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At Prices that Defy Competition.

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THE LITTLE GRAVE.

"It's only a little grave," they said, "Only just a child that's dead."

And so they carelessly turned away From the mould the spade had made that day. Ah, they did not know how deep a shade That little grave in our home had made!

I knew the coffin was narrow and small, One yard would have served for an ample pall; One man in his arms could have borne away The casket frail and its freight of clay. But I knew that darling hopes were hid Beneath that tiny coffin-lid.

I knew that a mother had stood that day With folded arms by that form of clay; I knew that burning tears were hid, And in an empty crib with its covers spread, As white as the face of the precious dead.

'Tis a little grave, but oh, beware! For world-wide hopes are buried there, And ye, perhaps, in coming years, May see, like her, through blinding tears, How much of light, how much of joy, Is buried up with an only boy.

A Western Romance.

BY MRS. ELA GIVENS.

I shall always remember that day among the glorious woods of Western Washington. I had known my companion, John Williams, for years, and he had charmed me by the general kindness of his manner, but on the particular day of which I write he seemed lost in a fit of abstraction, and as all my efforts failed to rouse him I left him to his apparently gloomy thoughts, while I admired the beauty nature spread around us. The stage road wound through tiny valleys, cool and green with waving foliage, and up steep hills where the slanting sunbeams checked the yellow road with waving shadows. Up, up we went, our stout horses panting at the steep pulls, and stopping often to rest, then whirling us on over the rocky way until another hill came in view. In a few hours we began to descend the mountain, not all at once, but by gradual inclines, sometimes passing a quiet little lake sleeping among the trees, with the Summer beauties of its surroundings embowered deep in its bosom, then along little ridges with sweet, pale, wild flowers, nodding dainty bells on either side, or rattling down into cool, dark depths where starry dog-wood blossoms stared at us, and foamy ocean spray nodded a greeting. All at once we came upon a deserted house that stared blankly at us with open doors and windows. No smoke curled from the chimney. The well swept pointed plaintively skyward. All seemed vainly beseeching some one to set between two hills by a still stream with the marsh grass growing rank and green around it the place seemed singularly desolate. No sound of animal life broke the stillness. We crossed the stream on a bridge made of split logs. Beside it an older bridge half torn up was decaying slowly. I wondered vaguely when the old one was built and who had tried to make a home in the depth of this wilderness. The silence was broken by my companion asking the driver if the old road to Big Skookum was open.

"I don't know no old road," replied that worthy. "This year's been the road for six year past, and he spit contemptuously on the wheel.

"Twenty years ago," said John, half to himself, "the trail ran two miles west of here. I built that old bridge," he added, turning to me.

"You," I replied in astonished incredulity. "Built that bridge! Did you do it alone?" with a half sarcastic emphasis.

"No," a flush deepening in his brown face. "I had some help; I lived there in that cabin two years." And he turned and looked at the desolate place until a turn in the road hid it from sight.

I was astonished at my friend's assertions. I had never heard him speak of being on the western coast before. But I was forced to content myself with this meagre statement for he vouchsafed no further information at that time. Our road now lay across a thinly wooded plain for several miles, then again plunged into dense woods. We had gone but a short distance when the road sloped suddenly downward. As we came to the edge of the hill a glorious scene spread out before us. At our feet the tossing waters of Puget Sound sparkled in the evening sun like some huge jewel set in circles of dark green hills that faded into azure against the glowing horizon. An exclamation of joy escaped my companion, but I was delighted with the beautiful prospect. The stage whirled down the long hill and out upon an open grassy place in front of a comfortable looking house, where our driver drew up with a flourish informing us that "folks must always get supper here if the steamer ain't ready to start back when they gets here. She ain't here nuther," shading his eyes and gazing down the bay.

"What time does the steamer usually arrive?" I inquired of our host as we entered the cool, dark sitting-room with its bare floor and yawning fireplace.

"I low she'll be along pretty soon," was the unconcerned reply.

"Ought to be here now," said the driver. "The tide'll turn pretty soon, then it'll take her all night to get up the bay."

"Does she always make connection here?" was my next query.

"Hain't missed but once in three weeks," said the host assuringly.

"Come 'tis, never mind if the boat is a little late, let's take a walk," called John cheerily.

I went half stultify, for I thought my companion might have relieved my curiosity concerning his residence at the wayside cabin. Then, too, I was anxious lest the steamer should fail to make connection that night at Olympia, where I intended meeting my wife. We walked along the beach admiring the ever changing skies reflected in the sea at our feet. The tide was turning and the waves lapped higher up the sands with that ceaseless murmur with which all of ocean's children lull the earth to sleep.

"Old Peter's camp used to be here," said John, as we paused on a grassy point that projected into the bay. "This is a familiar scene to me," he went on; "many a night like this I have stood watching the rosy hues fade from the skies and the moon rise white and still, while the tide ebbed and flowed. I was young then, very young," a sad smile flitted over his face. "I even had some wild thoughts of making an Indian of myself."

I shrugged my shoulders as I thought of the dirty savages we had seen the day before.

"The Indians now," he replied to my shrug, "are entirely different to the better class of Indians of those days. Today they are in a transition state from barbarism to civilization. They are neither hunters in the forests or workers on farms, but eke out a miserable existence, neither white men nor Indians. The present generation, all fostered in idleness, have lost their independence and love of the wild, free life of the woods, sinking into lives of inaction. A few will rise above their fellows, but the majority are doomed to destruction."

"It is but the universal law of nature," I replied, "that the weak shall go down and the strong survive. The Indians must give way before the superior white race, just as the forests disappear to make room for wheat fields and homes."

"I grant you that they are going down fast enough," he replied; "but let us return and see if the belated steamer has put in an appearance yet."

No steamer was there, and we obeyed our host's summons to supper, feeling that to reach Olympia that night was something not to be hoped for. As we took our seats at the table an outer door swung noiselessly open, and a tall, slim girl of eighteen or twenty entered and sat down by the hostess. I was at once charmed and puzzled by her face. She was fair, with dark eyes and delicate features. Her dark-brown hair hung in wavy curls. There was something in the little form, shadowy, dark eyes, and subdued yet proud manner, that spoke of mixed blood in her veins. "She is a half-breed," was my mental comment; yet her face seemed strangely familiar to me. Where had I seen her, or some one who resembled her? I glanced at Williams, whose frowning brow and pale face told me he was making a strong effort to control his emotions. Some how, all this jarred upon me. I was half vexed with Williams for being so agitated, when I had always regarded him as one of the most impressive of men. I was startled, too, by the face of the girl, whom our hostess called "Celinda." There was some secret of Williams' affecting him, but how could this girl be connected with it? Cogitating thus, I maintained a subtle silence, devoting myself to my plate and refusing to be drawn into conversation by the good-natured hostess, who finally turned her attention to John. That gentleman, to my surprise, threw off his reserve, and they were soon chatting easily, the lady bemoaning the scarcity of travel and the general monotony of life in those parts.

"I declare for 't mister," she exclaimed in a burst of pathetic confidence, "some days I'm so beat out and lonesome-like, a little bit of a dog fight'll just work me all up, nigh into fits."

I was watching Celinda's face as the good lady made this plaintive assertion, and I saw a bright smile flash into the dark eyes lighting her countenance wondrously. It was like a revelation. In that instant I saw the resemblance which had eluded me at first. It was John Williams' face over again, only softened into feminine beauty. Here was a clue to the mystery surrounding my friend, but my puzzled brain could comprehend only the exact likeness between the two.

Supper was over, and we went out again into the dim twilight, through which a few bright stars were beginning to gleam. Far down the bay we heard a solitary steamer whistle, and presently the Old Crow rounded the point and worked laboriously toward us. John had disappeared immediately after supper, but, as I stood by the little front gate watching the approaching boat, I was startled by voices in the dusky glare below me. The first was a girl's voice, wild with passion:

"Father," it said, "you ask me to go out into the world with you, but you will not, cannot blame me for shrinking from the ordeal. Three years ago an

elderly lady living near here took pity on my isolated life and sent me to the academy at B—. I had not one friend all the time I was there. Other girls had sisters, brothers, cousins of their own age. Even if they were orphans, they were white and easily found friends; but I—her voice quivered—"was it for any sin of mine that I was an outcast? Only a few even deigned to notice that I was a human being. There is no place in the world for me."

"My child!"—John Williams' voice was now broken with intense agony—"if I could lay down my life that you might be spared further suffering, how gladly would I do it. I can only strive to bear your burdens with you. All these long weary years I have believed you dead; my heart has hungered for your love; you are all that I have in the world; come to me, my daughter, and let my love atone for all the past years of loneliness. Cannot my little girl love her father, even though he has sinned?"

"Father, father, do not think that I do not love you, I do," sobbed the girl, "and I will go with you if you wish me to."

I started quietly as I realized that I had been listening to others' secrets, and walked hurriedly. The captain of the little steamer was bustling about in all directions, and in answer to my anxious questioning, said firmly:

"Can't start back till midnight sir; tide dead against us now, very strong. Get you to Olympia in time to take the stage," and he bustled away to attend to some one else.

"Celinda," said John's voice, calm now as usual, "walk up the hill with me, I have something I want to say to you."

We walked to the crest of the hill and seated ourselves on a fallen log.

"Twenty years ago," began my companion, "I landed at this point. There was then only an Indian camp here, and my journey hither was made in a canoe with a young Indian called Wildy who had promised to show me some good hunting. I was young then and impulsive. Some severe disappointments had, however, rendered me cynical as regarded the benefits of civilized life, and I was only too ready to think that all the virtues were embodied in my friends of the wild woods. Well, of course, I enjoyed the life we led. There on that slope stood Old Peter's camp. We fished in the streams and hunted through the forests. Oh, the enchantment of that time; the wild freedom of that woodland life!"

He rose and walked to and fro, then came and stood before me.

"Celinda," he continued, in a tone of agonizing entreaty, "you will not judge me harshly? I had lost my best friend, my father. My world had proved full of vain delusions. I drifted out to this coast, soured, disappointed, bitter; but those long Summer days when I wandered in the woods were full of peaceful content. The petty ambitions of civilized life seemed so far away. It was then—his voice grew hoarse—"that I built that cabin in the woods and I—yes—I took Old Peter's daughter for my wife. I believed that her very ignorance was purity and innocence, she seemed so modest. I thought she lived only for me, and I reasoned that there was as much sanctity in our union as though blessed by all the ministers in Christendom. Oh, the heart of man, that deceitful thing! But how bitterly was I punished for my great sin. We had been married a year and a half, my little girl was just a merry crowing baby when I first began to realize the enormity of my crime against God, myself and, most of all, my child. The scales dropped from my eyes and I saw that I was leading, not a life of freedom from base and sordid cares but a soulless, degraded existence. I longed for educated companionship. Then I saw the wrong that I had done in taking this Indian woman for my wife, my soul loathed the bondage. True, our marriage had only been in Indian custom, yet it seemed a greater crime to desert her. A sense of guilt weighed me down when I looked at my daughter's face, so like my own, and realized that life to a half-breed Indian is a curse. I almost dreaded to meet the gaze of her bright eyes, and hear her lisping prattle. One day my wife eloped with a dashing young fellow who had been working at a logging camp near us. The fact came like a stunning blow to me. I had longed for release and it had come, bringing added shame to my child and myself; but I had my baby still; I named her Celinda. I loved the dear, old-fashioned name. It had been the name of my little sister. I determined then to return to the world I had thrust aside and bring Celinda up amid surroundings that would obliterate all the Indian in her nature. I secured a position in a thriving store at Olympia, for educated men were scarce then. But the few ladies of the town would have nothing to do with me, not because I had lived with an Indian woman. Oh, no, men whose lives had been one long debauch were welcomed eagerly. It was because I kept my child with me; not one of them could be hired to care for the little thing. I struggled along, however, the best I could and succeeded very well with the help of Jim B., a good hearted but shiftless young fellow, who "bailed" with me. But I suppose the child missed a woman's care, for after several months she grew ill, and I became worn out with anxious watching; I was worn with work, and while she lay

sick I was attacked with a violent fever that brought me very low. Jim nursed me through it, and after weary weeks of convalescence told me the truth about Celinda. She was dead. I saw the little grave that held all that I had loved, but I was glad she was gone. There were only frowns for her here. My friend persuaded me to revisit the East with him, we engaged in business and prospered. A few years ago Jim returned to the Pacific Coast, but I had no desire to revisit the scenes of my suffering. In all these years I had not thought of marriage or a home.

I had forfeited all that makes life happy and buried my chances for earth-ly peace in that lonely little grave by the blue waters of Puget Sound. Only a few months ago I received a letter from Jim, saying that he was sure of death in a short while, as his physician had given him up; he must write and tell me that my child was not dead. He had seen how I was wasting my life away in vain regrets, so, during my illness he had taken the child and placed her with a poor but kindly family, who had taken it into their home as one of their own. He had regularly paid them a small sum for her maintenance, but had taken no pains to have her educated, supposing that the mother nature in her would eventually lead her to ruin; but since his return he had seen and conversed with her and was impressed with her superiority to her surroundings, so he begged me to come at once and undo, if I could, the harm he had wrought. He died with a prayer for forgiveness on his lips. You may be sure I needed no urging to come, but you, who have known my outward life for ten years, little imagined the hope that brought me here."

"And Celinda?" I enquired as he paused.

"She has consented to go with me, and to-night we both leave this place to build up a new home in some land where her mother's race will be no stain on the worth of my beautiful girl."

The night had grown darker and cooler. As he ceased speaking, I took his hand in unspoken sympathy for his sorrow and hope for his future.

"Thank you, Celinda," he said heartily, "I cannot help feeling that much is forgiven me, for I have suffered much. But I find my girl modest and gentle, and though she, too, has suffered, our lives will still hold much of happiness."

A tinkling little bell rang the signal for departure. We hurried on board the little steamer, and John Williams and his daughter left behind them the dark land of their sorrows and started out hopefully in the dawn of a new life.

Ballooning and Reporting.

Sometimes a reporter goes up in a balloon with an aeronaut. It would seem at first sight that the balloon man had the reporter completely at his mercy, but such is not the case. He laughs best who laughs last, and the reporter has the writing up of the aerial voyage. Recently a balloon ascension was made near Montreal, and a reporter of the New York Herald went up. The account of the trip shows that it was one of the most terrible on record. But the mind of the reader turns with pleasure from the harrow of the situation to admire the wonderful bravery of this daring reporter. The balloon would swoop down on forests, then bound to the skies, or nearly there, then dip into a lake, then turn a double somersault without touching the ground; in fact, it acted in a most outrageous and undignified way. The balloonist was pale as ashes, his teeth chattered and his knees knocked together. But his reportorial fervor, oh, where was he? With a calm smile at danger, and a look of unflinching serenity on his marble brow, he gave his order in the same quiet tone he would have used in ordering a beefsteak rare, at a penny restaurant. The trembling balloonist was bid to lull his fears. The reporter mildly informed him that the next thing to do was to get down out of this and ordered him to throw out some more ballast. The balloonist was utterly prostrated by fear that instead of doing this he opened the valve and the balloon started down. The balloonist struck a forest and tore great oaks up by the roots and left a track of fallen trees in its wake. The reporter, desiring to stop this wholesale slaughter of valuable timber, climbed on the netting, kicked open the valve and brought up the festive balloon against a barn. Having saved the life of the aeronaut several times, he completed his good work by carrying the fainting man into a farm house and there resuscitating him. When you let a New York reporter tell his own story you will find him the bravest, most daring hero on record.

One of Marie Antoinette's finest points was her hand and arm, and she greatly admired a similar advantage in others. One night at the opera a Russian lady, who sat opposite the Queen's box, exhibited a beautiful arm with a magnificent diamond bracelet on it, and it was observed that the Queen's glance was frequently directed to that quarter. Presently a gentleman, splendidly dressed, came to say that the Queen had greatly admired the arm and the diamonds, and begged to be permitted to inspect the latter. The lady, highly flattered, at once sent them. But he was merely a member of the swell mob, and she didn't see them again.

Statistics for Girls.

A young English statistician, who was paying court to a young lady, thought to surprise her with his immense erudition. Producing his note book, she thought he was about to write a love sonnet, but was slightly taken back with the following question:

"How many meals do you eat?" "Why, three of course; but of all the oldest questions!"

"Never mind, dear. I'll tell you all about it in a minute."

His pencil was rapidly at work. At last, finally clasping her slender waist:

"Now my darling, I've got it, and if you wish to know how much has passed through that adorable little mouth in the last seventeen years, I can give you the exact figures."

"Goodness! Gracious! What can you mean?"

"Now, just listen," says he, "and you will hear exactly what you have been obliged to absorb to maintain those charms which are to make the happiness of my life."

"But I don't want to hear."

"Ah, you are surprised, no doubt, but statistics are wonderful things. You are seventeen years old, so that in fifteen years you have absorbed oven or calves, 2; sheep and lambs, 14; chickens, 357; ducks, 24; geese, 12; turkeys, 100; game of various kinds, 824; fishes, 160; eggs, 3,124; vegetables (bunches), 700; fruit, (baskets), 603; cheese, 102; bread, cake, etc., (in sacks of flour), 46; wine (barrels), 11; water (gallons), 3,000."

"At this the maiden recoiled, and jumping up exclaimed: "I think you are very impertinent and disgusting besides, and I will not stay to listen to you!" upon which she flew into the house.

The Walking Fever.

Hear the San Jose Mercury man's eminently correct strictures on the walking mania which is now spreading over the land: "It is said that over twenty thousand people visited the Mechanics' Pavilion, in San Francisco, the other night, paying four bits a head, and all to see a half dozen fagged out tramps, with sore heels, sprained ankles, and caved in corporities generally, hobble around a sawdust track—only this, and nothing more." We see thousands of people walk every day, and think nothing of it—care nothing about it. Then why should we pay half a dollar to see a half dozen persons doing exactly the same thing in a very different and tired-out manner? If there were any particular novelty in their walking—any new style adopted calculated to make walking a more desirable method of locomotion—there would be of some sense in paying for the privilege of witnessing it. Even as a matter of novelty, if the walkers would amuse us by walking on their ears, or sliding around the ring on the cheeks of their managers, twenty thousand spectators might consider themselves paid for visiting the show. We have had our attacks of velocipede, of roller-skate and of bass ball; we have made periodic fools of ourselves in various ways; but never till now have we demonstrated to the universe exactly what double distilled idiots we can make of ourselves as in this last manifestation of lunacy known as the walking mania."

History of Yellow Fever.

The history of yellow fever in this country shows that it has hardly been the exception when the fever appeared as an epidemic the year following an epidemic. In 1847 there were 2,259 deaths in New Orleans, and 850 in 1848, and 737 in 1849. In 1853 there were 7,970 deaths in the same city, and there were 2,423 deaths in 1854 and 2,670 in 1855. In 1858 there were 3,889 deaths, but none the next year. In 1867 there were 3,093 deaths, and none the following year. In the same proportions the fever appeared in the smaller places in Louisiana and Mississippi in those years. In 1848, when it reappeared in New Orleans, it came in June, while the epidemic of 1847 began in August. The great epidemic of 1853 began in May, and the epidemic of the year following came in July, and in the next year in June. The epidemic in North Carolina in 1862 was followed in 1864, two years afterward, by one of increased mortality, but not in the same cities and towns as a general thing. In 1797 Philadelphia's death list was 1,300; in 1798, 3,500; and in 1799 there were 1,000 deaths. So it was in 1802 three-fifths when Philadelphia next had the fever as an epidemic. In South Carolina it has been almost invariably the case that the second year brought an epidemic. Memphis and all other points which were infected in 1873 escaped the second year. In that year the fever began at Shreveport first, and did not come until the latter part of August, reaching Memphis September 14th. August has been the favorite month for its inception. Last year it began near the first of that month in the South.