years back. You've had the biggest crop you've ever had in years, and you know it. The weather has been the best the oldest inhabitants ever saw. We've bluffed England in that Venezuela matter since I became constable; we've h'isted the American flag in Cubey and Phillipena islands; we're importin' gold instead of debts; we've got business off the sick list and things is beginnin' to hum; we've been layin' 'em up money; farmers is gettin' rid of their mortgages and even fish and game is gettin' a plentier because we parted 'em. I'm not blowin' 'em facts is things that speak for themselves. "Do you want these conditions to continue or not? Are you for prosperity or agin it? If you are fur it, vote for me. If you are gin it, vote for my reptile opponent."—*Boston Journal.*

Tarleton's Sword.

How interesting it is to look upon mementoes of the past and to conjure up incidents in which those relics played a part. Sometimes, however, these reminiscences are decidedly more pleasant at this late day than they were at the time of their occurrence.

Mr. A. C. Dickson, superintendent of the State dispensary, has a sword which once belonged to the "bloody Tarleton," the intrepid British commander who was so persistent and cruel in his efforts to crush out the spark of patriotism in South Carolina during the Revolution.

But the horrid instrument of war is more valuable as a relic, for it is the sword which was cut from Tarleton's hand at Cowpens by Colonel William Washington. The weapon is of rather crude make, having been fashioned by a blacksmith, but its temper is of good quality, and it was evidently more useful for battle than for dress parade.

On the end of the hilt is a little iron knob, projecting beyond the handle piece. The knob bears the scar made by the awful descent of Washington's sword. The same stroke severed the ends of Tarleton's fingers.

When the British leader dropped his sword and "put spurs to his horse," seeking safety, as history records it, the weapon was picked up by William Scott, an American trooper, who tied it to his saddle, and at the close of the war carried it home. William Scott was Mr. Dickson's grandfather. The sword has descended to the youngest child of each succeeding generation.—*The State.*

A Lawyers Mistake.

A story told by Major Menzies is being circulated through the offices in the State house, of a Vincennes lawyer who appeared for the defendant in a trial by jury and put on the witness stand a boy from whose testimony he expected to gain a great deal. To the confusion of the attorney, the story told by the boy was greatly to the detriment of the defendant, and the attorney set to work to show that the boy was "worthless."

"What is your occupation?" he asked the boy.

"I work on my father's farm," the witness replied.

"You don't do much but sit around, do you?"

"Well, I help my father."

"But you are worthless, aren't you?" was the attorney's decisive question.

"I don't know whether I am or not," retorted the witness warmly.

Then the attorney took another tack.

"Your father's a worthless man, isn't he?"

"Well, he works about the farm."

The attorney here fastened an eye which gleamed with triumph on the jury and nailed the boy with a glance from the other and said: "Isn't it true that your father doesn't do enough work to prevent his being called worthless?"

The boy had chafed under these unpleasant questions, and summoning his courage, he said loudly, "If you want to know so bad whether my father's worthless, ask him; there he is on the jury."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

—The narrowest street in the world is in Yarmouth, England. The entrance at one end is only twenty-nine inches and the other fifty-six. Neighbors can easily shake hands across the street. It is called Kitty Witches Bow.

—"Why is a merchant who does not advertise, like a man in a row-boat?" asked the student. "Keeps going backward," guessed his friend.

"No; he is trying to get along without sales," said the student.



It is sad and disappointing for a father to rear a son, spend hard-earned money for his education, work to insure him an advantageous start in life, and build castles in the air about the boy's future, only to have him killed off in the early years of manhood by the dread disease consumption.

Until recent years consumption was considered an incurable disease. Now it is known to tens of thousands that Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures 98 per cent. of all cases if taken in the early stages of the disease. It also cures bronchitis, laryngitis, throat and nasal troubles and all allied diseases of the air-passages. It is the best blood-maker and flesh-builder, the best general tonic and nerve restorative. It gives a keen edge to the appetite, corrects the impaired digestion, promotes the flow of digestive juices, facilitates the production of chyle in the lower stomach, or intestines, invigorates the liver and purifies and enriches the blood. It tears down old and inert tissues and builds up new, firm, muscular tissues of health. It strengthens the heart's action, promotes the circulation of the blood to every part of the body and deepens the breathing, thus supplying the blood with vitalizing oxygen. Thousands have testified to its merits. The dealer who offers something else as "just as good" is dishonest. "I never was very strong and then I had La Grippe," writes Mrs. Gracie G. Smith, of 450 15th St., Salem, Oregon. "I had a cough and felt tired all the time. I took three bottles of your 'Golden Medical Discovery' and two vials of 'Pleasant Pellets.' I have better health now than for many years."

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Appendicitis.

Dr. H. R. Leinen, of Alton, Illinois, says: "I often meet people who have such a wholesome fear of appendicitis that they do not eat grapes, tomatoes, figs or fruit containing little seeds, because of a fear that these seeds will lodge in the appendix and cause appendicitis. Whenever I hear a person say he denies himself fruit because of this fear, I take occasion to assure him that it is useless to take any such precautions. If you like fruit, eat it, for appendicitis, seven in ten instances, is due to other things than seeds. Little particles of food of any kind can lodge in the appendix and produce appendicitis, even a crumb being capable of it. In addition, a great many cases are caused by something entirely outside the appendix, something causing inflammation. To all I will say: 'Go ahead and eat anything you like, for all precautions you may take are not going to save you from appendicitis if you are going to have it.' The inexplicable thing to which the majority of cases are attributed cannot be guarded against, and it is useless to fight the minority."—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

—It takes but constant prayer and watching to enable us to avoid the errors and faults we are ever ready to condemn in other people. The nearer we come up to the high ideal in our lives, the more charity we have for other people. A censorious spirit is very far from the spirit of Christ.

Two Pointed Questions Answered.

What is the use of making a better article than your competitor if you can not get a better price for it?

Ans.—As there is no difference in the price the public will buy only the better, so that while our profits may be smaller on a single sale they will be much greater in the aggregate.

How can you get the public to know your make is the best?

If both articles are brought prominently before the public both are certain to be tried and the public will very quickly pass judgment on them and use only the better one.

This explains the large sale on Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. The people have been using it for years and have found that it can always be depended upon. They may occasionally take up with some fashionable novelty put forth with exaggerated claims, but are certain to return to the one remedy that they know to be reliable, and for coughs, colds and croup there is nothing equal to Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. For sale by Hill-Orr Drug Co.

Frightening Children.

Little Arthur R., while visiting his grandmother, came screaming from the yard where he was playing, and throwing himself into grandmother's arms, sobbed out: "Please don't let him have me gamin'!"

"What do you mean, dear, what has frightened you so?" and grandmother held the quivering child close to her bosom, fearing he would go into spasms with fright.

"Oh, granamma, the old black dog has come for me; mamma said he would if I was bad, and I broke your plate this morning. Oh, don't let him take me, please don't."

"No, no, darling, he shan't have you, I will hold you tight. Where is he?"

"Out in the yard *quite close to me when I run to you.*"

"Well, we will shut the doors and keep him out, and then you can come to the window and show him to me."

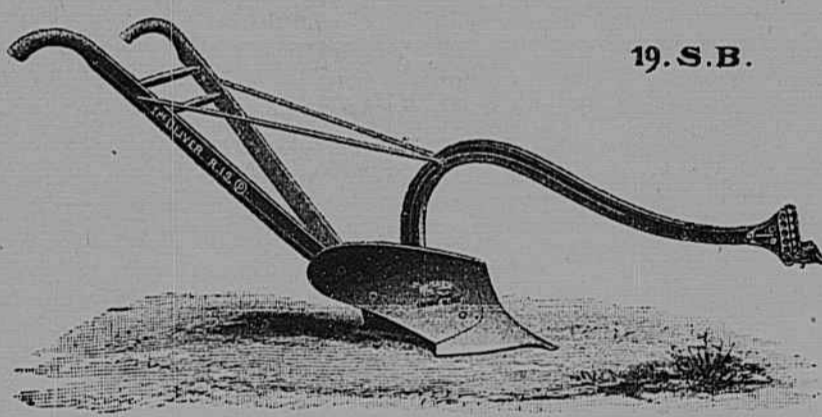
Arthur suffered himself to be led to the window, but the sight of the small black dog running around the yard renewed his terror, and grandmother had to quiet him by assuring him again and again that the dog could not get in while the doors were shut.

After he had slept off some of the effects of his fright, and the dog had been driven out of sight, grandmother tried to undo the evil wrought by his thoughtless young mother, by telling Arthur the dog was too small to carry off such a big three-year-old boy. But it was several days before his nervousness wore away enough to allow him to enjoy a play in the yard unless some one went with him to keep off the black dog.

How many children, like little Arthur R., suffer from the dread of *bug-bears* of every kind that can be imagined by their thoughtless mothers and nurses! Their nerves are injured, and what is far worse, they lose the sweet faith and trust that is childhood's heritage, as soon as they learn they have been deceived. Would it not be much better to retain their loving confidence at any cost? It may take more time and trouble to secure obedience by firm and loving discipline, yet it is much better for both child and parent.—*Christian Observer.*

—The cost of the Capitol at Washington has exceeded \$30,000,000.

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