



FEBRUARY NIGHT.

Below, the sea lies blue and cold as steel,
 And smooth as satin stretched from shore to shore,
 Save where a shimmering fish leaps; or an oar,
 Reeking with sunset's gold, dips; or the keel
 Of some ship lets a broad track backward reet;
 The sun—a flaming thing—sinks low and lower,
 And bents upon the west's inclosing door;
 The shadows downward creep, and reach to feel,
 With long, back fingers, if the day is dead.
 Above, the sky glows like a pearl alight,
 With a rose-diamond's shifting gold and red;
 And o'er the eastern mountains, large and white,
 The moon leaps, trembling, from its chaise, cold bed—
 A virgin bride—to meet the lips of night.

Society—real society—is a delightful and an elevating thing; but recently there has been too much attention paid to so-called high society, and too little to one's home and friends. The little home-maker whose income is limited can not, or thinks she can not, venture to invite a few friends to a quiet card party at which light refreshments only are served during the late hours, or to a simple dinner of three or four courses, lest her modest effort at entertainment be voted "tame" and "a bore" by her guests, who have probably already entertained her at some elaborate reception or dinner party. What is she to do, when John's salary is only \$2,000 a year, and they have solemnly made up their minds to save and invest \$500 of that, come what will? It brings a little wrinkle to her brow and a nervous patter to her foot each time she thinks of it. Shall she and John economize in every day home comforts, shall they work harder and enjoy fewer happy, leisure hours together; shall they get along without so many books and magazines and quiet theater evenings, that they may save a few hundred dollars to put into an elaborate reception once a year, so they may feel that they have done their duty to their fashionable friends? What folly! Why, the most charming and gracious lady I ever knew lives in a small and exceedingly modest home. She has three or four friends dine with her at least three times a week, and she entertains them so easily, so cordially, so happily, doing every bit of the work and cooking with her own hands—which yet look always well cared for—and taking such genuine delight in her guests that all the best people, the most "exclusive" people, even the ultra-fashionable people, are delighted to be entertained by her. Drop in at any hour of the day or evening, and you will be offered some dainty cakes of her own making and a glass of—wine, sweet cider or milk punch, which is not all milk, by the way. The secret of it is that she loves people and makes them feel at home; she does the best she can to make you enjoy her hospitality, but, at the same time, she is frankly independent, thinks a great deal of herself, and is not going to work herself to death or go to much expense to entertain you. If you are not satisfied with the result, her fine perception will recognize it. If something goes wrong, she laughingly tells you about it, instead of sitting in nervous horror, wondering if you have observed it; but she never, under any circumstances, makes apologies. She has her faults, of course, but she is so sweet, so kind, so womanly, that all men admire her and all women envy even while they like her.

One winter morning in Eastern Oregon, with the thermometer pointing below zero and a fierce sleet whitening the air, a farmer rode into town, "hitched" his horse to a post, and hurried away in search of a shelter. A lady observed the action from her window, and gave a regretful thought to the dumb animal left thus without protection; but, naturally supposing that his master would soon return, she became engrossed with household affairs, and forgot it. Nearly six hours later, coming again to the window, she saw that he was still there. The storm had grown colder and sharper, in fact had become a blizzard, and the poor beast stood trembling and helpless, with his head drooping to the sidewalk. She immediately summoned the only officer that the little town afforded, and asked him to put the horse in the stables and make the owner settle the bill; but that gentleman, being one of those who think they were elected only to wear blue coats and brass buttons and look pretty, declined to interfere. The afternoon wore on, and as night approached, unable to longer endure the sight of the animal's sufferings, she muffled herself in wraps and going out to him, laid her hand on him and spoke kindly. His

instant whinney and the look of dumb misery in his eyes went to her heart. As she hesitated, a little urchin with the kind, honest heart that—thank God—beats in the breasts of some of the most lawless little urchins on earth, came along, stamping his feet, slapping his red ears with his redder hands, and whistling all the blizzard out of his heart.

"I'll tell you whose horse that is," he cried, stopping suddenly, "It's ol' Fitzhig's; 'n' he's been in th' s'loon all day, gett'n' gloriously full. Yuh turn th' horse loose, 'n' he'll go home straight 's and arrer—I've seen him do 't lots o' times." The lady looked at him, still hesitating, when suddenly he came nearer, his impish eyes twinkling with delight. "Say!" he whispered, confidentially; "Ef yuh'll never tell, I'll do 't myself!" The lady smiled. "I am not afraid," she said, and deliberately unfastened the horse, shook his rein, and bade him go. With a glad whinney he struck out for home as fast as his poor, stiffened legs could carry him. As he passed the corner there was a great shouting, mingled with oaths, and his master came reeling and staggering out of the saloon and started after him. But the snow was deep, and the horse had the best of it; and if you could have heard his last long whinney of delight, you would have thought there was a touch of triumph in it, and a bit of human nature beside.

Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Stop and think about it. When one of those blue, dreary days steals in, and the wind rattles the doors and windows and screams down the chimneys; when the sea birds circle into the harbor, chattering noisily, and the rain drips, drips, drips from the eaves all day long with dreary monotone, do you mope around with dull eyes and a droop at each corner of your mouth, and wonder "what is the use of living, anyhow?" Or do you cheerfully make the best of it, and feel a bit thankful that you are not out on the ocean; and fill up the grate until the whole room glows; and think what a magnificent sunset there would be if those black clouds should roll apart at night? If you have a care or a sorrow, do you sit with folded hands and bowed head and ponder upon it, or do you shake it off and find time to listen to some other's tale of woe—for the heavy hearts are all about us, you know, if we only keep ourselves out of our own eyes long enough to see them. Now, next time you meet a melancholy, sad-eyed, listless individual, just you observe him very carefully. He will probably hint that he has "troubles"; that "fate" has not used him as he deserved; that he is not appreciated; that he is misunderstood and misjudged, and that life is an empty husk for him. My dear, that is a pessimist, pure and simple. Ten to one, he has not a trouble save those that sprout from his own imagination, which, by the by, is usually the only lively and vivid thing about him. He intimates that he doesn't care much for "people." With a dreamy, far-away look, he speaks of the grandeur of the hills, the music of the waves, the silent companionship of the forests. Now, we all love these things—some of us passionately; to some of us nature has a heart that beats, a soul that never dies, lips that talk to us day and night, and such things are all very interesting to write about, because no one need read less he choose. But when you are with people, talk to them brightly, cheerfully, and do not intimate that their company is less desirable than nature. When you find a pessimist, laugh at him. Tell him that he doesn't know what trouble is, but that you do, because your brother was hung, your sister murdered and your mother died in a mad house. Let him see that you are laughing at him, and, before he knows it, he, too, will be laughing. Do not be a pessimist. This is a hard world, and a sad world, and a mad world; but when you have once looked fairly into the eyes of death you will realize keenly that this is also a very sweet, tender and beautiful world as well.

American women are said to be very proud of the size and symmetry of their hands and feet in comparison with those of English women. Now, I think the average English woman has more beautiful hands than her American cousin; they may not be so small, but they have the beauty of shape, firmness, strength, character and care. Her feet, it is true, are not pinched into boots two sizes too small for them, and because of this bit of sense she is always a good, vigorous walker; and to be a walker, my dear, means that the complexion is clear and beautiful, the eyes bright, the carriage elastic, the health fine. There is no corner in the walker's composition where melancholy, hysterics or languor may find lodging.

If charity covereth a multitude of sins, there is many a magdalen who is more guiltless in the eyes of God than some of the pillars of churches.

Each wrong deed brings about its own punishment on earth.