The Roanoke Beacon.

$1.00 a Year, in Advance. "FOR GOD, FOR COUNTRY, AND FOR TRUTH." Single Copy, 5 Cents.

VOL. XIII. PLYMOUTH, N. C., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1902. NO. 31.

OLD TIME FAVORITES

THE WAVING OF THE CORN.

BY SIDNEY LANIER.

Ploughman, whose gnarly hand yet kindly wheeled
Thy plough to ring this solitary tree
With clover, whose round plat, reserved a-field,
In cool green radius twice my length may be—
Scanting the corn thy furrows else might yield,
To pleasure August, bees, fair thoughts, and me,
That come here oft together—daily I,
Stretched prone in summer's mortal ecstasy,
Do stir with thanks to thee, as stirs this morn
With waving of the corn.

Unseen, the farmer's boy from round the hill
Whistles a snatch that seeks his soul unsought,
And fills some time with tune, howbeit shrill;
The cricket tells straight on his simple thought—
Nay, 'tis the cricket's way of being still;
The peddler bee drones in, and gossips naught;
Far down the wood, a one-desiring dove
Times me the beating of the heart of love;
And these be all the sounds that mix, each morn,
With waving of the corn.

From here to where the louder passions dwell,
Green leagues of hilly separation roll;
Trade ends where your far clover ridges swell.
Ye terrible towns, ne'er claim the trembling soul
That, craftless all to buy or hoard or sell,
From out your deadly complex quarrel stole
To company with large amiable trees,
Suck honey summer with unjealous bees,
And take time's strokes as softly as this morn
Takes waving of the corn.

The Little Fiddler.

By Nora Hopper.

"FATE'S a fiddler."

The little fiddler—such a little fiddler—flung a quick unchildlike glance around the packed concert room, drew a long, unchildlike sigh, and began to play. First, a gay ripple of music—light and heedless and youthful—then a phrase or so, subdued and soft and piteous as the "moan of doves in immemorial elms," followed by the liquid lament of a nightingale. A scurry of soft notes like summer rain dropped from the strings into silence, and the end came with a repetition of the child's laugh.

"Gypsy, every note of it," an eminent scientist said to his daughter, as she leaned back in her stall with tears in her soft brown eyes. "Gypsy music, my dear Madge, and played, one would swear, by a gypsy, but for his face. And his name, too, is pure Saxon—Anglo-Saxon at that."

"It is, papa?" his daughter Madge said, with a swift glance at the little fiddler, now rendering a wild bazarre movement, half dance, half march. "It's an odd name, too; Godfrith Ak. I don't think I like it, and I don't think I like his face, either; it's so sallow and plain."

"Look at his eyes, my dear."

"So I have, and I don't want to do it again, papa; they give me the creeps," Madge whispered back. "But he's a wonderful player."

"Aye, he is that; I wonder where he comes from? I am interested in his name; pure Anglo-Saxon, Madge; think of it."

"Perhaps he's a ghost or something of that sort," commented Madge, flippantly. "Anglicize his name a little, please, papa; it's too Saxon for me."

"Godfrey Oak; that is the modern English of it, my dear; and there is no verb 'Anglo,' said the professor, dryly, as the violin piece ended, and a little rustle went through the crowded room. "Yes, that is the last. Come, Madge, my dear—Why, Hoffmann, I never expected to see you here. And how is your wife, my dear fellow?"

They were out in the vestibule now, and Madge Dormer, paler than her wont, offered her hand with a smile to the spectacled young German her father had taken by the arm.

"How is Mrs. Hoffmann? Better, I hope. And your boy?"

"Clara is as well as she ever will be, Miss Dormer," Ernest Hoffmann said, not too cordially. "She will never walk again, the doctor says, but she is stronger and patient—she is always that, you know."

"I do know," Madge said, with a catch in her breath. "I knew Clara before you did, Mr. Hoffmann, and I can bear witness to her sweetness."

"You did. I beg your pardon, Miss Dormer." Ernest Hoffmann flushed a little.

The professor, mildly uneasy, put in a half apologetic remark, after the blundering masculine fashion. "Madge is very fond of your wife, Hoffmann; always was, through all."

"I appreciate Miss Dormer's devotion," Ernest Hoffmann said, with a stiff bow. Madge held her head erect and looked at him with an angry light in her eyes.

"I appreciate Mr. Hoffmann's magnanimity," she said, icily. "Papa, we shall be late if we don't hurry. Good-by, Mr. Hoffmann; my kind love to Clara. O, by the bye, how is Ulric?"

"Ulric is ill," Ernest Hoffmann said, shortly. "Mr. Dormer, a moment. Can you tell me where Godfrith Ak is staying?"

"Senor Ludovico is at the Alexandra Hotel and Ak is with him, of course," the professor said, as he turned away, hurried by the danger signals flying in his daughter's face.

"How she hates me!" Ernest Hoffmann sighed, as he went through the park in the March wind and sunshine. "I suppose she thinks a clerk had no right to marry her cousin. Ah! Clara does not think so—yet. How that lad played—no wonder Ulric dreams of him. And I wonder if he will come——"

The wonder remained when he sat in the luxurious sitting room at the Alexandra, facing the impressario, a big, handsome Italian, with an enormous beard.

"Yes, his playing is a marvel," Signor Ludovico said, placidly scanning Hoffmann's shabby figure; "but I have brought forth several marvels in my time. That reminds me," with a glance at the clock, "my time is limited at present—you will pardon me, Mr. Hoffmann, I am sure."

"My business is—I came to ask a favor, Signor Ludovico," Ernest Hoffmann said, desperately. "My little son is very ill; he has not slept for four nights, and all his cry is for Godfrith Ak."

"Indeed!"

"Dr. Herz says if Ulric could hear him play it might cure him."

"I fail to see how it can be managed," the impressario said, with a smile. "Do you, Mr. Hoffmann?"

"Let Godfrith Ak come and play to my boy," Ernest Hoffmann pleaded. "That is the only way."

"An impossible way," the impressario said, harshly. "Quite impossible. I will not have my market cheapened. Godfrith Ak's playing has its market value."

"But, my boy——"

"What do I care for your boy? Here have I bred up Godfrith and brought him out, and I will not have him go playing to every ailing child. I tell you I will not have it. Besides, Godfrith is ill himself, Mr. Hoffmann (he slid smoothly into a different tone); it is impossible."

"He must come," Ernest said, dully. "Ulric has asked for him all day."

"He is ill," the impressario said, fiercely; "do you hear? He shall not go."

"My boy is dying, I tell you," Ernest said as fiercely, "and he must come. I will pay you anything——"

"He shall not——"

"I will come." Ernest Hoffmann faced round with a smothered cry; the boy's entrance had been so noiseless and so unexpected. The impressario muttered an oath as he turned also and met the little fiddler's grave, dark eyes.

"You are ill, Godfrith," he said, controlling his anger with an effort. "Mr. Hoffmann will not persist when he sees that."

The boy did look ill; even Ernest Hoffmann's shortsighted eyes could see how hollow the thin cheeks were and how darkly the shadows lay under the gray eyes.

Godfrith Ak laughed slightly and shrugged his shoulders. "I am well enough to play. I am always well enough for that, impresario. Is your son very ill, Mr. Hoffmann?"

"Very ill," said Ernest, sadly. "Will you come, then?"

"I will come," Godfrith said, quietly. Signor Ludovico caught his arm angrily.

"I forbid it, Godfrith, do you hear? I forbid it. Mr. Hoffmann, you persist in this at your own risk."

"I choose to play," Godfrith Ak said, looking at him with perfect coolness. "Maestro mio, you can do a good many things, but you cannot either make me play or stop me from playing when I choose."

The impresario's face was purple with anger as he answered: "You cannot go, and you shall not, Godfrith. You are ill, and you play in the Albert Hall to-night."

"I will go to play for your son," Godfrith said quietly, "or else I will not play in the hall at all."

"But you shall play," stormed the impresario, "or I will make you suffer for it, Godfrith Ak. I will not be cheated! I——"

"You cannot make me play, Signor Ludovico!" Godfrith said, still quietly, but with a flush on his sallow cheek. "I will do as I please now. Up to this I have done as you pleased, maestro mio."

"You are an ungrateful little viper!" the impresario said, hoarsely, "and I will pay you for it, never fear, Godfrith Ak! And as for you, sir——"

"Take care how you bully Mr. Hoffmann, maestro," Godfrith Ak said, composedly. "There are policemen outside."

"If there were not——"

"If there were not you would tie me into a chair and starve me into submission, as you did when we were in St. Petersburg. Maestro, if you speak so loud you will be too hoarse to sing 'Y avait un roi de Thessalie' to-night."

The impresario choked and moderated his tone a little.

"You have the whip hand of me now, Godfrith, but wait—but wait till I have you under my hand again. Corpo di came! I will make you pay for this!"

"Of course you will, maestro," Godfrith said, coolly, "and you may, but to-day I will be master of my own hands. So I will come, Mr. Hoffmann, if you will wait two seconds."

He left the room and returned instantly with a plaid thrown over his narrow, stooping shoulders and his violin case under his arm.

"Come," he went on, with an impish laugh and a glance at the impresario, scowling in his easy chair; "the maestro will recover when we are gone. Do you live here, Mr. Hoffmann?" as they emerged into the sunlit street.

"Quite close," Ernest Hoffmann said, curtly, as they left the high road and turned down narrow Savage street. Godfrith Ak gave a glance at the dreary, demure houses right and left, and laughed quietly to himself.

"Eden in tatters for somebody, I suppose. Do you live here, Mr. Hoffmann?" as Ernest pushed open the door of No. 330. "Have you any other children?"

"No," Ernest Hoffmann said, as he preceded the little fiddler up the creaking stairs; "only this one—and his mother is a cripple. This way, Clara, he is here." Dark blue eyes met the dark gray, in a long, inquiring glance; then a thin hand, soft and white and cold, went out to clasp the little fiddler's thin, hot fingers and a soft voice said:

"Oh, it is good of you to come—so good! Ernest told you how ill our boy was and how he longed to hear you play? And your playing is a marvel. How do you? Why——" She withdrew her hand with a little cry. "You are not a child at all, and I thought——"

"No, I am not a child," the little fiddler said, looking at her puzzled face with clear, candid eyes. "I am seventeen. Yes (with a shrug) I am a child in size, I know—I stopped growing when I was nine."

"Are you a gypsy? Forgive me," Clara said, with a pretty blush, "but it has been said so—and I wondered if it was true."

"I am of gypsy blood on one side, madame," Godfrith Ak answered—"the mother's."

"I am afraid," Clara said, as he opened the violin case and took the instrument out, handling it lovingly, "you ought not to have come out in this east wind. You have been ill, surely?"

"No," Godfrith said, quietly. "I am never strong, madame. But I am never ill, either. Shall I begin to play now, madame? Where is your boy?"

"In the next room — through that open door, if you will be so kind. Ernest," as her husband made as if he would follow the little fiddler to his boy's bedside, "let them be alone together, dear. Our guest will like it better, I know. Madge would say I am absurdly fanciful, dear," as he came to her side with a surprised face. "But I feel as if you had brought here a good fairy who will cure our Ulric, and—what is that he is playing?"

"A cradle song, madame," Godfrith answered for himself, through the open doorway. "It is a Norwegian lullaby." The lullaby crooned softly away into silence, and then Clara from her couch saw the little fiddler bend swiftly over the bed and kiss her boy's flushed, delighted face with a murmured "So, this is better than the Albert Hall."

Then he took up his bow again and drew it over the strings in a swift, dainty dance measure, all light, airy passages, through which Clara could almost hear the movement of dancing feet. She listened for a few minutes with a half smile on her lips; then her eyes, puzzled and half afraid, went wistfully to meet the little fiddler's, and came back to her husband's face with an unsatisfied fear in their blue depths. "Ernest, do I know that song? It seems so—and I wish almost—I wish he would not play it——"

"Madame, I am half way through it. I must go on to the bitter end now," the little fiddler called to her, with a tremble of laughter in his voice. "I shall soon have done."

"I don't like it," Clara murmured, distressfully. "I seem to know it, and——"

She lay listening in silence for some minutes, then the fear in her eyes kindled into a flame, and she caught at her husband's hand with the look of a terrified child.

"Ernest, I remember; it is the 'Dance of Death,' that the Bohemian gypsies play. Stop him——"

"My dear Clara——" Her terror made even unimaginative Ernest Hoffmann turn pale, and he turned yet paler when the music stopped in the middle of an airy dance movement.

* * * "On the 26th inst., suddenly, of heart disease, Godfrith Ak, violinist." That was what the third paragraph of the Telegraph said, but Clara Hoffmann, sobbing over the newspaper cutting, cried: "I told you I knew that dance—and the gypsies say that death always comes to player or hearer—one or the other. But one of the two can choose which it shall kill or cure, so they say. And look, dear, I am sure that Godfrith Ak knew the legend, and that he chose it should be Ulric who should be healed. I know it." And her husband did not say her nay.—Black and White.

An Awkward Position.

The following incident occurred at an entertainment in a large provincial town. On the programme a certain vocalist was down to sing "The Miner's Dream of Home," and to add special effect to the song he, having a friend a fireman at the fire station, about three minutes' walk from the hall, ran out and borrowed his top-boots.

His turn on the programme came around. He appeared on the stage in all the glory of a red blouse, slouch hat, white breeches and (the fireman's) top-boots. His rendering of the song was a great success up to the middle of the second verse, when a commotion was heard at the entrance of the hall.

Then a hot and eager fireman forced his way through the audience up to the footlights, and bawled out at the top of his voice:

"Bill, you've got to come out of them 'ere boots if you value your life. I'm called to a fire."—Tit-Bits.

The mail from London to Shanghai, which now is on the way thirty-three to thirty-six days, will require only sixteen days via the Siberian Railway.

The trouble with most people who argue is that they say too much.

LYNX A TERROR AT BAY.

But Scourge of the Canadian Wilds Will Not Voluntarily Attack Man.

Scarcely another animal presents such a striking picture of savage hatred, of uncompromising ferocity as a Canadian lynx at bay. That brutal head, with low forehead, beneath which two cruel eyes are blazing like evil stars; that fierce display of teeth between the parted wrinkled lips, and the massive, powerful feet, hiding flesh-tearing hooks of living steel, all impress the beholder with the fact that a personal encounter with a Canadian wildcat must end in death for at least one of the combatants.

Not that the lynx is specially aggressive in his attitude toward men—far from it—and the stories of how he follows belated hunters through the overhanging branches of the forest trees, seeking a favorite opportunity to spring upon his human prey, are products of the imagination. But when, after a chase, he is driven to take refuge in a tree, where he crouches in preparation for his last battle, I would prefer, unless armed with a rifle, to interview almost any other creature of equal weight.

Many years ago the Canadian lynx was to be found in the mountainous districts of New England, New York and Pennsylvania, but now he is seldom seen far south of the Canadian border. He is to be met with in Labrador, and is quite common in certain parts of the Dominion, where he is hunted chiefly for his skin.

He is somewhat larger than the common American wildcat (lynx rufus), and, moreover, his head is rounded and broader in proportion than that of his kinsman. His triangular, furry ears are each tipped with a tuft of coarse black hair. The general color of the body is gray, with many irregular darker spots; the fur on the under side of the body is lighter. Beginning at the ears and extending downward around the throat is a ruff of longer hair, which adds not a little to the animal's appearance of ferocity. The tail is short, thick and well covered with hair.

He is splendidly adapted for the wild life which he leads. Clad in his thick winter fud, he can resist the most penetrating cold, and when his hunting luck is against him, as it often is, his great vitality enables him to exist for many days without food. His methods of pursuing and capturing his prey are very similar to those adopted by the domestic cat.—Ottawa Free Press.

When the Tenderfoot Was "It."

"Several years ago I was down in the Indian Territory on a trip," said the dancing man, "and some of my friends got up a dance for me. I asked my most particular friend what I should wear. He informed me, full dress. I went that way and was the only one at the dance with even a white shirt on, and was the target for all the eyes in the hall. Naturally I felt very uncomfortable. The girls, however, were taken with me at once, and any one of them was mine for the asking. In fact, I forgot for a while there were any other other men present. The cowboys stood around like a lot of 'has beens.' I was 'it' for once in my life. Eight months later I made a return visit to this little town, eighty miles from a railroad, and happened to strike the place on the eve of a dance by a club that had been formed that season. I received an invitation from my friend, and, remembering my previous experience, attended the dance in my traveling clothes. No dress suit again for Willie. To my surprise, when I emerged from the dressing room, I found all the men in full dress, and a more evenly balanced lot of dressy fellows I never saw, all being dressed exactly alike. I was the only 'has been' in the hall. I learned that the club had engaged a tailor to come in and fix them all up correctly."

The First of Its Kind.

The peace agreement between the British and Boer leaders is typewritten, and is probably the first instrument of the kind. Louis Botha's signature is described as being in a "fine, clerkly hand." The others are all somewhat rougher, and Delarey's is stated to be the roughest of all. By the way, he splits his name into three syllables, thus: de la Rey, while his redoubtable colleague of the late Free State signs himself Christian de Wet, also with a small "d."

In 1880 one-tenth of the population of Bavaria lived in cities of over 20,000 inhabitants. In 1900 one-fifth of the population lived in such cities.