

THE PLUG HAT OF JAPAN.
 Tiles of the Vintage of Fifty Years Ago
 Make the Mikado's Subjects Proud.

"There is one sight which you must not miss when you go to Tokyo," said the seasoned traveler. "That is the rare display of anthropological plug hats."

"Some people arrange to get to Japan in cherry blossom season, and others want to get there in time to receive an invitation to the emperor's garden party in chrysanthemum time; but take the tip of one who has batted about the world considerably and land in Tokyo either on New Year's day or on the emperor's birthday. On both you can see something unique in the line of headgear."

"When Japan began to get civilized she bought all the accessories of civilization that England did not want any more. England sold her old-fashioned, out-of-date, narrow gauge railroad stock, antiquated tram cars and other second-hand junk, including the then current styles of plug hat."

"The title of those days has remained the ruling fashion in Japan up to the present. Japan may build Dreadnaughts, but the plug hat of 50 years ago still reigns supreme."

"Only on such ceremonious occasions as the New Year's festivities, the emperor's birthday or possibly the racing meets at Negishi, near Yokohama, does the Japanese gentleman bring forth from his camphor wood chest his plug hat, a heritage from his forefathers. It may be warped with 20 summers; damp or green with the shine of antiquity, but that matters nothing."

"Once this superstructure to his wrinkled frock coat and bagged trousers is added, the Japanese gentleman feels that no dignity short of a decoration of the order of the Rising Sun can be added to his person. That crowning glory of a plug hat may settle around his ears or it may perch upon his head like half a peanut shell, but no matter; it is the hat of civilization and the badge of respectability."

"He trots out of his house looking like one of the ancient daimios stiff with the dignity of two swords. All that fearful day he wears this hat of ancient vintage like a crown, and in the end he stows it away in his damp-proof chest awaiting another festal occasion or held as an asset in his estate after death."

Unwise Combination.
 To the mind of Mrs. Abigail Jennings there was a sort of disloyalty in admitting to any outsider that a native of Willowville could be really eccentric. As for anything beyond eccentricity, Mrs. Jennings would never have admitted it, even in the case of Miss Rachel Gregg, who was frankly called crazy by the summer visitors.

"Now, Mrs. Jennings," said one of the boarders, "do you really mean that you've never known Miss Gregg to do anything that you'd call crazy?"

"No, I haven't," said Mrs. Jennings, with a firm and unyielding expression about her prominent chin.

"Why, what do you think of her sending that bag of eggs over to the Corners to Mrs. Cole, right in the box with her laundry work, and never telling the stage-driver, and letting him throw the box right off?" inquired the summer boarder. "Mrs. Cole says there's one shirtwaist she'll never be able to wear again."

"Well," said Mrs. Jennings, calmly, "I should say about that as I have about a number of little things Rachel does and has done. She may lack in wisdom and forethought now and again—but then, who doesn't, I'd like to know?"—Youth's Companion.

Making It Measure Down.
 In these days when only the rich criminal or suspect is accorded much space in the newspapers it may be a relief to the predatory rich to have the fact recalled that the blessed middle class may also produce dishonesty. A policeman tells this story:

"Before I reformed and went on the force I was clerking in a small store. One day an Italian woman came in. She held a string in her hand, a long string, and said that she wanted a blanket of the same length. I went through our stock and found that the longest blanket we had was six inches too short. In the midst of my search the boss came up."

"What's the matter?" he said.

"I told him."

"That's easy," said he. "I'll talk to her and keep her busy while you cut off the string."

The honest copper swears that he would not be an active party to such a trick, but whatever was done the woman soon left the store with a blanket and string of equal length.—San Francisco Call.

Martian Life Dying.
 A sadder interest attaches to such existence; that it is, comically speaking, soon to pass away. To our eventful descendants life on Mars will no longer be something to scan and interpret. For the process that brought it to its present pass must go on to the bitter end, until the last spark of Martian life goes out. The drying up of the planet is certain to proceed until its surface can support no life at all. Slowly but surely time will snuff it out. When the last ember is thus extinguished, the planet will roll a dead world through space, its evolutionary career forever ended.—Century.

Still Had Hopes.
 "Say," queried the Wise Guy, "don't you ever get discouraged in trying to get something for nothing?"

"Now," replied the granger, who had just invested in his twenty-third gold brick, "I've noticed th' other fellow gits his that way, an' mebbe in th' course uv time I'll be th' other feller."

No, Indeed.
 "The sun is mighty scorching these days, but—"

"But what?"

"I notice women still hate to be thrown into the shade."—Kansas City Times.

Higher Up.
 Howell—What do you do with your money?
 Powell—Give it up.
 Howell—I've heard that your wife is taller than you are.

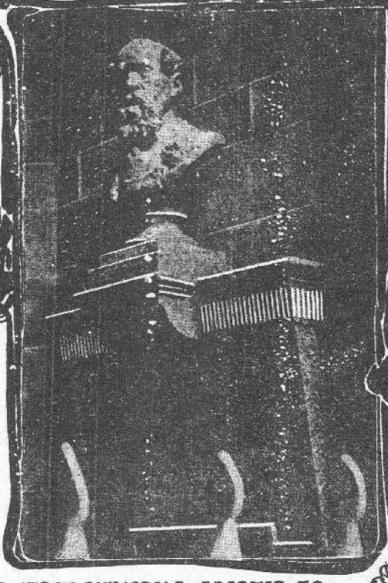
TO HONOR EDGAR ALLAN POE

THE OCCASION OF HIS CENTENARY WILL BE FITTINGLY OBSERVED ALL OVER THIS COUNTRY

BY FRANCIS MADISON LARNED



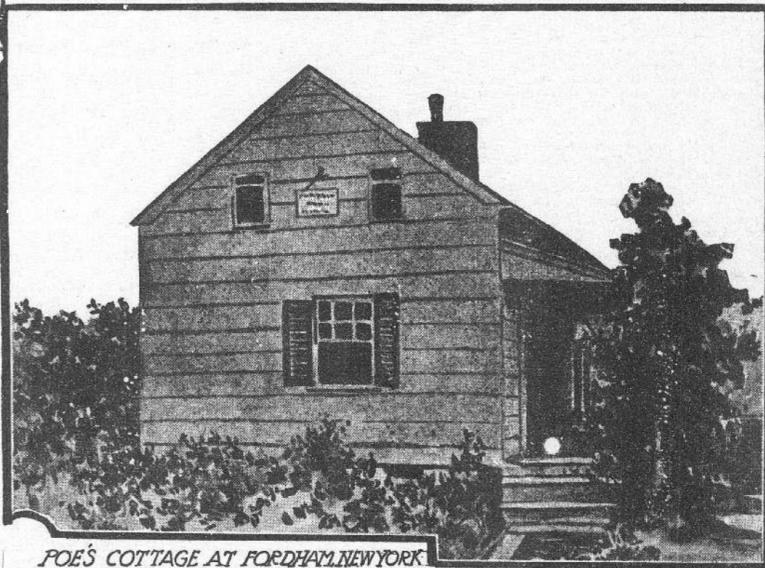
EDGAR ALLAN POE



THE FIRST MEMORIAL ERECTED TO CHARLES DICKENS IN LONDON



VIRGINIA CLEMM POE



POE'S COTTAGE AT FORDHAM, NEW YORK

A MERICANS who deplore the fact that the memory of Poe has not been duly honored in a conventional way may extract a grain or two of comfort from the thought that it was not until last summer (1907) that the first memorial to Dickens was erected in London. Despite the great love of Englishmen, and especially of Londoners, for Dickens, it was nearly 40 years after his death, in 1870—before a memorial of any kind was erected to his memory in the British capital. This memorial is a simple portrait bust, with a bronze tablet, and was placed upon the site of Furnival's inn, Holburn. It was at Furnival's inn that Dickens wrote "Pickwick," and it was there, in a little room on the third floor, that he awoke one morning, in 1836, to find himself famous.

Poe's failure of election to the Hall of Fame is another very real grievance to many of his countrymen, but a parallel, in a way, to this situation, too, may be found overseas. Last November the authorities of the British museum undertook to select 19 names as the greatest and most representative in English literature to be painted on 19 panels in the reading room of the British museum. It was no easy task, but the names finally settled upon by the trustees of the museum were: Chaucer, Caxton, Tindale, Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Locke, Addison, Swift, Pope, Gibbon, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Carlyle, Macaulay, Tennyson and Browning.

This selection, of course, by no means met with universal commendation. On the contrary, loud cries of complaint and inquiry were heard from all over the country as soon as it was announced. Where was Dickens? Where was Thackeray? Where was Robert Burns? Where were Dryden, Johnson and Burke?—and, to continue: Where were Fielding, Shelley, Blake, Richardson, Butler and Ruskin? And where, asked George Bernard Shaw, in a stern and wrathful tone, was Bunyan?

Thus we see that other national households besides our own have trouble in arranging their literary treasures to suit all the members of the family.

No one, perhaps, could speak with more authority on the subject of Poe than the late Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, himself a poet, the writer of a delightful life of Poe, and one of the hundred electors to the Hall of Fame. In the August number of the North American Review he said:

"If the vote for Cooper gave scores for wonder, what of the insufficient tally score for Poe, whose names probably will never cease to be vexed by a willing class of followers, but concerning whose place in imaginative literature the world at large has not the slightest doubt? As a writer he was among the first to recognize the powers of Hawthorne; both were idealists, and if one produced no sustained romances like 'The Scarlet Letter,' the other gave voice to no lyric melodies such as 'Israfel' and 'The Haunted Palace.' These artistic, beauty-haunted compeers were twin orbs in their nineteenth century con-

stellations. And as for the matter of renown—of a place in the Hall of Fame—what is fame? On your conscience, fellow judges, whether you are realists or dreamers, jurists, scholars or divines, pay some slight regard to that voice of the outer world, which one of our own writers termed the verdict of 'a sort of contemporaneous posterity;' note that there is scarcely an enlightened tongue into which Poe's lyrics and tales have not been rendered—that he is read and held as a distinctive genius, in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Russia, Scandinavia—that the spell of his art is felt wherever our own English speech goes with the flags of its two great overlords. Fame! Is there one of us still unconscious of Poe's fame?

"Not hear? When noise was every-where! It tolled increasing like a bell."

"Those who have given their votes for Franklin and Hamilton surely have not demurred on ethical grounds to one against whom no charge of immorality can be, seeing that his life, like his handiwork, was chaste as moonlight. That he was poor, and headstrong is true; and that he was the congenital victim of an abnormal craving for stimulants, now accounted a disease, is true; but what of all this beside the gift that made his shining way against such odds—beside one's gratitude for his crystallization of our inchoate taste and for the recognition which his poetry and romance did so much to gain for the literary product of his native land."

Charles Frederic Stansbury in an article on Poe's life in Tidewater Virginia (in the Jamestown Magazine), written apropos of the Jamestown exposition, says:

"Virginia is, likewise, proud of Poe. His memory has been vindicated by the fine old university where he was a student, and the world-be assassin of his character have been silenced forever. There were all too many of these virtues, the chief of whom was the unspeakable Griswold, the ghoulish slanderer, destined, like the temple burner of ancient Ephesus, to live forever in lasting infamy, his dishonored name dragging after that of the brilliant genius, to emulate the work of whom is the despair of great minds and the confusion of little ones."

"The exquisite bronze bust of Poe, which adorns the University of Virginia, was modeled by the famous sculptor, George Julian Zolnay. It is probably the most sympathetic and beautiful portrait of the poet extant. It was brought into existence through the efforts of Prof. Charles W. Kent of the University of Virginia. Many lives of Poe have been written, and few can remember the names of the writers; Poe's name was not thought worthy to grace the alleged Hall of Fame, while nobody can remember whose names were thought to be thus worthy. Many a hardened toper on reading the many pharisaical biographies of Poe, is highly shocked at the stories of his occasional intemperance on which those writers love to dwell. Griswold started it, and the rest of the sorry pack followed in full cry. An excerpt from Augustine Birrell's essay on Charles Lamb might well apply to Poe. With fine scorn this writer says: 'Lamb was rich in all that makes life valuable or memory sweet. But he used to get drunk. This explains all,

Be untruthful, unfaithful, unkind; darken the lives of all who live under your shadow, rob yourself of joy, take peace from age, live unsought for, die unmourned—and remaining sober, you will escape the curse of men's pity and be spoken of as a worthy person."

When Maarten Maartens visited New York city last summer to attend the peace conference one of the first things he touched on in an interview (in the New York Times) on literary matters was the subject of Poe. He said:

"Can you tell me where Poe is buried? I scarcely expected the answer I have been inquiring for ever since I landed. He is buried somewhere, isn't he? and he is your greatest writer, isn't he? The greatest interest attaches, if one might judge from the controversy which rages to this day, to the cause and manner of his death, but apparently no one knows or cares where his body lies or can direct the foreign pilgrim whither to repair to render his need of reverence."

Mr. Stedman's judgment is thus confirmed—indeed, more than confirmed. It is strongly emphasized by Mr. Maartens, who places Poe at the head of American men of letters. Let us now listen to a voice from England; that of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who said of Poe in a recent article in an English (Cassell's) magazine:

"I have said that I look upon Poe as the world's supreme short story writer. His nearest rival, I should say, was Maupassant. The great Norman never rose to the extreme force and originality of the American, but he had a natural power, an inborn instinct towards the right way of making his effects, which mark him as a great master. He produced stories because it was in him to do so as naturally and as perfectly as an apple tree produces apples. What a fine, sensitive, artistic touch it is! How easily and delicately the points are made!"

Poe was proud of being a Virginian. In 1841 he wrote to a friend in Baltimore: "I am a Virginian—at least I call myself one, for I have resided all my life, until within the last few years, at Richmond."

Another writer, Mr. Charles L. Moore, invites attention to Poe's merits as a "tone-painter," in an article in the Dial. Most epics and great works of fiction, he thinks, have no trace of tone—the region of tone being the drama, the lyric and the prose story. Hamlet begins with a tone picture, the scene on the platform at Elsinore, hardly equalled in Shakespeare. Continuing Mr. Moore says:

"With, of course, other immense inferiorities, Poe cannot come into comparison with Shakespeare in variety of tone. Shakespeare's different pieces are keyed to all the notes of color, from ebony black to the purest gold of sunlight. Poe keeps in the main in the dark side of the spectrum. But within his range there are great differences in shade and always absolute certainty of effect. Consider the varieties of tone in the grave, somber colors of 'The Fall of the House of Usher,' the restless brilliancy of 'The Masque of the Red Death,' and the sober, ordered daylight of 'Londor's Cottage,' or the range between the intangible shadows of 'Ulalume,' the rich gloom of the 'Haven,' and the faceted sparkle of 'The Haunted Palace.' As the modern world of letters has main-

ly gone to Keats (to learn style—the perfection of word-phrasing—so it has gone to Poe to learn tone, the truths of keeping an atmosphere in composition. "Poe did not set himself to write copy-book maxims of morality, but the total effect of his work is that of loftiness and nobility. His men are brave and his women are pure. He is the least vulgar of mortals. Perhaps, if books have any effect at all, his tend to make men too truthful, too sensitive, too high-minded."

Standards, evidently, have changed since Emerson referred to Poe as "that jingle man." Alluding to this disparaging comment Dr. H. G. Wells, the English novelist and writer on sociology, said at a dinner in Boston: "I think hardly of your New England writers for their contempt of Poe. I shall never be able to forget that Emerson called him 'that jingle man.' To-day a thousand read Poe where one reads Emerson, and not to know Poe's work is rather a disgrace."

Rupert Taylor, LL. B., in a recently printed "Study of Edgar Allan Poe," has this to say of Poe's private life:

"Poe took pleasure in the softer influences of home life, although there is little or no reflection of it in his writings. He dearly loved his wife and her mother, of whom he speaks in an excellent sonnet addressed to her after the death of his wife, as 'more than mother.' In the 'Black Cat' he gives evidence of a fondness for domestic pets. His cottage at Fordham was beautified by vines and flowering plants, and he kept in cages several singing birds and tropical birds of plumage. He was as all who knew anything about the matter attested on every occasion a devoted and model husband."

People in general are so accustomed to regard Poe as a poet and short story writer that they fail to realize that he was also a profound speculative thinker. In an article entitled "Poe as an Evolutionist" (Popular Science Monthly, September) Mr. Frederic Drew Bond points out that in estimating his character too little attention is bestowed on this phase of his work. He finds that Poe entertained in its broad outlines that idea of the changes and development of the world which goes, nowadays, by the name of the theory of evolution. On February 3, 1848, Poe delivered, as a lecture at the Society library of New York, an abstract of his speculations on the material and spiritual un-

verse—its essence, origin, creation, present condition and destiny. Shortly afterward this was published by Putnam under the title "Eureka."

After quoting the paragraphs from Eureka in which Poe sums up his theory of cosmic development, Mr. Bond says:

"The statement of Poe that 'heterogeneity, brought about directly through condensation, is proportional with it forever,' appears to contain the germ of Herbert Spencer's developed formula: 'Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity through continuous differentiations and integrations.' Noteworthy, also, is Poe's statement of the correlation between mental development and physical organization."

After a thorough investigation and consideration of Poe's theory Mr. Bond concludes that:

"In its important features, 'Eureka' is a perversion of the modern doctrine of evolution. In the statements that the universe is in a perpetual flux, that it is now evolving and will in the future dissolve, that it has developed from a condition of homogeneity, and that our own system sprang from a nebula, Poe is in accord with the Spencerian philosophy and very probably with the actual facts; while in the assertions that the earth has, during successive geological ages, produced a higher and higher organic life characterized by an ascending development of mind, hand in hand with an increasing complexity of the physical organization, he is stating what are now known to be simple scientific facts. Erroneous, of course, the details of his conceptions very frequently are; but this is common to him with the pioneers of every great idea. Only in the course of time does the germ of truth attain its full growth and reveal its true character. To criticize 'Eureka' from a contemporary standpoint would be as beside the mark as to treat the 'Naturphilosophie' of Schelling or of Hegel in the same way. It was a remark of John P. Kennedy, Poe's old friend, that the latter 'wrote like an old Greek philosopher' and any one who reads the fragments of the Greek thinkers before Aristotle can easily verify for himself the truth and aptness of the statement. The merits of Poe, in common, more or less, with the other pre-Spencerian evolutionists lie in

how far and how truly his genius enabled him to divide the mode of development of the universe.

"It is improbable that 'Eureka' had any influence in preparing the way for the reception of evolutionary ideas, a little later; at the most such influence must have been of the slightest, for though his work was early translated into foreign languages, the failure to find fitting recognition of its true character, and the general obscurity in which it has lain, seem to preclude such a likelihood. Its interest lies in the light it throws on its author and in the honorable place it assigns him in that long line of thinkers from Thales to Darwin."

The status, then, of Edgar Allan Poe, 60 years after, is as follows:

Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman finds that Poe "is read and held as a distinctive genius in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Russia, Scandinavia—that the spell of his art is felt wherever our own English speech goes with the flags of its two great overlords."

Mr. Maarten Maartens declares that Poe is "at the head of American literature," and "that Europe is quite agreed, as it has been from the first, in recognizing the overshadowing genius of Edgar Allan Poe."

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle looks upon Poe "as the world's supreme short story writer," whose "nearest rival was Maupassant."

Charles Frederic Stansbury pronounces Poe "a brilliant genius to emulate the work of whom is the despair of great minds and the confusion of little ones."

Mr. Charles L. Moore tells us that "Poe was the least vulgar of mortals," and that "the total effect of his work is that of loftiness and nobility."

Miss Myrtle Reed says that Poe "fought bravely against cruel odds."

Mr. Rupert Taylor finds that Poe was "on every occasion a devoted and model husband."

Mr. Frederic Drew Bond points out that Poe "had a prevision of the doctrine of evolution," and that "he is entitled to an honorable place in that long line of thinkers from Thales to Darwin."

This, then, is the testimony, on direct examination, of the year 1907 in the case of Edgar Allan Poe versus those electors to the Hall of Fame who have, so far, withheld from him their votes.

Gentlemen, the defense rests.