THE BLOWING of the HORN

BLOWING of horns on occasions of joy and festivity has grown to be an established institution in the United States. Whether the custom as practiced is strictly in musical accord with the harmonious feelings of a people who in one voice indulge a celebration which affects all alike is another matter.

The bleating and the blasts, the screeches and even barbaric sounds issuing from the tin horn of to-day are brazen echoes sending up thankfulness to the lofty height of heaven for the benefits bestowed—sounds from a multitude of millions expressing satisfaction with material conditions or giving heartfelt welcome to a new year just born or a battle victory or other momentous events which make and mark the pages of history.

While the custom of horn blowing is growing, few of the old heads stop to think of its origin, and the youthful celebrant little dreams that is all traditron; that in those revelling sounds which escape neither nook nor corner, loft nor cellar, are the echoes re-echoed from thousands of centuries ago—that momentous period in the world's spiritual and material history when the blasts from the ram's horn (shophar) proclaimed from Mount Sinai the giving of the Ten Commandments to the end of time.

The first mention of it is in the Old Testament at the giving of the law:

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet.—Exodus, xx:18.

Then it was a sound which sent the blood coursing through every vein, aroused the soul's deepest reverence and brought together men in one common brotherhood.

As the sound of the horn signaled the giving of the law which was to lead mankind and stand for life's moral and spiritual obligations along the ages, the multitude bowed with feelings of awe and humility.

The sounds were new to the ears of the people who listened to their echoes along the mountain, wondering at the distant tone repetitions.

And when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

The fear then in the hearts of the multitude was significant. They realized the import of the occasion, which had been signaled by the blasts of the horn. So, from the very first introduction of the instrument its sounds have generally had a significant meaning and purpose.

How well one can picture the scene at Mount Sinai when the people trembled and stood afar off when Moses bade them to fear not; that God had come to prove them and that his fear might be before their faces that they sin not.

The sounding of the horn on an occasion so prolific with divinely potential incidents naturally brought the instrument into use and prominence during special spiritual exercises and celebrations, but later its brazen notes were heard in time of war.

They were also heard in times of extreme jubilation and in the temples of the Jews on their days of rejoicing and on the day of atonement.

In Leviticus, xxv:9, is found the following:

Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

And even in this age of "advanced thought," the Jew, following commandment and the voice of tradition, assembles in his temple to hear the sound from the shophar.

What effect must such tones issuing from a holy place have upon the hearer? They are not musical sounds, for their loud, piercing notes, with no range or compass, have never been found adaptable to concerted music.

But is this description not exactly and strangely in accord with the tones from the modern horn, the horn with which the jubilant man and youth, woman and girl, of this period give vent to their joy at the birth of the Christian new year?

Try as you will, you can get nothing but a piercing, shrill or inharmonious tone from the tin instrument, and like the ancient shophar, its tones are unmusical, having neither range or compass. If needed for such a purpose, however, its blasts from the summit of Twin Peaks would summon a multitude that would comport itself according to the import of the occasion.

In Numbers, chapter xxxix: 1, we find an injunction as to the use of the trumpet.

Therein the people are commanded on the first day of the seventh month to hold "an holy convocation," to do no servile work, it being "a day of blowing of trumpets unto you"—a feast of the trumpets.

Here is demonstrated the giving up of all labor and indulging the tones of the shophar as heard in the synagogues to this day on a like festival.

Once more this proves that the modern world, with all its innovations, with all its many smirks at tradition, with all its vainglorious boasting of a refinement overshadowing and even thoroughly eclipsing the primitive ages, follows closely the precepts inviolably set by the great forefathers, whose obedience to divine commandment was, in view of modern usages, no more loyally observed then than now.

The skeptic may say that to-day's outpourings of joy lack thought, are indulged without the slightest religious sentiment, have no relationship with the very same movements and same trumpetings that characterized the day when the law was given from Mount Sinai, those periods when joy and victory and holy festival influenced the early peoples of the earth.

Who will say that there is no feeling of thankfulness in the hearts of the nation when, with horn a-blowing and flags waving, it gives vent to its joy over victory or any great national event?

The ancient New Year's service, observed in the synagogues even at this period, is considered one of the most impressive in the Jewish liturgy. It is composed of three parts, which refer, respectively, to the sovereignty, justice and mercy of God, and as each part is concluded the shophar is sounded from the pulpit.

The first part, "Malchioth," proclaims God the universal king.

The second part, "Zichronoth," emphasizes that God remembers the work of the world and visits all creatures, and that "nothing remains concealed from his eyes."

The last part, "Shopheroth," speaks of the scriptural shophar, and especially as it is connected with the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when its tones were first heard, and also with reference to the time when the "great trumpet" will be sounded "to declare the universal triumph of liberty and religion."

In a poem sermon founded on passages from the Talmud, by the Rev. Isidore Myers, B. A., in Montreal in 1897 (5657 Jewish year), the following occurs:

What solemn thoughts each blast compels!
At every sound our bosom swells;
Our soul is stirred by every note
That issues from the shophar's throat.

The first, which "Malchioth" is named,
In which God's sovereignty's proclaimed,
Commemorates a fact sublime—
Recalls to mind creation's prime.
When God, creating out of nought,
This world into existence brought—
This universe by wisdom planned,
And framed by his almighty hand—
Whose order, beauty, harmony,
We everywhere can plainly see;
Whose every part, below, above,
The impress bears of gracious love.
The shophar's voice does first record
The coronation of the Lord.

Thus, from its first mention up to the present period, has the shophar been given the most profound and grave consideration.

Besides the sounding of the horn in the hour of religious and joyous festival it was brought into use in time of war to summon and assemble the army, and in this respect it is first mentioned in Judges, iii:27:

And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

Subsequent verses relate the defeat of 10,000 lusty men and the downfall of Moab, much resembling the bloody conflicts of later centuries, sans machinery of modern warfare.

And here we find the horn brought into military use, which is a long step from its initial requirements, when it served to bring the people together to hear the law read amid the thundering and lightning and darkness which after prevailed and filled the assembled multitude with awe and fear.

After all, in comparing the past with the present there seems but the difference in the manufacture, design and manipulation of material and the advantages in these times of having more powerful and more scientific implements with which to annihilate a foe. Indeed, it is doubtful whether anything could be more effective on a modern battlefield than the slaying of 10,000 valiant men, as was done by the Israelites who answered the shophar's call to arms.

The shophar has been utilized in other than times of law-giving and war, for it is told in Isaiah xxvii:13:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

The prophet foretold that the shophar should announce the recall of the people from exile. Therefore it is seen how, stride by stride, the shophar, the horn or trumpet, grew in use and favor and need in the world's earliest period.

Its sounds were welcomed by those to whom the law was handed down, its notes were and are maintained by one denomination to voice the anniversary of God's coronation.

By that same people its sound is resorted to as an alarm or warning of the approach of the day of atonement and that they should review the actions of the past year and prepare to become reconciled to God by means of confession to him of their sins and promise of amendment.

One other reason for the blowing of the shophar, even at this period, is to emphasize to the Jewish community the conviction that the time will come when the shophar will announce, according to the word of the prophet, a universal freedom when all oppression and tyranny shall vanish and the reign of absolute liberty will be manifested throughout the world.

IN RETREAT

By Troy Allison

THE dog beside her growled, and the woman, looking up from her novel, saw the man coming down the path, fishing tackle in hand.

The path was overgrown with weeds and there were few indications that it was used except by the cattle coming to the creek for water.

The dog arose, alertly pugnacious, and the fisherman suddenly became conscious of the fact that his favorite spot was pre-empted.

"I fear I must crave your protection." He took off his tweed cap with humorous gravity and smiled, first at the woman, then with a conciliatory air into the face of the bristling dog.

She took the dog by the collar and drew him toward her.

"I can at least offer you a reprieve from sudden death." She held the animal with a firm, white hand, and Ferroll loosened his grip on the fishing rods he had intended using as a club should the necessity arise.

"Perhaps he is stickler for etiquette," he suggested, "and might regard my civilities with less—er—animosity if I offered him my card."

"I must admit he shows more amiability toward people to whom he has been introduced."

He took a cigar case from his pocket and offered it to her, his name printed in gilt letters on the side.

"Kindly introduce me to him properly," he implored. "I wouldn't further offend his sense of propriety for worlds."

She patted the dog on the head, and, pointing toward the newcomer, made the introduction with exaggerated politeness.

"Billie, most able bodyguard of an unprotected spinster, allow me to make you acquainted with one Dr. James Ferroll."

"Quite charmed, old fellow, I assure you," Ferroll bowed extravagantly. "You'll excuse my not shaking hands? You will? That's exceedingly kind, for I would be slightly nervous about trying it on first sight."

"He will behave properly now." She paused, evidently expecting Ferroll to continue upstream.

"If you wouldn't mind," he spoke, hesitatingly, "I will ask permission to fish here; in fact, I have been dreaming about this very spot since my vacation last summer. By Jove, I've caught some beauties here."

In less than an hour she had dropped her novel on the grass by the side of the now placidly sleeping Billie and was taking her first lesson in the art of bass fishing.

When she finally took up her novel and hat preparatory to leaving he looked at her with frank friendliness.

"I'm going to be here a month. I hope I will have the pleasure of seeing you again?"

"Billie and I spend hours in this spot every day. If you do much fishing you will probably meet up with us occasionally."

Next day Ferroll had been in luck and half filled his basket when she reached the creek.

"Good morning, Billie," he called out. "I hope we are on friendly terms to-day?"

The dog sniffed at the basket of fish, then lay down on the coat Ferroll had discarded.

"That's right, old fellow, make yourself at home. I hope he doesn't object to smoke?" He looked at Miss Winchester inquiringly, carefully placed his rod in the forks of a convenient bush, and lit a cigar preparatory to a few minutes' chat.

"You are rather a plucky woman," he looked at her admiringly, "but why did you come absolutely alone?"

"That's the nice part," she fastened a wreath of green leaves around the neck of the slumbering Billie. "I was tired of everybody and, if you must know the exact truth, I ran away to keep from being married for my money. I had an idea that a match-making friend was concocting a scheme to deprive me of my liberty."

Ferroll showed a sudden interest.

"We have a bond of sympathy," he said, watching his creditable performance at making smoke rings in the calm summer air. "I have an aunt in Newport who was absolutely determined I should visit her this summer. She had picked out a rich old maid who owned a lovely cottage, and had it all planned that I was to go, to see and to conquer said spinster. So, you see, I came down here to keep from being forced into marrying for money."

"I used to know some people in Newport. What's your aunt's name?" she asked with a pretense of idle curiosity.

"Mrs. Fenlon. She's been there for the last three years only." And his observation being concentrated on his newest smoke ring, he failed to see the crimson that flushed her face when he mentioned the name of her own next door neighbor at Newport.

* * * * * * *

Billie's mistress sat under the tree by the creek one day until she had finished her book, and still Ferroll had not appeared.

She leaned over and patted the dog's head.

"It's the first time in three weeks that he has not been here first, Billie," she said.

Billie gave a snort that either expressed ridicule for the anxiety in her voice, or disapproval of having his ears rubbed the wrong way. Then he suddenly sat up to listen, and in a few minutes Ferroll came down the path.

For the first time he came without his fishing tackle. He threw himself down on the ground beside them and scowled into the dog's welcoming eyes.

"Billie, I want you to know that I'm an egregious idiot. Perhaps you will be somewhat at sea as to the meaning of egregious, but I assure you it's the very worst kind of idiot."

Miss Winchester raised her eyebrows in sympathetic surprise.

"Suppose you tell us how you became aware of your mental defects," she suggested.

He pulled the dog's head over on his knee.

"Billie, I dare not tell her how I discovered the fact of my idiocy. Last night when I left the creek I was a happy man. I had determined to come down here this morning and ask you how you would like to live in a house with a doctor's sign on it. I had a faint hope that your mistress would hate to give you up, and would come, too, to look after you, you know. But, Billie, that hope is as dead as a doornail. I had a letter from my aunt this morning, and she mentioned casually—oh, yes, darn casually—that she was glad I had postponed my visit, as Miss Julia Winchester was not at home, and she would not have me miss having a trial at winning her money for anything."

The woman sat perfectly quiet while he continued his confidences.

"Now she would always think I was after her money, you unsympathetic brute, and to make matters worse, I have kept her amused for three weeks with jokes about the old maid at Newport. Billie, do you think there is a living woman that would overlook being called an old maid?"

She reached over and took hold of one of the dog's maltreated ears.

"Lend me an ear, Billie. You ought to be a well-trained dog, for I have spent hours on your education. Get up and express nicely to the gentleman your overwhelming desire to live in a house ornamented by a doctor's sign."

Then she managed to force her head away from Ferroll's shoulder long enough to add another sentence.

"You might state that your mistress has a fondness for egregious idiots, Billie."

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APRIL SHOWERS

By Ruth Sawtelle

THE raindrops pattered down as merrily and musically as if an unexpected shower were a most delightful thing. They washed the pavement to a fresh red, making tiny rivulets of the gutters.

But Phyllis Dalrymple was not occupied with admiration of the raindrops' pranks. It was provoking! Ten minutes before there had not been a suspicion of rain. And here she was cooped up on the tiny piazza of an apartment-house, without the remotest hope of rescue till the rain should please to cease. How empty the street seemed, too!

A lone pedestrian! Enviable creature, with rain coat and umbrella, sauntering along as if being out in the rain were the pleasantest thing imaginable. And now—what an odd young man he was, stopping right in front of her to watch the tiny river swirl and divide upon an obstructing brick!

"I beg your pardon, sir, but could you possibly let me—" Her voice faltered.

Herbert Ward wheeled about and beheld, perched on the top step under the narrow shelter, a most alluring picture of distress.

"Can I be of assitance?" he began, drawing nearer, hat in hand. "You were speaking to me?"

The vision stiffened from its appealing attitude.

"You must be mistaken, sir. I do not recall having met you." Then, hastily, at his look of injured surprise, "Oh, yes, yes. Forgive me. I did speak to you. Oh, please don't go away and leave me now!"

The bewilderment on Ward's face was so very frank that the girl broke into a ripple of laughter.

"Really, I must ask you to forgive me again. I do not mean to be rude. But it was funny to see you looking as overcome as I felt. There! That smile makes me sure you are good-natured, and if you'll come up out of the rain I'll try to tell you."

Ward accepted with alacrity.

As a matter of fact it was not raining much now, but the big umbrella and its stalwart owner were excellent company in the deserted street.

"I almost believe I like unconventionality," said Phyllis, picking her way as a daintv woman will. "It's so so—well, different from everyday."

"I am convinced that I like unconventionality, if this is it," responded Ward.

Phyllis looked reproachful.

"This was what I thought about it before I first spoke," she said hurriedly. "Of course, we don't know each other at all—"

"Worse luck!" said a voice at her side.

"But I need to be rescued, and he's apparently nothing better to do than rescue me. He looks trustworthy, and after he takes me to Mrs. Walker's where I can send for the carriage, we shall never see each other again—"

"Never see each other again! Oh, I say, after I do my best—"

"—And as I am perfectly sure"—with no hesitation to show that she heard a word of the protest—"from his appearance that he would not dream of taking advantage of my confidence, I think I shall run the risk of appealing to his generosity."

They walked for a minute silently. Then she stole a glance at his clear-cut face, flushed with mortification, and relented.

"You are doing me such a favor"—more genially—"that I don't mind telling you that I was horribly frightened after I spoke, and I truly believe I should have run away the minute you turned if it hadn't been for the rain."

"Thank heaven for rain!" he murmured, so fervently that they both smiled, and caught each other in the act.

"But I really think it's not raining a drop now," she said. "There's nothing left but the sprinkle from the trees."

"It would ruin your frock in no time." And he gave the exquisitely gowned little figure another openly approving smile.

"But of course," responded Phyllis, "I couldn't permit myself to presume upon your kindness when I don't really need you, and you see the sun is trying its best to shine this very minute."

"May failure attend its efforts! That is—I mean—you know how very uncertain such weather is, and if I allowed you to be caught again I'd never forgive myself."

"Oh, you wouldn't think of it again, of course," she laughed coyly. "But I should be desolated if I caused you to miss your appointment. It's quite a little nearer 3 than it was, you know."

"Hang the appointment! Oh, I say, I beg your pardon, you know. But really I'm having such a good time, I'd forgotten. And it's a bore, anyway."

"The appointment?"

"Yes, a beastly duty, you see. You wouldn't mind my unburdening myself? I'm just in town for a few weeks on business and an old school chum made me promise I'd look up his sister—gave me a letter and all that which I'm to present this afternoon. I know her sort too well—the frothy, gushy kind. Old Bob's the right stuff, but these girls—Lord! I'd no end rather be excused. If it had only been some one like you, now—"

"Oh, you really mustn't say it!" came a queer, muffled voice.

"Ward looked down to see a very pink face, a pair of unaccountably roguish eyes and a tempting mouth that twitched at the corners.

"Why mustn't I say it?" he persisted. "Hang conventionality! There I go again—but hang it, anyway! Here I am having the best time of my life, and just because we happen not to have met formally I can't say what I think. And worse still, I've got to go presently and run my head straight into a noose. Probably find an 'at home,' and the house full of others just like her. I'd not rebel at all if you were to 'take care' of me—that is, if you were willing. Can't we be introduced or something, whatever would be necessary to make it proper?"

The pretty face had burned pinker and pinker.

"Don't you think you're a bit hard on a girl you've never seen?" suggested the same muffled voice.

"Don't have to see her. What's more, don't want to. I know the sort, I tell you. But Bob—"

"Bob who? I might know his sister."

"Bob Dalrymple. Grand old chap, too."

"I knew it," triumphantly. "I mean—yes, I have heard of him. And here we are at Mrs. Walker's. You can't think how grateful I am for the share in your umbrella—and your very refreshing frankness. Good-by."

Then the gate slammed against her hand, and a shower of white cards sprinkled the walk. Ward bent to pick up her purse, and from every white square was confronted by the words "Miss Phyllis Dalrymple."

"Miss Dalrymple," he stammered in an agony of humiliation. "I—I—how could you let me—I—"

But Phyllis was tripping up the walk. As she reached the step she turned and smiled. Just then the sun burst from behind a cloud, transforming the world into a sparkle of diamond drops.

"Miss Dalrymple will be at home, alone, at 3," she said. "It is possible that she would listen to a—well, let us say an explanation."

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