

OLD ST. JOHN'S GATE.

go on, you pass close to the high walls of a cloister overtipped by snow-drifts, beside cannon pointing above the confusion of

roofs at the foot of the crag, and into the impenetrable veil of the storm. The gloom of the great northern wilderness bears down into your very soul, but the dormer windows over the wall of the cloister light up as friendly eyes, the Angelus sounds from the chapel of the nuns, and you feel again that you are near to the beating heart of the old city. Then let the clouds pass and the moonlight come, and the scene becomes enchanted. The street is as silent as a polar sea; its broken, jagged lines of gables, dormers, and chimneys, in alternate light and shadow, rise against a sky of dark blue; wherever the moonbeams touch the roofs, icicles and snow crystals gleam out in response. But, as the white earth reflects the light, the air itself seems luminous, and you see everything below the sky-line as if in a dream.

The bells of a sleigh sound for a moment from the busier thoroughfare into your retired lane; and now and then a muffled figure crosses in the distance; the creaking of steps on the snow dies away, and all relapses into an unbroken silence. On Christmas-eve you would find the same scene of rare and delicate beauty, only that on that sacred night the city heart would be all aglow—though little would escape through doors and windows into the silent streets. Now and then the strains of some ancient Christmas carols would sound faintly through the double sashes, as from some under-world, prelude the midnight music when the chimes break out, and the still air beats with the world's emotion. You look up, and the old city on the crags seems to lie close to the glory of the midnight sky.

Charles H. Farnham.

THE MINSTREL AT CASTLE GARDEN.

HARK, whence come those strange vibrations, whence that haunting monotone,
Like a mournful voice in darkness, crooning softly and alone,
Breathing melancholy whispers that might move a heart of stone?

What lone soul, surcharged with sorrow, voices here its weird lament,—
Here where Europe's eager exiles, still with hope and strength unspent,
Throng beneath the wide-flung portals of this mighty continent?

Hark! methinks that in the music of that gently murmured strain
I detect a Norseland cadence trembling through its sad refrain,—
Something wild and vague, awaking strange responses in my brain.

Ah, behold! there sits the minstrel high above the surging throng,
On a heap of chests and boxes, playing dreamily along,
Luring back his vanished Norseland by the tone's enchantment, strong!

Well I know those guileless features, mirroring the childlike soul,
And those patient eyes and placid, that disguise nor joy nor dole,
And the sturdy, rough-hewn figure, rugged like a fir-tree's bole.

In his violin whose hollow chambers plaintively resound
Is a hushed metallic tremor—shadow voices, felt, not found,
By the louder human bustle to the blunter senses drowned.

How they gently stir within me buried chords that long were mute;
And dim memories, awaking, quiver with a life acute,
Of my youth, with its ideals and the long and vain pursuit!

God, the judge, the stern and loving, dwelt among my childhood's hills,
And his voice was in the thunder and his whisper in the rills;
Visibly his hand extended in my little joys and ills.

And his eye, so large and placid, kept its watch behind the cloud;
Saw that all went right in Norway; cheered the humble, awed the proud;
And amid the forest stillness oft, methought, he spoke aloud.

Avalanches, hail, and lightning sped the message of his wrath;
He destroyed and he relented, spreading like a healing bath
Sun and rain to raise the harvest in the devastation's path.

Rude, perhaps, though not ignoble, was that calm and simple life,
Blooming in idyllic quiet and with hope and promise rife,
Sheltered safe from vexing problems and from thought's harassing strife.

Hush, the minstrel's mood is changing! He has bade the old farewell!
From his sight has Norway faded, with the mountain-guarded dell
And the legend-haunted forests where the elves and nixies dwell.

Through a maze of wildering discords—*presto* and *prestissimo*,—
Runs the bow—a wild *legato* rocking madly to and fro,
As if wrestled in the music, hope and longing, joy and woe.

Joy has triumphed! See how broadens life beyond this moment's bar!
How the future brightens, beckons, wide, refulgent, star on star;
And the prairies' rolling harvest glimmers faintly from afar.

Blindly hast thou come, O minstrel, like a youth of old renowned,
Who his father's asses seeking, by good chance a kingdom found;
Awed, I ween, and wonder-stricken, standing sceptered, robed, and crowned.

Thus shalt thou, who bread art seeking, conquer boons undreamed, unsought;
Thou shalt learn to doubt and suffer; lose thy peace so cheaply bought;
Souls grow strong and blossom only on the battle-field of thought.

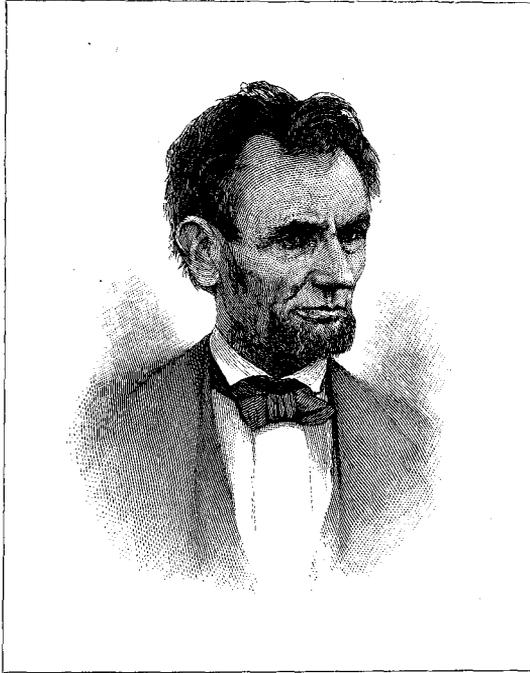
Thine shall be the larger knowledge which the daring age has won;
Thou shalt face the truth, unquailing, though thy faith be all undone.
Bats may blink in dusty corners; eagles gaze upon the sun.

Creeds may vanish, thrones may totter, empires crumble in decay;
But the ancient God of Battles is the God of strife alway;
Who shall bless his foe that wrestles bravely until dawn of day.

Hjalmar H. Boyesen.



TWO PORTRAITS OF LINCOLN.*



ABRAHAM LINCOLN. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN MARCH 6TH, 1865.)

THE portrait of President Lincoln which serves as the frontispiece of this number of the magazine, is a copy of an ambrotype which was taken in Springfield, Illinois, in 1860, two days after Mr. Lincoln's first nomination. The original was made in the presence of Marcus L. Ward, afterward Governor of New Jersey, who has kindly lent it to the magazine, and given its history in the accompanying letter. The smaller portrait, above, is a copy of a photograph which was taken six weeks before the President was assassinated, and under circumstances which are interestingly described by Mr. Alexander Starbuck, of Waltham, Massachusetts. The two pictures enable us to contrast the features of President Lincoln in their earlier strength, as they appeared two days after he was named for the presidency, with their thought-chiseled and careworn aspect a few days before his death :

“NEWARK, N. J., Dec. 19, 1881.

“EDITOR OF THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

“SIR : I send you with this the ambrotype portrait of our late President Lincoln, to be

used in such way as may be most useful to you. The history of the picture is as follows : On Friday, the 19th of May, 1860, the day succeeding Mr. Lincoln's nomination, I left Chicago for his home in Springfield, for the purpose of congratulating him and forming his personal acquaintance. I was kindly received, and invited to share his hospitalities. Though this kindness was declined, I was enabled to see much of him during the few days of my sojourn at Springfield. On the next day after my arrival,—the 20th,—I suggested to Mr. Lincoln that I would like to be the possessor of a good likeness of himself. He replied that he had not a satisfactory picture, ‘but then,’ he added, ‘we will walk out together and I will sit for one.’ The picture I send you was the result of that sitting. No one, I imagine, will fail to recognize in the expression of the face those noble qualities of the man—honesty, gentleness, and kindness of heart—which so endeared him to all who knew him.

“Very truly your friend,

“MARCUS L. WARD.”

* For other original portraits of Lincoln see the frontispiece to this magazine for February, 1878, which was copied from what was supposed to be the last photograph taken from life; also the life-mask in the issue for December, 1881.