ECHOES FROM BABYLON

The Fifth of November—The Unique London Costor—Lord Mayor's Day—London's $25,000,000 Fire—Fire Department Forty Years Behind the Times—Utahnians in London, Etc.

Regular Correspondence.

London, Nov. 23, 1897.—November home up dear to the average Londoner's heart, for does it not suggest pleasant diversions involving the glorious Fifth with its bonfires and crackers galore—a modified Fourth of July as to speak? And, furthermore, does not that great representative institution that has been in vogue for 600 years past, viz., the Lord Mayor's show, take place four days subsequent? Then there is to seen a cup-tie football match every Saturday afternoon at which event there is ever to fifty thousand football cranks make the welkin ring with their slogans and other Attractions begins to get tired of slaughtering hundreds of brace of tame pheasants and partridges upon their preserves so it looks back to the days when the cockney put on their best attractions, and the policemen, who regulate the mud-bespattering traffic, their oddities. Fog, slush, umbrellas and cough mixture. November the month the Modern Babylon.

True to the fifth of November, 1605, the Guy Fawkes, as every school boy knows, was discovered modestly retiring behind a stack of barrels of gunpowder in the vaults underneath the House of Parliament at Westminster by an officer detailed with a dark lantern and matches, it was surmised that he contemplated taking a rise out of King James and his parliament that shortly would have assembled a few brief feet overhead. After the custom of the period, Mr. Fawkes had an extremely lively and harrowing time and was ultimately ushered into the great beyond assisted by a masked gentleman in black tights armed with a bone axe. Bright and early on November 5, 1897, the anniversary of Fenton street was broken by what the average Johnny Bull would delude under the caption of "a bloomin racket." If it had been a little after midnight, when the "pubs" close, the aforesaid racket would have passed without comment, but such an unusual proceeding, when revellers were craving and tired winners at work, honestly and unostentatiously plying it in progress. From the street below arose the strains, accompanied by a tin can banjo:

"Please to remember the fifth of November
The gunpowder treason and plot;
I see no reason why the gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.
Guy Fawkes, Guy, stick him in the fire,
To burn in a lamp post and there let him die.

Whoop."

The two last lines to be repeated ad libitum until the chorus becomes decidedly tiresome to the long-suffering inmates of the adjacent flotsam of seven dependents of the faith, who were wasting the precious hours of daylight in sound, restful somnolency. It was but the work of an instant: "Get up, Bill, it is the fifth of November." A diplomatic investigation from ambush on the part of those interested, disclosed that these inharmonious noises proceeded from a band of matutinal disturbers armed as rumbled with tin cans and like diabolics, not the candi were attired mostly in fantastic garb and possessed faces that were literally smeared with soot. This motley gang, ever chanting their lugubrious refrain, were busily engaged in escorting a sooty barrow, drawn by a patient "mokie." Upon the barrow in state was seated and effigy—possibly it was intended to represent the hero of the Fifth of November. At the same time Mr. Fawkes in his day was a strict Catholic, it seemed slightly inconsistent that his mute chest should be escorted to the tune of Salvation Army jingo. This particular Guy was further possessed with a decided Hebraic cast of countenance together with a decidedly clay pipe stuck between his lips. As to his anatomy, it was developed to most undesirable fullness owing to an unequal distribution of stuffings. Taken all together it was a most "revolting" looking effigy. All day long were these effigies drawn around the streets and on every corner the London pedestrian is consequently held up for pennies "for the Guy."

It was in the evening when the fun and frolic and fatigue, especially upon what may be designated as London playground, viz., Hampstead Heath, or as it is better known, "happy hospital bank." To see the Heath at its best one would do well to visit it on a Bank holiday, during the summertime, when the huge undulating park like sing of London is dotted with rows of hill workers. But ever the Heath is in summer the cornicles is an oil mosaic, showing salivated ones thick as peony at old Aunt Sally or somesuch, rig the cane and other delightful pastimes dear to the cockney landlubbers heart. Not only do these small holes line the roads and course in the walks of the trees, but they are repeated and re-repeated all over the Heath in a most haphazard fashion that is to say, the last scrap for all the world as though they had been shaken out of a bag. The economics of humanity are the same in particulars, for everywhere, ten simon pure oil fiend, fun hall-marked from the days of the Morris dancers and guisers to the present, a regular comic opera so to speak, with a chorus some score strong of bakers, sippers, and the like, minus the vases for wear—let us be charitable and say, suffering from the effects of cane-rubbing. Then there are mixed soldiers with their absurd side whiskers, unmistakably drunken Jolly Jack Tars and nursemaids.

The soldiers are distinctly a London institution—kind of a cross between a Jerry bluth and a Hyde street bounce. They have a regulation dress, pea-jacket, striped shirt, and wonderful caps made and fitted individually, who affect a curl dropped down on the center of their forehead, surrounded by a cap exactly like unto a tam-o'-shanter. Their sweetheart also a suit of clothes intricately dressed from the velvet collar of the house maid-ensemble of their full buttoned velvet striped pants with two rows of small buttons, each as big as a half dollar, which the aforesaid individuals affectionately designate as their "tuppenny bits." The women and girls are fine, and wonderfully made and affect umbrella sized mutton hats with multi-colored feathers. Further they are adorned with numerous cut-tail curls and fringes in front. Add to all the bag of the hood as big as a football, enclosed in a net. They manifest a passion for red and other colored check skirts and beaded trimmed velvet capes. Here their affinity as regards dress terminates, for the shoes are decidedly boss in comparison, the boots in most cases run up the side of their feet and their toes spread as the pads. Oh, how they do gather around a band organ or a band engaged in a free for all dance, and they dance very gracefully too, with just a suggestion of high kicking.

It was just such an aggregation of Londoners that gathered on Hampstead Heath on the night of the fifth to witness the annual parade, bonfire and fireworks that are held there. Whoop! there they go in squads, twenty or more girls with their arms lovingly enwreathed around their immediate neighbors' necks, and in a row completely across the road, filling the cheers of the latest popular ditty:

"Nothing, nothing, nothing to spend
If you want to be a family man there's
nothing to have but kids."

Whoop! down go their heads simultaneously, apparently aimed for the fourth button of one's vest. Just when you deem annihilation inevitable, up comes a phanium of millinery and twenty shattered weeks of evenings are all eleven pence woes are shaken definitely at the horizon.

Dancing in its barbaric fashion seems to be confined exclusively to the girls or "Arrers as they are designated by scoffers, whilst the Arrers content themselves with making night hideous with catcalls, concertanas and harmonicas. To such an extent do the Arrers throw themselves into the gay measure that one trembles, for as he of the pensive glee aptly said in song, "Arrers pins are generally vended between the pins, that one may truthfully say that their contingent gets and sees at every point. Suddenly a Arrer apparently breaks in two at the waist, and with a sharp pull-back regains her compliancently remarks: "How it, give us a pin, Lisa," and continues in the mad career. Yet Mar cries are the English take their pleasure sadly? Taken as a class, the coster girls are somewhat stout and although their vocabulary is anything but refined, they are possessed of a moral code of virtue.

One parade is much like another. There are the same blatant brassy bands with plenty of drum, floats, rank and file, etc.; one bonfire greatly resembles another and as the sky rockets ascend up to the sky as in America so in England, a long drawn prolonged O-o-Oh! goes up from the upturned faces. Then the parade started on its tour of the Heath, a general bombardment on the part of the crowd ensued in the form of squibs and crackers buried with telling effect at the contiguous feet of the wearers of the aforesaid tile floats. Britannia, who happened on this occasion to be of the fairer sex, nonchalantly, on the occasion, upon receiving an explosive firework upon the apex of the helmet, delivered a kick that Saturday afternoon with great relat, the reproduction of which in cold type would seriously jeopardize the future prospects of the illustrype; confetti scattered to the four winds and scything over everything and everybody, now and then, and in one's hair, white "Arrer armed with squibs and lady tormentors dispersed made life a dreary blank to any who had the hardihood to wear a silk hat.

Lord Mayor's Day was but a repetition of four days previous, although on the first that the route of the procession was the heart of the staid old city, possibly things did not assume such a boisterous form. In the afternoon, however, for the parade traffic was entirely suspended at an early hour, the numerous contingents of the aforesaid crowd had to be amused, so battalions of young medical students, dressing for the occasion as the most ludicrous possibility they could devise, descended to furnish gratis entertainment, by way of humorously smashing hats, defying the constables to arrest and making life a burden to those in the immediate vicinity. The sentiments of the onlookers overlooking the streets further indulged in the time honored custom of hooting pennies up, down and over a policeman's head and then hurling them promiscuously amongst the crowd below. As they did not feel inclined to "do" the procession myself, I was fortunate in securing a window overlooking the line of the route, and from this coign of vantage I had a most excellent view of the whole proceedings. Of course