

GRACE GREENWOOD.

BY SARAH K. BOLTON..

Years ago, as I read Grace Greenwood's books and recognized in them a keen delight in Nature, a love of freedom, and a great heart, I wondered how she looked, how she talked, and if I should ever see her. Some years since I read that she was to give a lecture, at the large public hall in the city where I lived, on "The Heroic in Common life." Of course, I eagerly hastened thither. She came upon the stage, tall and with fine address, gracious and gentle, yet strong, and with distinct utterance and in graphic words told of the nobility of human nature, even under the commonest types and the humblest surroundings. No one who heard that lecture went away without a heart full of sympathy and eyes open to the good which lies close to our feet and is so constantly overlooked. I did not dream that circumstances would one day bring me under the same roof with the famous author and lecturer. This winter, in Paris, we have boarded in the same pleasant pension, and as the acquaintance has grown I have added affection to my old-time admiration.

Grace Greenwood is not as young now as when, nearly twenty-eight years ago, she wrote "Haps and Mishaps of a Tour in Europe," when, in the flush of a national reputation as a poet and novelist, she received the attentions of Dickens, Mrs. Browning, and others; but the same fun-loving spirit is in her heart and breaks forth in her face. She enjoys life, albeit she has done earnest and wearing work, as keenly as when she galloped across the fields and hills about her home. That home was of the pure New England type, for, though she was born in the State of New York and spent much of her life in Pennsylvania, she was of New England parentage. Her mother was of Huguenot descent; her father (Dr. Thaddeus Clark) of English Puritan blood, he being a relative of Jonathan Edwards.

Often of an evening in Paris we gathered about her, asking for a recitation—perhaps some quaint, humorous poem by Will Carleton or Bret Hart, or something tragic; and though she is often weak and ill (having suffered much at intervals, for years, from bronchitis and asthma), she always, when possible, consented. On the stage Grace Greenwood would have made a success, in either tragedy or comedy. Perhaps she might have

wood?" Whittier and a few others knew that it was Sara J. Clarke, and they looked on admiringly, wondering what this fresh, earnest life would be as it came to full bloom and fruition. For three years she was one of the regular contributors to The National Era. Her first book, "Greenwood Leaves," was published in 1850, and her "Poems" and "Recollections of My Childhood" and "History of My Pets" in 1851.

The poems are natural, fresh, pure, and some of them very beautiful. The "Horse-back Ride," composed on horseback, is so true to life that, in reading it one feels the blood tingling in his finger-tips, as in the glowing early morning, he beholds Nature at her best and realizes how good it is to live. "Ariadne Deserted on the Isle of Naxos by the Demigod Theseus" has won great praise as it deserves. The Tribune said of it: "It is a poem rich in passionate expression and classic grace," and also adds: "Grace Greenwood is one of the most interesting story-writers of this or any other country."

The poem entitled "The Poet of To-day," a fine and mature creation, won her much fame and golden words from the poet Longfellow. After this she spent one of the happiest years of her life abroad. Hon Abbott Lawrence was our minister to England, and he and others made her stay there one of great pleasure. In Italy she had some unique experiences as, being a friend of Mazzini's she was carefully watched. On her return home, "Haps and Mishaps of a Tour in Europe" added to her reputation. Of this 8,000 were sold rapidly. Next came "The Forest Tragedy," dedicated to Mary Howitt; then "Merrie England," a year later; "Histories for Children," "Stories from Famous Ballads" "Stories and Sights in Italy and France," "Record of Five Years," in 1867; "New Life in New Lands," in 1873; "Heads and Tails," "Stories of Pet Animals and Birds," etc. Her children's books have numbered about a dozen, I believe. Of late years she has brought out no books, though she has done much work in the way of letters and essays in daily papers and magazines articles which she has not collected for republication.

In 1853 Grace Greenwood was married to Mr. L. K. Lippincott, of Philadelphia, a gentleman of much literary and artistic taste and culture. For some twelve years she resided in the "City of Brotherly Love," when she wrote for various magazines and journals, among the latter The Inde-

decided on a dramatic profession, having in her youth received much encouragement from distinguished actors and actresses, both in England and America, but she was dissuaded by her family and friends, never having had, she says, a will strong enough to resist the wishes of those she loved. Doubtless, it is best as it is; that what the stage lost has gone into books and lectures and even inside talks. An actor's work is done when life is finished. Not so the author's, whose thoughts pass into other lives, and so live on and on.

When Grace Greenwood was not reciting, we often begged her to talk to us. She has traveled much, has a prodigious memory, and is one of the best conversationalists I ever listened to. She has known, in many cases intimately, most of the leading authors, artists, politicians, philanthropists, agitators, and actors of her time. In Washington she knew Clay, Webster, Seward, and Lincoln; in Boston, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Sumner, Lowell, and Whittier; in London, Massie, and Kosuth, Dickens and Talfourd, Landor, Kingsley, Lover, the Howitts, Miss Muloch, George Eliot, and many others. In Rome, where she resided with Miss Cushman, she knew the English and American colony of artists and literateurs, and, later, the grand old soldier, Garibaldi. So she has no end of charming reminiscences. Such a book as she could write on these friendships and associations would be a storehouse for those who love the gifted and truly noble.

Grace Greenwood is above medium height; with a handsome face and a head, which from its size and high, broad forehead, one would say belonged to a man; dark hair, slightly touched with silver; and large dark eyes, that kindle with feeling or brighten with amusement. Hers has been a busy, earnest and successful life. Her school-days were spent at Rochester, N. Y. Here some of her poems were accepted by the press when she was just entering her teens. From thence her family moved to New Brighton, Penn. Here the young girl found that she had powers that must needs be used. Slavery was then hanging like a pall over the country, and her hand was one of the first to help tear away the hated thing and let in the light of a new day of freedom.

Her work now began to appear in the Liberator, The Home Journal, and other papers, and the world soon asked: "Who is this brilliant writer whose nom de plume is Grace Greenwood, and edited The Little Pilgrim, a charming publication, known and loved by adults, as well as young folk. Next, for several years, she resided in Washington, from which city she wrote several series of semi-political letters to the New York Tribune and Times. For the latter journal she has written many letters from Europe. She is a most painstaking writer. Although composing rapidly, work never goes from her hand till it is carefully polished though she really cares little for fame. She has great power of concentration, composing while others are in the room busily talking. Until the death of her mother, who never wished to be out of her sight, Grace Greenwood worked usually while some one read aloud to the aged woman. During the war she lectured almost constantly and her overwork, doubtless, accounts for the illness of the last few years. Besides these intellectual gifts, she is most skilled with her needle and an admirable house-keeper. For some time she has been abroad for the musical education of her daughter. Miss Annie Lippincott, who has studied under various masters in England, Florence, and Paris making the best progress I hear under her present teacher, Signor Spriglia, a maestro of the true old Italian method. Already the Paris papers speak of her in high praise. Her voice is a clear, sweet, high soprano, and with a manner most unaffected and modest and a beautiful face, she seems likely to win fame in music, as her mother has in literature. Mrs. Lippincott has planned much work for the future when she returns to America.

Driving out in the Bois with her on my last day in beautiful Paris, I wondered when again I should hear this bright, gifted woman talk. Perhaps not again. Sometimes lives touch once for all, but are again quite the same after it. New thoughts and inspirations have birth, and of such meetings and such developings this life, which is only a growth, is made up.

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