

point of taking my own worthless life, but lacked the moral courage to strike the final blow. Now, however, fate has intervened, and laid before me a better path than that of absolute self murder. Dear friend, do not deny what I have asked of you. Leave that cross above yonder grave, write a letter which I shall dictate, sign your name and send it to her, and you will have lifted from my soul at least a portion of the load that weighs it down. Nobody knows me here; nobody knows aught of me in the countries to which I shall go upon leaving here. Keep my secret, and Roy Mason will be dead to all the world but you."

Reader, I did not yield at once to his pleading, for, God knows, my heart misgave me in the contemplation of so ghastly a deception; but his magnetic power and eloquence conquered me at last, and I consented to do as he wished. The following is a copy of the letter I wrote at his dictation, and sent to a certain small town in a far Eastern state:

YUM YUM, OREGON, March 25, 1862.

To Mrs. Edith Mason,
C—, M—,

DEAR MADAM:—It becomes my painful duty to communicate to you the tidings of the death of your husband, Roy Mason, which sad event occurred here three months ago. Deep snows and interrupted mails have delayed this communication until the present date. His last request was that I make known to you, as early as practicable, the fact of his death. I also forward by this mail a letter of instruction to his lawyers, Messrs. Blank & Lotan, in the city of B—, which letter was written at his dictation, two days previous to his death.

By express, I forward a small box, containing a book, a photograph, and some little mementoes that you may value for his sake. In case there is anything I can do for you, I stand ready, as your husband's friend, to serve you.

Sincerely yours,

CHAS. M. BLAKE.

"How is she situated pecuniarily?" I asked, as that somewhat practical question presented itself to my mind.

"She is well provided for," he replied. "I sold out my business before I came away, and deposited one-half the net result, \$9,000.00, to her credit. I learn, however, that she has never drawn a dollar of the money. She is a gifted little creature, intellectually, and capable of making an independent income for herself with her pen. Besides that, she is the only child of a wealthy, widowed mother."

Mason and I went together to the postoffice to mail the letter, after which he wrung my hand, with tears in his eyes, and left me, saying only—

"Roy Mason is dead, but if you ever need a favor or a friend, remember Henry Morris lives."

And so I parted with the man who had won from me a kind and degree of affection bordering on the romantic. Oh! how lonely and lost I felt, as I went back up the trail to the cabin on the mountain. The

day was drawing to a close when I reached it, and the pale disc of the moon was just visible above a crag. With bated breath, and a queer, superstitious thrill at my heart, I walked around the end of the cabin and looked at the grave, and at the cross which bore that painted lie.

"There's something uncanny about all this," I thought. "It isn't a nice place to be alone in, and I think I'll get out of it before many days."

Then suddenly in upon the weird stillness broke a sound, that, for once, was welcome to my ear. It was a long-drawn "Y-a-h h-e, Y-a-h h-e" of Damocles. I went into the stable, and, leaning my head against the poor brute's shoulder, let fall a few lonely tears, unseen of man. C. BLAKE MORGAN.

(To be continued).

WAY OUT IN IDAHO.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot has ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with nature's charms, and view
Her stores unrolled.

SUCH sentimental consolation we surely need in the mountains of Idaho. Since the famous Florence placers were discovered, there is hardly a gulch or stream bed in the territory, which has not echoed to the tread of the self-denying miner. From beyond the Mississippi, men who had known no greater hardships or severer labor than guiding the plow or loom, came by hundreds, all buoyed up with the hope of immediate fortunes. In camp at night, during their journey, they dreamed of golden harvests and a speedy return to the scenes of their childhood. Matron and maiden shared in the privations and hardships incident to the trip, not only without a murmur, but actually courting the god of poesy and song. The anticipated golden bounties of Idaho were chanted, as the heavily loaded wagons creaked an accompaniment. One happy, joyous voice, in an original rhyme, might have been singing—

We need no pick or shovel, no pan, no spade or hoe,
For the largest chunks are top of ground, way out in Idaho.

One party "struck color" on Loon creek, a tributary of the Salmon, in the region now known as Custer county, and at one time there were a thousand miners at work at that spot. From these placers, tens of thousands of dollars were extracted. The ground, or the richest portion of it, was worked out,