

ACROSS THE STREET.

Across the street the bright lights flashed and gleamed,
And fortune's favored ones were gathered there,
The merry music of the dance outstreamed
Upon the air.

Across the street—it seemed so far away,
That joyous world, from my unhappy sphere,
Made up of weary toil, day after day,
And year by year.

I turned me from my window, with a sigh,
"Thou mak'st life's differences, O God, so wide."
I could not conquer that ungrateful cry,
Tho' hard I tried.

Across the street, next night, across the street,
Death's grim insignia from the door was hung.
I heard the passers-by, low-voiced, repeat,
"So fair, so young."

Across the street—ah, surely 'twas not so,
That they were mourning who last night were gay.
That yonder mansion was a house of woe,
Where death held sway?

Across the street, beside a single light,
A cheerless company a sad watch kept,
And she, the homaged one of yesternight,
Forever slept.

—Boston Journal.

JOHN ALDEN'S INSURANCE

JOSIAH REYNOLDS was a staid, respectable man, whose life had been uneventful and monotonous; he was what one might call an average man. He had obtained, when fourteen years of age, a position as errand boy in a retail dry goods store. From this store no ambition had ever tempted him; there he had remained, and in his methodical way had plodded step by step, higher and higher, till he had become head salesman at a salary of fifteen dollars a week.

Josiah, at the age of twenty-five, had married. He loved his wife in his own way; and then, as he always said, "It is so much cheaper to live!" Poor Josiah discovered his mistake by the time he was the father of eight children; and often in his despondent moods longed for the time when he, a happy bachelor, had lived in an attic and dined neat and when he pleased. But Josiah was a thoroughly honest man, and after these retrospective and despondent musings redoubled his exertions to solve the problem—how to pay rent, clothe his family, and settle the thousand and one little bills continually intruding themselves—all on fifteen dollars a week. But, to his credit be it said, his family was provided for well; the children were warmly if cheaply clad; the wife always looked neat, nor did they suffer for food; true, they had few amusements or luxuries, and poor Josiah often felt ashamed of his threadbare coat, for he would rather go shabby by himself than be ashamed of his wife and children.

In this manner Josiah lived until his forty-fifth year; then he received a great surprise. His employer had each year grown more feeble, and left more and more the charge of the store to Josiah. Many men under such circumstances would have demanded more pay, but not so Josiah; it seemed only natural to him that he should give his best endeavors to his employer, who, however, made no comment upon his assistant's faithful work; but Josiah was content with the thought of duty properly performed.

On the morning of the first of March, Josiah's birthday, he came to the store at his usual hour, but his seedy coat bore upon its lapel a little bunch of hothouse flowers, his natal gift from his wife and children. He went to his work light-heartedly on this particular morning. It was his nature to be happy, and only an occasional gloomy spell over some unusual expense broke his generally untroubled serenity. This morning, however, he was particularly happy. When he had seated himself for his breakfast of porridge and molasses he had found at his plate a bunch of flowers, which his wife, amidst the joyful wishes of her children, had pinned upon his coat. Strange as it may seem, this matter-of-fact man had a passionate fondness for flowers, rarely gratified; but to-day, as he started to his work, the remembrance of his happy home and the odor of the flowers stimulated him to a sense of unusual joy.

When his employer arrived Josiah greeted him with a pleasant smile, but noticed regretfully how weak he seemed.

"Ah!" he thought, "what a sorrowful life for poor Mr. Alden, all alone at this age! I would not change places with him, I am sure. What is money without happiness?"

"Josiah," said Mr. Alden, "I have something to say to you."

"Yes, sir," answered Josiah, surprised at the impressive tone of his master's voice.

"Josiah," said Mr. Alden, "you have been with me ever since you were a boy; I have watched the unfolding of

your character, and I know you to be a truly honorable and reliable man. I have not been unmindful of your faithful services, nor am I indisposed to reward them. I am getting old; I am now eighty-four years of age, and, in the ordinary course of events, I cannot live much longer. Since my dear son died I have been entirely alone in the world. What I want to say is this: I wish to give you full charge of the store; I will take you into partnership, and you can have one-half of the profits. All I ask is that you take me into your family, for I am weary of living alone. When I die I shall leave you all I possess, including an insurance on my life of twenty thousand dollars. Does that suit you?"

Mr. Alden, who knew his clerk well, was not surprised that he did not speak; it was, indeed, and he knew it, a most alluring prospect. Josiah was so stunned that he could not speak coherently. Through his mind rushed a picture of his past life; how he had always pinched and calculated to make both ends meet; the continual whirl about money, which had become so much of a second nature that he scarcely noticed it, but which, in his retrospective glance, under the bright illumination of this magnificent offer, weighed on his spirits like a pall.

What! He an equal partner in the firm! He an equal sharer in the profits! He the heir of Mr. Alden! It seemed incredible.

"Well, Josiah, what say you?"

He roused himself and said:

"I don't know what to say, the offer is so unexpected and undeserved. I have never done more than my duty, and why you should be so generous I do not know; really I do not know what to say or do."

"There is nothing you need say, Josiah, and but one thing to do—allow me to have my own way. My decision is not a thing of the moment; I have thought of it long and often. The store does not pay very much—about four thousand dollars a year—still it has enabled me to lay up a snug fortune, and to place upon my life an insurance of twenty thousand dollars."

Josiah listened to the old man's talk only with external application; he understood what was said, but each word conjured up a picture. At first his mind did not wander beyond the yearly income of two thousand dollars; this sum, in contrast with his beggarly fifteen dollars a week, seemed inexhaustible. He thought of the many things he could do now. Maria, his wife, should have a silk dress, and should rest from the labor which had been wearing her out. Martha, his oldest daughter, should have the wish of her life granted, and should study music. Alfred should go to college; the other children should have their dresses when they grew up—and he—oh, he would get a new coat!

With such roseate pictures did the two thousand dollars fill his thoughts; but when he allowed his mind to contemplate the time when he should possess Mr. Alden's entire fortune, it affected him as a flash of lightning does the eye.

"Well, Josiah," said Mr. Alden, "let us go and have the partnership papers drawn up; then, as it is your birthday, you can take a holiday, something you have not had in many years."

"Just as you say, sir," said Josiah, meekly.

Soon the business was transacted, Josiah signing all the papers in a dazed manner, unconscious of their contents. Then he hastened home, for he was anxious to confide to some one the joy that filled his heart; and to whom more properly than to her who

had shared his privations and sorrows?

When he reached his abode, a dingy house in an obscure back street, he found his wife working upon a pile of shirts; this she had done for many years to eke out their meager existence. Josiah was not unused to the sight, since he had witnessed it day after day, but now he felt within his soul an impulse of indignation that his wife should be doing such work; so, while his wife gazed in astonishment at her liege lord, who never before in all their married life had returned so early from the store, he stalked grandiloquently to the pile of shirts, gathered them up and cast them out of the door.

"Josiah Reynolds!" exclaimed the amazement-stricken wife, "are you crazy?"

"No, Maria, I am not, but I do feel rather strange here," said Josiah, tapping his forehead, "but crazy or not, you shall make no more shirts for Wringer & Starchem."

"But, my dear, what shall we do? I made three dollars a week out of them; we can't get along without the money."

"Mrs. Reynolds," answered Josiah, with an air of dignity, "the wife of the junior member of the firm of Alden & Reynolds does not need to make shirts at three dollars a week."

Maria was ready to burst into tears. Never before had her dear Josiah called her Mrs. Reynolds; moreover, he frightened her with his strange actions and incoherent talk, and, with a woman's reasoning, she concluded he was insane. So the tears that had been gathering burst forth like a torrent, accompanied by a storm of sobs.

"My dear Maria, what is the matter?" exclaimed the now awakened husband; "have I said or done anything to offend you?"

"No," sobbed Maria, "only go-gone and go-got crazy!"

"Why, Maria, I am not crazy; what do you mean by saying so?"

"What do you mean by talking about the firm of 'Alden & Reynolds' when you are only a clerk getting fifteen dollars a week?"

This was more than Josiah could stand. What! He, a partner in the firm, accused of being a clerk at fifteen dollars a week? It was an insult! In a voice of indignation he said:

"Madam, I wish you to understand that I am neither fool nor crazy. This morning Mr. Alden took me into partnership; I hasten to tell you the good news, and you accuse me of being insane; nice encouragement, is it not?"

"Oh, Josiah, I am so glad!" said "is it really and truly true?"

"Yes, it is true; and, moreover, Mr. Alden is coming to live with us, and when he dies he will leave all his wealth to me. Maria, we are rich! No more pinching and contriving; we can live like human beings, and the children can have a chance to be somebody."

"Oh, Josiah, I am so glad!" said Maria, and again the floodgate of tears was opened; but this time the tears were those of joy, and were soon dried up under her sun of happiness.

"Now, Maria, as soon as the children come we will have a little excursion and celebrate the birthday of the junior member of the firm of Alden & Reynolds."

In the bosom of his family, Josiah, kind and benignant, celebrated the day which opened to him and his such delightful prospects.

Next morning Josiah went to his work at the usual hour. The rest of the help congratulated him—some honestly, some enviously—but all subversively. He informed Mr. Allen that he could not receive him till a week had passed, for he was about to move into a new house.

"You know, Mr. Alden," he said, "it would not do for the firm to live in such a neighborhood as that in which I formerly lived."

"No, certainly not," assented Mr. Alden.

In a week everything was arranged. Mr. Alden was installed with his new partner in a fine house, nicely furnished. It was true Josiah was obliged to run in debt for the furnishings, but then the firm was good for it. Martha had her music teacher; Alfred was sent to college; Maria was not allowed to do much of any work, except to oversee the girl; the children were finely dressed, and everything went as naturally as if the family had never economized on fifteen dollars a week. Mr. Alden made his will, leaving his entire wealth to Josiah; but despite the kind care of Maria, he daily grew weaker. He never went to the store, but Josiah, now-always neatly dressed and with a bud on his coat, kept the business up to its usual standard, though he had ceased to work as he was wont to do when a clerk.

Business was very satisfactory; the life just suited Josiah; he felt himself expand and broaden; it pleased him to be called Mr. Reynolds by those who formerly called him Josiah or even plain Reynolds. It gratified him to say to a good customer: "My partner, Mr. Alden, is not well; he is staying at my house;" or to say to a customer from out of town: "We dine at six; will you honor us?"

For three months all was rose-colored—then the bills began to come in—the quarter's rent, bills from the

house furnisher's, Alfred's college expenses, tailors', grocers', butchers' and a thousand and one other bills poured in like an avalanche, till the poor man was nearly distracted, and found it even harder to make both ends meet than when working for fifteen dollars a week. Pride would not allow him to recede from his position, and by hook and by crook he managed to make things come out nearly right; but was obliged to borrow a few hundreds from a friendly broker, who knew the circumstances of Alden's will, and who readily took Josiah's note.

Months went on thus, outwardly pleasant to all, but Josiah found himself steadily getting into debt to the friendly broker on whom he had to call to keep up his credit and appearance.

"It is only for a short time," he argued. "Mr. Alden cannot live much longer, then I will have the whole store and all his money."

Thus Josiah went on, calculating on the death of his benefactor, till from calculating he grew to thinking.

"What is the good of his living? He is of no use to himself or others, and only stands in the way of my advancement. Well, he cannot last much longer, for he grows weaker day by day."

A year had passed and Josiah owed the broker about one thousand dollars. When he borrowed his last installment his friend said:

"How long do you think old Alden will last?"

"I do not know. He is now eighty-five years of age, and certainly should not last very much longer."

"I do not know about that," said the broker. "I was talking with a life insurance agent a few days ago, and he said that according to the mortality tables of the insurance company a man of eighty-five years could expect to live for five years."

"What!" gasped Josiah, "do you think Mr. Alden will live to be ninety?"

"According to the table he can," said the broker, producing a series of tables compiled by one P. E. Chase. Josiah looked eagerly at the book. Yes, there it was:

"Expectancy of Life—eighty-five years—5.18 years."

"So Mr. Alden will live to be ninety," he said, looking blankly at the broker.

"So it seems," said his friend, calmly lighting a cigar.

"And what am I to do, run into debt all this time. Will you wait and still furnish me with money?" and Josiah wetted his lips anxiously.

"I will wait," said the broker, "but you will have to pay me a larger rate of interest."

"Anything at all," eagerly responded Josiah. "I cannot go back now, but, oh, I wish this suspense were over! Why will he not die and leave his money where it will do some good?"

Josiah went home gloomy and thoughtful; he did not notice the many respectful salutations he received; his mind was filled with but one idea; one thought intruded itself and rang in his ears with monotonous insistence—ninety years, ninety years. When he reached his home he savagely repulsed the children who came to him with a recently learned timidity; snarled at his wife, and hastened to his room.

This manner had become habitual with him and had caused Maria many tears, as her mind reverted to the time when they were happy and contented on fifteen dollars a week. In the privacy of his own room Josiah gazed once more at the insurance table. The figures stared at him:

"Expectancy of Life—eighty-five years—5.18 years."

"Yes, he will live to be over ninety," he said, bitterly. Glancing down the column, his eye fell upon the figure ninety with a cry of anguish; he read: "Expectancy of Life—ninety years—4.16 years."

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed, "then he will not die till he is ninety-four." As if directed by an external power, his eye followed down the column of figures till he reached ninety-four. There he read:

"Expectancy of Life—ninety-four years—3.49 years."

He groaned aloud. Feverishly he once more scanned the column.

"He will be ninety-seven," he moaned.

Once more the figures seared themselves upon his brain.

"Expectancy of Life—ninety-seven years—three years."

Josiah dropped the book, his face blanched to the color of its leaves.

"I see it all now," he exclaimed, in a hollow voice, "this man can never die; I might continue this column on indefinitely; but there would always be something left. He shall always live to mock me with the anticipation of wealth I shall never obtain!"

Next morning the old man was found dead in bed: strangled to death, the coroner said. Josiah was arrested, and in one of lucid intervals, for he was undoubtedly insane, confessed the crime.

He was confined in an insane asylum, and the property left by Mr. Alden was managed by Maria with the same care she had displayed in the management of fifteen dollars a week. —Waverley.



Old Fashioned Ribbon Cake.
It is made after any good recipe for white cake, with chocolate and fruit added to the middle layer. Much latitude is allowed in mixing this middle layer, some people preferring to leave it rather plain and others making it very rich indeed. The following is good: After mixing the cake, divide it into three parts and bake two of them in layers three inches deep. Add to the third part one cupful of raisins, one cupful of currants, one quarter of a pound of citron, two teaspoonfuls of molasses, two teaspoonfuls of brandy and a dash of spice. When baked put the layers together with icing, press tightly to insure the layers sticking, and cover with icing. This recipe makes a large cake.

Taploca Jelly.
Wash one-fourth of a pound of taploca in cold water, put it over a slow fire in sufficient water to reach two inches above it. Cook slowly, stirring often to prevent burning. If the water is absorbed before the taploca is cooked add a half cupful of cold water, a little at a time, so as to keep it moist. When only very small particles, white, are visible in the grains of taploca add one pint of any kind of fruit juice or the syrup from canned or preserved fruit. When this has been absorbed turn the taploca into a jelly bowl and set on ice. If the fruit juice is not sweet enough add sugar to it to make the taploca palatable.

Curried Mushrooms.
Mix an equal quantity of chopped cold roast veal or chicken and coarsely chopped mushrooms, and stir them into a curry sauce made by frying a chopped onion in butter and adding half a cupful of white stock, a dessertspoonful of curry powder and a little salt. Some persons substitute milk or cream for the stock. Let the mushrooms simmer in the sauce for about five minutes, and add a little lemon juice just before removing from the fire. Always serve chutney with curries. The genuine East Indian chutneys are to be had at the large groceries at no very extravagant price.

Sour Milk Gingerbread.
Mix together a half cup of molasses, a half cup of sugar, a tablespoonful of melted butter, a half teaspoonful of ground cinnamon and a teaspoonful of ground ginger. Set the bowl containing these ingredients at the side of the range until the contents are warm, then beat until light and foamy. Now whip in a teaspoonful of sour milk, a scant teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a tablespoonful of boiling water and two and a half cups of flour. Pour into a greased tin and bake in an even oven. Eat hot. —Chicago Daily News.

Cranberry Sauce.
One quart of cranberries, one pint of water and one pound of granulated sugar. Wash the cranberries in cold water, put them into a porcelain or granite kettle, add the water, cover the kettle and bring to the boiling point. This will take about five minutes. Press them through a colander, add the sugar and stir over the fire, just a moment, until the sugar is thoroughly melted and turn out to cool. Serve with poultry, game or mutton.

Hot Potato Salad.
Put into a frying pan one-fourth of a pound of bacon cut into dice; when light brown take out and saute in the fat a small onion cut fine. Add one-half as much vinegar as fat, a few grains of salt and cayenne, and one-half as much hot stock as vinegar. Have ready the potatoes boiled in skins. Remove the skins and slice hot into the frying pan enough to take up the liquid. Add the diced bacon, toss together and serve.

Steamed Pudding.
Mix together 2½ cupfuls of graham flour, one cupful each of milk, molasses and seeded raisins, two small teaspoonfuls of soda, a pinch of salt and a half teaspoonful of ginger. Steam two hours in a buttered mould, never allowing the water to stop boiling for a moment. Serve with a hard sauce or a liquid sauce.

Brief Suggestions.
To be just perfect baking powder biscuit should begin to rise the minute the pan is in the oven.

When baking bread have the oven quite hot when the loaves are first put in and let the heat diminish.

Do not put salt into soup until you are done skimming it, as salt will stop the rising of the scum.

Fresh fish should never be permitted to soak in water. Put in a cool place, but never place directly on artificial ice.