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A REMINISCENCE OF TRAVEL.

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All day long our faithful steamer had busily stemmed the rushing current of the Upper Columbia. When, at nightfall, we made a landing at the little wind-worn village which was for several years the head of the interior navigation of the great Pacific Northwest, and I sought entertainment for the night at an old *adobe* hotel (the only one the tiny hamlet afforded), only to find it full to overflowing, I was sorely puzzled.

All around me was the jar and jam and din of travel. Several switches lay alongside the wharf, upon which long flat cars were running to and fro, and with apparent aimlessness, endangering life and limb. The sand and pebbles blew in clouds, and the smooth cobble-stones beneath my feet rolled at every step, alarmingly suggestive of heavy falls and broken bones.

I could have remained on the steamer till 3 A. M., the obliging Captain had informed me, but I could see no final liberation from my quandary by postponing the dilemma for half the night, so I directed my steps to a long, low building in front of which was a brilliant light, that, as I knocked at the door, revealed the evidence that I was about to enter the Oregon Steam Navigation Company's express and transportation office.

A bright little boy admitted me to the inner portal, and a blue-eyed woman, apparently on the sunny side of thirty, welcomed me to the hospitality of her home. Her husband, a great-hearted, kindly-visaged, but extremely busy man, was hurrying hither and thither about his work, and the telegraph apparatus in the corner convulsively clicked at intervals. The little children, accustomed to the faces of strangers, paid little heed to my presence till I managed, by the promise of a story, to draw them toward me.

A smoking supper had allayed my hunger, and, after a few marvelous accounts of impossible adventures with white rabbits and turtle doves, the little ones were dismissed for the night, and my hostess and I settled ourselves for a cozy chat around the glowing stove.

A rap at the door startled us. It was not the cool rap of a regular caller, but the nervous attempt of some one in a hurry or in great agitation.

My hostess turned pale.

"I had a queer dream last night, and I feel a peculiar foreboding," she said.

"Of evil?" I asked, with a show of concern.

"Not evil exactly, but surprise," she answered, as she opened the door and admitted the landlady of the one *adobe* hotel.

The two stepped behind the great counter in the opposite corner from the telegraphic instruments, out of hearing of my host and myself, even had we been disposed to listen to their words. They talked in whispers for a minute or two, and, when the landlady bowed herself out, my hostess returned to her chair, pale and preoccupied, with a strange light in her eyes, and a furtive look of perturbed expectancy which so impressed me that I could not help saying:

"Has anything happened?"

She did not reply.

Presently the door was opened wide, and a pale, furrowed-faced woman entered, accompanied by a well-grown, fair-haired youth of apparently twenty summers.

My hostess advanced and kissed the youth and motioned him to a seat on the lounge. He accepted the seat, and she stood a little apart for a minute, eying him earnestly, and then, to my surprise, advanced and perched herself upon his knee, taking no notice of the pale-faced woman, who was silently shedding tears.

"How beautiful you are!" she exclaimed, as she threw one arm around the young fellow's neck, and with her other hand stroked his really handsome forehead.

"My mother!" cried the boy, entrelling her in his strong arms with a bear-like hug as he spoke, and bursting into tears like a sorrow-burdened child.

My busy host turned from his work to gaze at them. I seemed riveted to the spot. The pale woman with the furrowed face was still standing, silently shedding tears.

The mother and son clasped each other closely for a full minute, though the time seemed much longer to the husband and myself.

"Nobody can tear you away from me now," said the mother, earnestly.

"But I must go on to-night. I promised," faltered the boy.

"Would you have known me, darling?" asked the mother, through her tears.

"No," was the candid reply. "Father said you were ugly and hideous and old and bad, and I see that you're young and handsome, with nothing hideous or bad about you."

"We thought we'd better let him see his mother

once in his life," said the pale woman, addressing myself. "Though I think we had better go now," turning to the boy, who showed no disposition to relax his hold upon his mother's form.

"It'll be late, and the folks'll be looking for us. Come!" the woman exclaimed, emphatically.

The boy, accustomed to obeying the foster mother, who had reared him from infancy, let his hands drop, mechanically.

"Go, my son," said my hostess, rising, "and may the loving angels guide you. But, first, let me introduce you to my husband."

The youth advanced and bowed. My host, who had prepared to go out in the darkness on an errand to the waiting steamer, swung the lantern he was holding, and deferentially touched his cap. I fancied there were tears in his eyes. The wires clicked in the corner, and he excused himself and withdrew.

The pale woman awkwardly fumbled her shawl. I turned my head and shut my eyes and tried not to be in their way. My mind was in a tumult of strange surmises. What could it all mean?

A minute later, the woman and the youth were gone.

My hostess came softly up to me and knelt by my side in silence.

"Thank God!" she said, after a long pause, in a half whisper.

"Do you want to tell me about it, dear?" I asked, laying my hand upon her shining head, and gently stroking her waving hair.

She drew up a low chair and seated herself, sighing heavily.

"There are stranger tragedies in real life than ever find their way into novels," said she, in an abstracted way.

I silently acquiesced.

"I am thirty-two years old," she continued, after another long pause, "but I have lived much more than most women who have reached three score."

Again I was silent. The wind howled in the fissures of the mighty rocks adjacent to the ragged hamlet, and the busy Columbia poured its rapid waters over the boulders in its rugged bed, resistlessly carrying on the unceasing erosion of the ages.

"I was first married at fourteen," said my hostess, with a shudder. "Would to heaven I might forever forget the fact!"

"Were you so very unhappily married?" I asked.

"How could I be otherwise? What was I supposed to know of the responsibilities, realities and subjugations of my fate? Fancy a child of fourteen, tender, imaginative, ambitious and withal poorly disciplined, being suddenly placed, even through her own consent, in the sole custody and power of a great, green, unfeeling border ruffian, whose tender mercies were the direst cruelty. See her placed out on the frontier, in a lonely cabin in a howling wilderness. Let her become a mother under circumstances too sad and terrible to repeat. Let her flee at last, in desperation, and in quest of food, carrying her babe with her—herself yet a child. Let her find a position at meager wages and slavish toil in the kitchen of a woman scarcely better married, as regards mating, than herself; and then let the man the law calls her husband rob her of her baby boy, and hide him from her sight till he is grown to manhood. Then, after a chain of circumstances too complicated to repeat, let that boy, grown almost to manhood, suddenly come into her presence for a few minutes, only to vanish as he came, and need you ask the question, 'Were you so very unhappily married?'"

"Who was this woman who accompanied him here to-night?" I asked, deeply interested.

"His aunt—his father's sister; but I wouldn't demean myself to speak to her."

"Where is his father?"

"I neither know nor care, thank God!"

"But you are happily married now?"

"Yes; so happily that my dark past seemed like a hideous dream till that woman brought back the boy they had robbed me of to tantalize me. O madam! if you could only know how I have longed in the bygone years for the custody and companionship of my first baby; could you know how desperate I was, and how the world turned its back upon me, and how cruel and critical women were, who blamed me for rebelling against the inhuman father of my child; could you see the black gulf of degradation and despair from which my present husband rescued me; could you understand how noble he has been, you would not wonder that I fairly worship my husband."

"Indeed I do not wonder," I answered, through fast-falling tears.

"But," she continued, "whenever I think of the legal inhumanity to woman that robs a mother of the custody of the child of her peril—the child that she is willing to live for, to drudge for, and, if need be, die for—and gives the child, which never cost its father a pang, into his hands, to be placed by him among strangers, while the mother, who cannot longer endure the father's despotism, goes

forth into the world, robbed, bereft and desolate—whenever I think of these things, I get so furious that I can hardly control myself!" and she arose and rushed nervously about the room.

"No wonder, little woman," I said, sadly, as she again seated herself at my feet.

The wild wind rose to a gale, and the rushing river chanted a solemn dirge as a fitting accompaniment to our tumultuous thoughts, while the Autumn rain began a piteous weeping against the window panes.

"My poor boy!" sighed the mother, rising to stir the smouldering fire, and again moving nervously about the room. "I hope he has never grieved for me as I have mourned for him."

"Children's minds are plastic. You can comfort yourself with the assurance that you alone have suffered," I said.

"But I never shall be able to comfort myself!" she exclaimed, almost fiercely—"never while the right of a mother to the custody and companionship of her minor child depends solely upon the will of its brutal or improvident husband and father. You may rest assured that no happily married woman will leave her husband's home and go out to fight her way among strangers. But, when cruelty or incompatibility drives her to such a step, and she is compelled to seek refuge in the divorce courts, her lot is hard enough in all conscience, without the law's compelling her to give up her children."

"But mothers sometimes prove recreant to their trust," I ventured to say.

"They are recreant to their children never!" she emphatically exclaimed. "A woman's idea as to her duty concerning her children may not always coincide with man's, but she alone should be umpire in the case, since she alone has endured the peril that has given them existence."

"I am rejoiced to see you so happily married now," I said, to divert her mind from its train of reflections.

"Yes; for a dozen years I have been a shielded, loved and cherished wife," she answered, her eyes brightening. "But the infamous law that gives the father the superior right to the custody of the children is still in force, in cases where marriages are not harmonious, and I shall neither live nor die in peace so long as the possibility exists that any woman's children may be legally and ruthlessly torn from her, as my poor baby was. I wonder if they have educated him. I know they have taught him to despise me! I wonder—oh, my very soul is on fire from yearning for my boy!"

The hour was growing late, and we knew by the flickering light of the swaying lantern, as it gleamed through the uncurtained window, that my host was coming back from the steamer. He greeted his wife most tenderly. I could have knelt to him for very gratitude.

"Taken by surprise, was you, eh?" he asked, in an audible whisper.

I excused myself from their presence and retired to my room. Sacred between themselves was the chastened interchange of thought that I could see was welling up for utterance.

The gale increased till it fairly blew a hurricane. The heavy clouds drifted away to the northward, and the gibbous moon hung low over the horizon's edge and played upon the fantastic waves in the busy river. A white tent hard by a covered wagon was visible from my window in the moonlight, and I knew that my friend's "erewhile baby boy" was ensconced within the one or the other, his waking thoughts filled with new and sweet remembrances of the loved mother of his dreams, whom in his waking hours he had been taught to believe was hideous and bad and ugly and old.

Shall these things always be?

The use of the word "female" for "woman" is rapidly growing into disrepute. When thus employed, it is low at best. No better rebuke can be found for such a senseless usage of the word than the stinging satire of an editor in reply to a young lady, "Annette," who wanted to know "what celebrated female character in history it would be proper" for her to select as the "subject of a graduating essay." The answer was: "With such an abundant store to select from, Annette, we hardly know how to answer your question; but from such names as Queen Mary, Catherine de' Medici, Mme. de Sevigné, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Lot's wife, George Elliot, Jill, Susan B. Anthony, Goldsmith-Maid, Aspasia, Cleopatra, Joan of Arc, Maud S., Bondieca and Mrs. Somerville, you ought to be able to choose."

The members of the Chinese Embassy, now in New York City, must think that the boasted superiority of the Christian civilization over the Confucian is a delusion. They have been so shamefully treated by the rabble of New York City, where they are establishing a consulate, that they will return home on the completion of their business. While on the street, they find it necessary to have an escort of police.

THE CAPITAL.

MRS. A. S. DUNIWAY DESCRIBES HER EXPERIENCES DURING THE FIRST SESSIONS OF THE OREGON LEGISLATURE.

Once more the duly elected Representatives of the aristocracy of sex are in the seats of the two legislative branches of the Oregon government, engaged in the arduous physical labor of making laws to govern protected women and regulate the privileges of their represented constituents—including white men and black, brown men and gray, red men and yellow, and Indians who are taxed. A finer looking body of individual sovereigns one seldom sees; and there is but one way to improve the general appearance of such a convocation of rulers, and that is by observing the natural order of human selection and obeying the divine law of inalienable rights—admitting both men and women to seats in the sessions of future years, to make the laws by which both are governed, and which both are taxed to sustain.

Our popular and fine appearing friend, Hon. Sol. Hirsch, has borne away the honors of the Senate, and occupies the President's chair with the grace, fair dealing and dignity that characterize his life in all things. It is refreshing to note the goodly number of kindly faces that greet us as we enter and take our seat in the front of this august assembly. The old prejudice that used to set our heart a-fluttering when we entered—like it did once in the long ago when somebody we liked better than ourself unexpectedly "popped the question"—no longer disturbs our equanimity, and we meet on all sides the cordial greeting that the subject is always proud to get from the sovereign ruler who holds the destiny of her emancipation or subjugation in the power of his ballot. Men as law-makers are not afraid of women as equals like they once were; and the courtesy with which they receive us when we solicit their names for the NEW NORTHWEST is decidedly encouraging. There are exceptions to all generalities, however, and the fact that we meet them here is not surprising. Two crusty Representatives from Jackson, the Egypt of Oregon, informed us that they didn't want the paper, because they hadn't time to read it and attend to their "legitimate" business of representing their constituents. One of them said he was alone in the world and had nobody to send it to, or he would subscribe. We asked him who he represented, if he was so complete an alien, and he answered, "The People." We couldn't see it—possibly because we were not one of the people. His colleague promised to read the People's Paper to him, however, and we are happy.

Mr. Moody, of Wasco, has been chosen Speaker of the House, and is gradually working himself into parliamentary harness. Among the Representatives, as well as Senators, we see many pronounced friends of human rights; and were it not for the personal *isms* that "binomially" bring a set of men and women lobbyists to the front, who ask for the ballot for woman on side issues such as intemperance and insanity, there would be no prejudice to fight this year. As it is, the officers of the Woman Suffrage Association have determined to make no organized move for woman's enfranchisement during this session, choosing to rely for justice upon the magnanimity and common sense of honorable men rather than to seem for a moment to place themselves on a footing with the fanatical nonsense that demands the one-sided "temperance ballot." Judging from the well-developed top-heads of most of the members, we are induced to believe that they can comprehend the importance as well as the honor and justice of woman's demand for the free ballot, without which all "side issues" in form of special legislation prove themselves to be practically null and void.

From the portions of the Governor's message which we heard, we judge it to be a fair and business-like document, as far as it goes; but it is given wholly in the interest of the aristocracy of sex—though it admits that taxation, always unpleasant, even as a duty, when inflicted upon a people or a class for purposes foreign to their own interest, is an absolute crime. It is pleasing to note that His Excellency is not averse to the enfranchisement of the half of his constituency who are taxed without being allowed any representation whatever; and we are glad to proclaim that he, as a Democrat, is willing to sign a bill for an amendment to the Constitution, submitting the Woman Suffrage question to a popular vote, if the Republican Legislature will pass it. A. S. D. House of Representatives, Sept. 15, 1880.

Men look at everything with an eye to economy, that is to say, economy to be practiced by women. The New York Times notes that barrels, car-wheels, and many other articles for hard usage are made of paper, and cries aloud for the manufacture of lace handkerchiefs for women of the same versatile material.