

WITHIN UMBRIAN METES AND BOUNDS.

"Tales of Ten Travelers" Series. By EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

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Briefly told recollections of curious coincidences had already entertained our Ten Travelers for perhaps an hour of the cheery evening time.

friends, recalled the fact that a year or two previous a queer old fellow, a distant relative, living somewhere among the mountains of Cumberland, had made me heir to his ancient homestead, a stone hut, I presumed, surrounded by a few stony acres among the Umbrian scars and fells.

I think I never saw in print and I certainly never heard discussed, the peculiar feeling which is experienced in seeing or hearing spoken one's own name, when it is possessed by another person; or the still more inexplicable emotions of interest and affinity which flash into one's mind and heart, despite all mental protest, when one is confronted by another human being, of whose existence there has been no previous knowledge, and whose right to your own name can no more be disputed than yours to his.

I was in London, at my accustomed inn with a few old Oxonian companions, when this resolve was formed. They seemed to have a clear perception of my real purpose, and at once assailed me with jolly jests and all manner of cutting and boisterous satire.

While an undergraduate at Oxford, I often ran down to London, usually with no better defined purpose than of sinking off the gloomy and austere environments of scholastic life.

"Suppose you'll restore your ancestral hall, while you're gone?" said one of my friends soberly.

My home while in the city was at a certain almost historic tavern, in the bustling neighborhood of Covent Garden; and, having in those days a liking for studies of lowly London life, I soon formed more than an ordinary attachment for the stalwart night porter of the ancient inn where I lodged.

"Dig out the moat, repair the draw-bridge, mend the portcullis and plant anew the family standard!" solemnly urged another.

At all hours of the night I would linger near him in the tavern entrance, listening to his tales of London life, naively and engagingly told in his broad northern accent, noting his frank yet canny treatment of late arrivals at the inn, or watching with the keenest interest his dextrous handling of the wild market mobs which now and then surged viciously upon the area railings and the entrance where he sat or stood.

"Don't forget your friends, now, when you come to leave your shootings!" insisted another in the same lofty and exasperating strain.

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"To me it seemed that the sweetest and most encompassing of all benedictions was here. The Almighty never elsewhere fashioned the face of the earth in more entrancing mold. And then, as if the fiat were that added winsomeness and grace should shine from every feature, lofty-souled men and women were born here, or came here, and in the years worshipped the God through all this transcendent handiwork by pouring forth their hearts and souls in ever-living psalms.

One night two huge market porters, evidently with bad blood between them, while passing with their burdens from the market stalls to the greengrocers' wagons, which are always closely jammed in separate lines from Covent Garden through the by-roads, away around into the Strand, almost to Trafalgar Square to the west, met on the crowded walk immediately before us.

"This was the complete magic of this Umbrian region wrought; until from Morcambe Bay to Solway Firth, over against the land of Burns, you can turn your eyes scarcely upon mountain or vale, lake or river, crag or tarn, rock or rivulet, forest or copse, beck or waterfall, hamlet or home, that does not send thrilling through the vision to exultant memory some tender association with tender life, or strike some subtle chord upon the harp of fadeless song.

In an instant there were fierce blows and a cheering mob hemming the combatants in. The two clinched desperately, and in their struggles finally plunged upon the pavement and steps, and fell squarely against us. Then I saw the most extraordinary exhibition of physical power I had ever witnessed.

"I wandered on foot and alone, save for an occasional rest on the box of the swift coaches, filled with gay tourists, which wake endless echoes of stirring bugle notes throughout the enchanted region, and thus came close to things not set down in guide-books, tales or song; to things undiscoverable even in the literary remains of the host of prose writers and poets who drew almost their sole inspiration from this wondrous lake country; and to things without which I could not make clear the lives of the few who have their place within this simple tale.

My porter friend parted the maddened men as though they had been blades of grass; lifted one over my head and set him safely behind the oaken tavern door, and then, apparently without effort, lifted the other entirely over the nearest line of carts and dropped him gently on the other side; thus as effectually separating the brawlers as though the Thames were flowing between them. For a moment the market mob was silent. Then a hearty cheer of approval followed, and trailing out of this I heard a gigantic and ruffianly coster hoarsely exclaim:

"I found first that here among the dales and crags were an isolate, a distinct and a characteristic people. These dalesmen are nearly all 'statesmen,' or men owning and tilling their own pieces of land which have come down to them intact from their forefathers, who were enfranchised vassals, under the ancient feudal lords.

Then for the first time I knew that my porter friend, whom I had always accosted as 'Bob,' and who had never addressed me other than as 'Sir,' bore my own name.

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family bits of "Wedgewood" brought here from Staffordshire by hawking Gypsies; strange old chests, clocks, bureaus and settles; all mingled in most startling contrast with lawdry household ornaments of the present time; but the old things prized ever dearest still.

The village and home life of these sturdy folk is very simple and uneventful. Each little community is sufficient unto itself, because of the unbroken custom of seldom "hiving-off."

So, too, their amusements and merry-makings are few and of the most primitive character. Their piety is intense and of that stern and severe nature which is oftenest accompanied by ineradicable superstition.

With this environment and in this almost exultant mood, I came to a little coterie in southern Cumberland, near where its hoary peaks peer over upon the still mountainous but gentler heights and more peaceful lakes and glens of wondrous Westmoreland.

Spuny waterfalls hung ghostly against the crags. A dark line of fir rimmed the hollow at their base; and just where I had left the shadowy pass through which I had come from Grasmere in search of my own seat across a quaint stone bridge, perhaps as ancient as Devorgilla's gilt to olden Dumfries, in Scotland, spanned a foaming stream, which tumbled melodiously around the edge of the dale in its mad pace from the shadowy tarns above to some invisible gorge below.

Old stone walls, zigzag and sinuous, divided the dale into little steadings and these again into tiny fields. Narrow, winding lanes trailed in and about the low, gray abodes of stone; and in the branches of the matted shrubs and trees overhanging them, birds flitted and sang as if ever undisturbed by change of season or by man.

One outlook from this peaceful scene was given. Away westward through the mountains was a single rift in the wall of stone. Bright sunshine lay beyond on the bosom of a sumberous valley, sapphire set with the lovely West Water, purpling mountains still beyond.

Cattle grazed lazily within tiny out-reaching dales. Above these, almost like the chamois of the Alps, diminutive Umbrian sheep scampered along perilous ledges, or leaped prettily from rock to rock in quest of hidden banks of grass.

As stern Switzerland, as melodious the Azores and as pastoral as Italy! I could not but exclaim as I crossed the ancient bridge and passed upward through the dappled shadows of the lane to the first stone cottage beyond.

I had come to its jumbled outbuildings and stood at the corner of the main structure, which I could see faced the exquisite outlook upon West Water. Two other stone cottages stood along the lane at almost equal distances from each other and the one near which I had halted, each perhaps a quarter of a mile apart.

The first one appeared to be deserted and a weakened old man, the only human I had so far seen in the glen, stopped for a moment as he passed it and shook his withered old fist toward it menacingly.

A feeling came upon me that this cottage and this man were in some way to become concerned in my own mountain experiences; but it was only a fleeting fancy instantly dispelled, for I heard earnest and protestive voices, but a few feet distant, apparently proceeding from the open space in front of the cottage at whose corner I stood.

"We ha' gie'n ye five years, Betty Bamthel, came first in measured and reproachful tones, 'on'y t' ha' ye gie Matt Barbison th' sneck-possot (the cold shoulder)." This quietly and determinedly from some lass near the first speaker.

softly. Then she spoke to him almost tenderly. "Theer, theer, fadder. Gie me a wee bit time. I'll sa' snabe (snout) auld Matt mair. Gie me four weeks, on'y four weeks, fadder. Then—if nabuddy sumps, fadder—I'll tak auld Matt, skin, bane, pawa, barrow-back an' a' s' Ye can gie me four weeks, fadder?"

"Ay, Betty, four weeks; na mair, min' Betty. An' we'll ha' th' three gradley places an'!" "Lans a marcy!" chimed in the mother joyously. "We'll ha' Matt an' Betty struttin' awa' t' kark wi' a sonny rowth o' friend!"

It was easy to know that the tottering old man who had cursed the deserted cottage as he passed it was Matt Curbison; that the father and mother, taking no account of the family grow up of the human herd, had for years endeavored to wean the daughter from some ill fated attachment; that their own sordid natures were solely set on adding to their mountain acres, and that the lass had made a last weak and pitiful shift to gain time and peace for the almost hopeless hope to which her heart still clung.

It was a strange, sad pastoral drama which had been partially revealed to me, I thought, before I had set my eyes on a single participant's face. And I wondered if I was destined to in some inexplicable way change its dolorous course for its thus far unneeded victim.

With these feelings and reflections strong upon me, I presented myself at David Bamthel's home and met with the same hospitable welcome which is ever any honest traveler's within these glorious mountain wilds.

Mother and daughter after the first greeting disappeared to prepare the midday meal; and David Bamthel, taking a huge horn from above his wide low door blew upon it a sturdy blast which soon brought to the cottage a few servants and helpers from the adjacent hills and dales.

I neither disclosed my true character nor my full name, for I was still sore upon the subject of my trifling legacy. I simply told them I was a student, rambling for a little among the lake country mountains, in love with their people and their ways. I had money to pay for all favors asked; and for the present, plain Mr. Robert would answer for my name.

To these simple souls it mattered not what I had come for, nor how long I might remain; and as my host conducted me to my room and showed me with pride his ancient dwelling, I found myself repeatedly studying his imposing figure and typical Umbrian face.

He was more than six feet in height, and as he moved about the large, low room his head just escaped the huge oaken beams of the ceiling. His hair was soft, silken and bountiful; faxen where the silver had not yet come; and with his full, fine beard it suggested a strain of the old Norse blood. His forehead was high, wide, white. His eyebrows were bushy, but fine and flossy, above large eyes of lustrous light blue, deep set, steady and almost mournful in their gaze. The nose was strongly cut, truly classic; and the mouth was large, but characteristic and firm.

This sort of a head set upon a huge and perfect frame, stout as the timbers of his centuries-old habitation, gave its owner, who looked straight at you and made you, despite yourself, look straight at him in return, a strange feeling of dominance and power; and I remember that the thought flashed over me then: What a struggle two such men as David Bamthel and porter Bob, locked in deadly embrace, would make!

I saw little of Betty that day; but the few glimpses I caught revealed a remarkable figure and face. I was struck with her splendid stature and a certain manner of movement, full of physical fire and force, which evoked tremendous latent energies.

All this was no less impressive than her face. It was the image of her father's, firmer and finer molded in the lines of a woman's perfect countenance. Had it not been tinged with sadness it would have been almost divinely radiant. Had it not been a peasant woman's face a sculptor would have chosen it to show the placid sweetness of Niobe and tell the limitless heroic grandeur of Zenobia.

Form and face stirred me as I had never before been impressed by woman; not once with the emotions of love, but by an inexpressible compassion ever commingled with something akin to awe. I cannot now tell how well I concealed these emotions. For the time they swept all else—my calling, my friends, my future, even the petty inheritance which had covertly brought me to the Umbrian hills—completely out of my existence.

If there be any manner of hypnotism so subtle that swayed and swayed are unintentional and unconscious of its exercise and influence, and yet, which holds the subject in gossamer bonds, as firm as steel, this innocent maiden was that unconscious master and I as unconsciously her other self.

David Bamthel, as he closed the door upon his enemy and the storm. But in the morning the tempest had passed away, and with it apparently all the dread wreaths of the night before; for David Bamthel's face was as impassive as his gray house-walls of stone; and Betty Bamthel's face was as radiant as the glowing day without.

We had grown into a habit of climbing the hills toward nightfall and descending into the dale behind the shepherd's herds and the herds, after lingering for a time beside a huge table-rock, overhanging the caldron of a splendid waterfall which broke from its dark and splintered edge.

The girl had avoided me this day. The afternoon had passed; the shadows were stealing into the lower gorges; the sheep had trailed melodiously to their fold, and no tidings of the girl had been heard. It caused no alarm at the cottage; but filled with unaccountable forebodings I hastened up the heights.

I called her name, but there was no answer. I sped to the table-rock with the direct misgivings. There, upon her hands and knees, at its very brink and gazing into the dark waters below, as if with home-coming, exultant face, was the wretched maiden I sought.

Half fainting from terror I could not call. I sprang to her side just as it seemed she must plunge to her death in the foaming abyss below. I dragged her back and held her with trembling hands. Even then she regarded me with calm and pitying eyes.

"Betty!—Betty! In heaven's name, what were you about to do?" "Just gae out o' th' sorra an' fashin' about me, sir. That's a'!" "By taking your own life?" "I ha' na leef left. It's deed—deed syne Robert Dorklin went awa'!" "Robert Dorklin?"

"Ay, that's ee. Ee's ghaist coom'd l'est aet i' th' storm. I seed it i' th' leatin' flash. It stud by th' window an' shook its fist an' glower'd. 'O, Robert, Robert!' I screeched; but it turned an' skirled awa. In sin mair day, auld Matt Curbison's t' coom. Thinke, I'll bide t' th' leavin' groave wi' ee? I tell ee, sir, I'm a ready deed, deed, deed!"

My head whirled from her impassioned words, and pitiful harrassments, her desperate calmness of purpose. Not knowing what I said, I poured into her ears the wildest protestations of compassion, of friendship and I know not but of love; but all were of no avail, until I stumbled upon the magic words, "You shall not wed this wretch! I will save you from all this infamy. Betty, Betty! I will myself take you to your love—for Robert Dorklin is my friend!"

However long I may live, whatever scenes I may look upon, it will never be mine to again have retranused into my own veins such thrill of transcendent joy as now leaped into the face which but an instant before was set in the stony hardness of heroic but insufferable pain.

Almost heart to heart we descended into the saffron lighted glen. Hand in hand we ran, led by the impetuous girl, to the lonely cottage. Arm in arm we stole under its grud old sycamores and threw its rusty shutters open to the departing day. Still arm in arm, we wandered through its deserted rooms, while her now ecstatic voice prattled on and on of a miserly old man who had lived here and had died; how an orphan lad had grown to manhood in the same house, and because of the uncle's hatred for her own, and the lad's love for her, the stony heart had turned him from his door.

How, too, he had gone away to the great city to toil and save for her, with the brave parting words that if he lived he would come again for her; how the lonely old life had withered and shrunk in its hurt and hate within these very walls, until upon his dying bed he had cursed the loving heart he had turned away and left the tiny estate to a stranger of her lover's selfsame name, who had never yet been found; and how here, now, at this very moment were all things still, just as they had been left, even to Robert Dorklin's room; which we were now stealing into with the evening's shadows; for it must be seen by Betty Bamthel, for the last time, now that she was going straight to Robert, straight to her love;

"May th' guid God spare us!—its—Robert—Dorklin's—ghaist!" And so it was. It arose straight and tall and wordless from Robert Dorklin's bed, as Betty Bamthel swooned between us at its feet.

Then two huge arms shot out of the dusk, and their mighty hands rested upon my shoulders heavily, while Robert Dorklin's blazing eyes looked wildly into mine.

"Mon! mon!" he at last said almost in a whisper. "Is't you I must settle wi' now?" "No, Bob—no, no, no!" I faltered, "unless you would harm him who has, within this hour, saved that poor girl's life for herself and you!"

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GENERAL NOTICE. EXECUTOR'S NOTICE. Public notice is hereby given that I have duly qualified as executor of the last will and testament of Matilda Adams, deceased. All persons knowing themselves indebted to her estate are requested to call on me at the City Bank of Wheeling, and all persons having claims against the estate will present the same properly certified, for settlement. HENRY R. LIST, Executor, 1016

Redemption of Bonds. LOAN OF \$500. WHEELING, W. VA., October 15, 1894. The following bonds of the Loan of 1881 have this day been drawn by lot according to order of the court and will be redeemed on and after the 1st day of November, 1894, at the bank of the Ohio Valley. Interest on same ceases on that day: Numbers 40, 45, 53, 111, 124, 148, 157, 158, 182, 187, 198, 240, 252, 258, 268, 284, 305, 310, 311, 312, 342, 362, 378, 381, 385, 412, 444, 446, 453, 459, 485, 507, 525, 534, 538, 585, 595, 618, 623, 639, 660, 704, 717, 724, 725, 726, 730, one hundred dollars each; numbers 732, 783, 792, 793, five hundred dollars each, and number 863 for one thousand dollars. W. B. SIMPSON, J. B. POLLOCK, F. P. JERSON, Commissioners Loan of 1881, 1016

EXECUTOR'S SALE. EXECUTOR'S SALE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS. ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 25, 1894, at 10 o'clock, on the premises, No. 113 Chapline Street, I will proceed to sell at public auction, all of the household goods belonging to the estate of Mrs. Matilda Adams, deceased. The property consists of Parlor, Bed Room and Dining Room furniture, Carpets, etc., and kitchen utensils. Terms—Cash. HENRY R. LIST, Executor of the will of Mrs. Matilda Adams, 1016

EXECUTOR'S SALE OF STOCK AND REAL ESTATE. ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1894, at 10 o'clock, on the front door of the Court House, I will proceed to sell at public sale the following described real estate, situated in the City of Wheeling, West Virginia, to-wit: The one-half interest of the late Mrs. Matilda Adams and thirteen (13) in East Wheeling addition to the City of Wheeling, fronting 30 feet on the north side of Eighteenth Street, between 20th and Jacob streets, with a depth of 120 feet. The improvements consist of one double story and attic brick dwelling house, with a front porch, and one two-story frame dwelling house of five (5) rooms on the rear of said lot and known as No. 32 Alley A. I will also offer for sale 35 SHARES PEABODY INSURANCE COMPANY. Terms—Cash. HENRY R. LIST, Executor of the will of Mrs. Matilda Adams, 1016

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