

PROPHECIES.

Sometimes you will look back to those bright days... And think of all our quiet, happy days...

ONE NIGHT.

"Well, my dear, shall we go?" There was a dreamy light in mamma's eyes...

"Why, what is to hinder us from going, pray tell?" "Every thing, John, we should have to be away at least a week, and what could we do with Sue and the house?"

I watched the light fade from her face, to be replaced by the usual stern expression, and vowed she should have this one pleasure for her heart's sake.

Now, when I undertake a thing, I accomplish it at all hazards, so I gave up mamma's protestations and might as well have the satisfaction of seeing her and papa at home for Brandon the next morning.

I went for Madge, my "dear familiar," and what with our riding, visiting and entertaining company the time passed quickly. Gently to our surprise we found ourselves elevated to the position of heroes.

"Man in the wardrobe. Saw him. Keep quiet. Three revolvers in the bureau. Guess we can take care of him."

Every particle of color left her face, but her voice did not tremble as she continued the conversation, talking brightly, just as she always did.

"Why, Madge, did you notice them, too?" "Yes, but, provoking thing, you never let on that you saw them, so I didn't dare say a word about them."

"Well, Watch will teach them to consider their ways and be wise; they won't dare come again to-night."

"All the time I was racking my brain for a plan whereby we might escape the danger. Finally I settled upon this: we must have Ann with us—she was a lost in herself."

"At 3 o'clock the stage passed along with passengers for the early train. We must manage until then and get assistance from the stage."

"This I imparted to Madge; she volunteered at once to call Ann. Kissing me quietly she glided away."

"Ah! such long minutes as those were while I was alone with that wardrobe. Once the door opened a new bit, then closed again. Would they never come! Maybe they had deserted me. Just then Madge appeared, and holding her watch before me showed me she had been gone only five minutes."

"Ann came soon, making a great racket, as she always did. 'Dear and she wasn't going to stay down there! What with the heat of a dog and Jenny's snoring she couldn't sleep a wink.'"

"We teased her, and had as much fun to all appearances as we would have had under the most favorable circumstances."

"Only 12 o'clock! 'I shall be gray as a rat if this nocturnal continues much longer,' said grumpy Madge."

"As for me, I had a perverse desire to drop to sleep. Madge commenced reading aloud. I yawned so obviously that, frowning savagely upon me, she tossed the book across the room."

"As minute after minute passed, with no sign of life within the wardrobe, Ann's face settled into incredulity, and I fully expected she would investigate matters for herself. One o'clock."

"Out stepped our man with a gallant bow. 'Excuse me, ladies, but your wardrobe is uncomfortable, and as you seem determined to sit up all night I couldn't afford to wait longer.'"

"Ann walked to the door, locked it and pocketed the key. There was an instantaneous display of fireworks."

Keep out and seize me. I was sure some one was close behind me going down stairs. My heart leaped into my mouth.

But no, it was only the rustling of my dress. Watch was always my most obedient servant, and he seemed to understand what was wanted of him.

The moment I opened the door out he darted with such a savage growl that I was half afraid of him myself. A series of yelps, then a scream and an oath, told me that Watch had found his game.

I could hear them rushing through the shrubbery. Presently there was a great noise, more oaths, and I knew the man had fallen over the wall in the back yard, which raised it several feet from the garden."

Frightened as I was I could not help laughing. I knew Watch would be faithful, so I no longer feared the out-sider."

My chief desire now was to reach my room, that had a strong lock. "What on earth is the matter?" asked Madge.

With a laugh I bade her wait until we were in our room, before she made me tell a long story.

The door was open, and as I reached the head of the stairs the moonlight showed me distinctly in the large mirror the reflection of a man hurriedly secreting himself in the wardrobe."

Frightened nearly to death I stood a moment undecided what to do. There wasn't a room in the house where we would be safe. I thought of the three revolvers hidden in the bureau and decided to "hear the lion in his den."

It happened that Madge and myself were expert in the use of the deaf and dumb alphabet; it had served us many a good turn, and I resolved it should now."

Madge was in an unusually talkative mood—talked incessantly as she unlatched her long hair. I never saw her look more lively. I managed to attract her attention, while with my fingers I said:

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me, and throwing up my arm to ward it off I received an ugly cut in the wrist. Nothing more serious happened.

By and by his curiosity overcame him, and he gruffly questioned us, asking how we knew he was in the house, how long we had known it, closing his cross-examination by pointing at Ann and graciously inquiring "how that old fool came to blunder up there?"

"You're deep ones," was his comment. Holding up a bottle of chloroform he said admiringly:

"There's the thing that would have quieted you down if you'd have given me half a chance!"

Half after two, Madge looked at me, and simply saying, "You need Ann more than you do me," unlatched the door and disappeared."

I believe the house was haunted. At any rate, dozens of times I heard mysterious footsteps upstairs, downstairs, everywhere. Verily a whole legion of spirits must have been abroad."

I could not keep still. My nervous pronouncement up and down the room attracted the man's attention. He laughed tauntingly, and complacently informed me that it was "his opinion I'd give out pretty soon."

Ann watched me anxiously, knowing that my slender stock of strength was almost exhausted. "Away off I caught the rattle of the stage."

Ann read the news in my face and grew jubilant. "Nearer and nearer it came. Soon I could hear voices in the yard. A short delay and the door opened, noiselessly, admitting half a dozen men."

I have a faint remembrance of being led from the room—of hearing Madge and myself hustled to the stairs for bravely. Then there was a blank."

When I became conscious Madge and a stranger were with me. I remembered having seen him directing the arrangements which were made for the disposal of the prisoner."

Proud Madge, who had a haughty contempt for tears, was crying nervously, just like any other woman. Meeting my gaze she smiled smilingly said:

"You are Miss Sue Hanks, I am sure." Slightly amazed I acknowledged my name.

"Have you not heard your Cousin Will speak of Harry Nelson? I am he."

Impulsively I sprang up, and grasping both his hands commenced to say "I don't know what, for suddenly I found I was 'netting the weeping willow,' as Madge used to say."

I had heard Harry Nelson's praises sung constantly for the last three years, and as I was Will's favorite cousin I did not doubt but that Mr. Nelson was pretty well acquainted with me."

He left the next afternoon, returning in the evening with Aunt Julia and Will, so we really had an enjoyable time to the end of the week."

I shall not tell all that happened before papa and mamma returned. This much you may know. Harry was in the library with papa a long time the day they came home, and I found Madge wearing an elegant ring on the "engagement finger."

She said apologetically: "Will and I have known each other so long."

Never mind what became of the two villains—I have not seen them since that night. If you would like to hear this same story "with variations" you have only to visit our village. Before you have been there a day you will have heard it half a dozen times.—C. C. O'Connor in New York News.

Fines of Habit with a Woman. After shopping for the greater part of a recent afternoon a well known Brooklyn lady, with a letter in her hand, entered a drug store. She asked for and received a postage stamp.

"Anything else today, ma'am?" inquired the clerk. "No, I think not," she replied; "please send it to the house."

"I—I beg pardon, ma'am, stammered the clerk, "but what is it you wish to have delivered?" "Why, this—the—" Then, suddenly refreshing her mind, she quickly added, "Oh, well, never mind it," and took the postage stamp and walked out.

The clerk afterward said he had never seen a better illustration of the force of habit.—New York Herald.

The Beauty of Life. Life appears to me too short to be spent in nursing animosity or registering wrongs. We are and must be, one and all burdened with faults in this world, but the time will come when, I trust, we shall put them off in putting off our corruptible bodies, when the basement and sin will fall from us with this embryonic frame of flesh and only the spark will remain—the immortal principle of life and thought, pure as when it left the creator to inspire the creature, whence it came it will return, perhaps to pass through gradations of glory. It is a creed in which I delight, to which I cling. It makes eternity rest, a mighty home, not a terror and an abyss. Then revenge never worries my heart, degradation never crushes me too low; I live in calm, looking to the end.—Charlotte Bronte.

A Practicable Hint. It isn't safe to presume much on the religion of our neighbors. A good story is told of the Rev. Dr. Cushman. He went to a barber during the hot weather and said, with a twinkle in his left eye: "Now, I want you to cut my hair as short as you would like a sermon."

On rising from his chair and carefully surveying his bald and shining head he was constrained to observe that the barber wanted no sermon at all.—Nashville American.

THE HEAD MASKS OF MUMMIES.

A Curious Part of the Quill Provided for the Ancient Peruvian Dead. Among the many curious burial customs of the world, ancient and modern, there is nothing more remarkable than the mask heads placed within the outer wrappings at the top of the mummy roll in the ancient Peruvian tombs.

One of these heads, now in the collection of H. H. Harbutt, of Chicago, is of herule size, the face only being of wood, differing in this respect from the majority of Peruvian mask heads, which are generally, with exception of the ornaments, entirely made of wood.

Mr. Harbutt's specimen is strongly carved, having a prominent nose and wide, firm mouth. The eyes are formed by excavating oval depressions in the wood and setting in pieces of shell.

First oval pieces of white clay shells were inserted, which represent the whites of the eyes. Upon these small circular pieces of a dark kind of shell have been stuck with a cement made from fish bladders. These dark pieces are for the pupils of the eyes.

The eyelashes have been made by inserting bits of hair beneath the shell eyes and letting the ends protrude in all directions. The wooden part of the mask is flat behind, but the end has been neatly rounded out, with dry laces, which are held in shape and place by an open net of twisted cords.

Around the margin of the mask are five pairs of holes, through which strings fasten a great variety of articles to the grotesque head—little packages of beans and seeds, rolls of cloth of different colors and textures, minute bundles of wool and flax, bits of copper and earth carefully wrapped in the corn husks, bundles of feathers, etc.

Attached to the left side of the mask by long, stout cords is a pouch resembling a tobacco bag about six inches square, the fabric of which resembles coarse sail cloth. From the opposite side of the head a net is suspended in which was placed a variety of objects equal to those named above—a string of beads, bundles of flax cords, small net bags containing beans, ground seeds, etc.; many copper fish hooks, to which the lines are still attached, sinkers of dark slate carefully wrapped in flax and husks, together with many other curious relics.

These articles were doubtless the property of the deceased, so placed in accordance with the established customs of the race to which he belonged. These mask heads were probably objects of much consideration, although we of the present day are at a loss to determine their exact use by the living or their significance as a companion for the dead.—St. Louis Republic.

Coal in Russia. If the calculations of Professor Mendeleeff are to be trusted, Russia possesses the richest coal deposits in the world. The superficial area of the coal fields in the Donetz basin alone amounts to about 60,000 square kilometers. If the capacity of these deposits is put at 30,000,000 pounds per square kilometer (one pound being about thirty six pounds avoirdupois) the total supply of coal is stated to be equal to the world's present consumption for fifty years. Moreover this only refers to the superficial beds, and not to the deeper deposits, which have not yet been explored, but which promise still greater riches.

La Russie Commerciale points out that notwithstanding the natural resources of the empire there are imported annually about 107,000,000 pounds of coal, of which 85,000,000 are from Britain, 19,000,000 from Germany, and more than 2,000,000 from Austria-Hungary, besides which large quantities of wood are used as fuel, both for manufacturing and domestic purposes. The high import duties have not operated to replace the foreign coal by the Russian—a fact which is to be explained by the inefficient means of transport and the inferior appliances for working. In England royalties are higher than in Russia, and so also are wages, but notwithstanding this and the cost of transport the selling price of Russian coal is approximately the same as English. La Russie therefore urges improved methods of working and proper facilities for transportation in order that the immense coal fields in the country may be developed.—London Industries.

Black Walnut. Black walnut is a tree well known to all. It delights in a cool, rather loamy soil, well drained and with a good subsoil. It makes a good growth in even poor soil, and when once fully established is unusually hardy. It is planted from twenty to thirty feet apart each way to allow plenty of room for large growth, although the average distance is twenty five feet, which will be found sufficient. It would be an excellent idea to plant some quick growing variety and valuable timber tree between the spaces, like the white ash, and in twelve or fifteen years these ash trees can be cut down, giving the entire space to the walnut trees.

From such a plantation of the white ash \$3,000 has been realized from ten acres, making an annual average profit of nearly \$25 per acre. This same thing can be readily done with the plantations of other varieties of nuts, giving the nut bearing trees all the space they need, and at the same time making profitable use of what would otherwise be waste and open space in the nut trees were old enough to occupy it all. These timber trees can be bought of any prominent nurseryman, or ordered through him, of the proper size for setting out in the permanent plantation.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Harvest Moon. It so happens that the position of the moon is such that the full moon preceding the autumnal equinox for several successive nights, in the latitude of London, rises only nine or ten minutes later each succeeding evening. This phenomenon is called the "Harvest Moon," from a notion that it is a provision of all wise Providence calculated to enable the husbandman to take care of his grain at night, if there is so much of it that it cannot be handled during daylight.—St. Louis Republic.

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