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THE DYING MAN'S STORY.

You have often asked me for my history, doctor, and now that I am so near my end, you shall have it. Now, don't stop me, my dear friend; I know what you would say—I must not excite myself, or talk much. You see, I am almost as good a doctor as you are; but I feel that I cannot last another day, and as a few hours cannot make much difference, I prefer dying my own way; so sit down, and listen to what no one has heard but yourself.

Six and twenty years ago I was a clerk, in a merchant office. I can't say I liked the business, but I stuck to it and got on, for I loved my master's daughter, and hoped by hard work to one day be able to make her mine. I was an orphan, with neither kith nor kin to look after me; but the love I bore Milly kept me quiet and industrious. I rose step by step in the office; and Mr. Bruce, the Merchant was never tired of sounding my praise.

All went on happily until he discovered that I loved his daughter, and then his passion knew no bounds. I need not enter into the particulars. I was turned from his house, but not alone for Milly and I had been secretly married three months before.

We took a quiet little lodging in the suburbs, and I went every day into the city hopes of getting another situation. I had a little money that I had saved, on which we lived—lived, Oh! so happily, that even at this distance it seems a heavenly dream to bright for earth. Milly was always trustful that her father would relent, and I always believed I should obtain another appointment; but we were both deceived. Time rolled on; our little capital was nearly gone, our hopes almost exhausted, but our love bloomed as fresh as ever. I tried literature, and made a few pounds; but my manuscripts but too often came back without being read. Still I struggled on, and wrote several songs, which had a certain amount of success; once more hope seemed to beam upon us.

Milly—heaven bless her!—fancied that I should soon become famous, that the whole country would ring with my name, and then her father would be glad to receive us. What might have happened had I not met with such misfortunes, Heaven alone knows—I cannot say; but in the midst of this bright happiness my wife was taken ill. It was consumption, I worked day and night to procure the necessary medicines and food for her; I wrote to her father but received no reply; I went from publisher to publisher, lawking my songs about, selling them for almost nothing to buy bread. Oh, how they ground me down! Men who had had successful songs from me, now that they saw me in poverty, out down the price till starvation was close upon me.

One afternoon I shall never forget it—I left poor Milly in bed—she could not rise—and went to seek for work. I called at her father's but was turned away from the door. I wandered about from one place to another, but all my efforts were fruitless—I could not earn a penny. Heartbroken and weary, I turned homeward; I had not money enough to buy a loaf bread. Several

times I paused as a well dressed man approached me, and determined to beg but the words choked me, and they passed on without noticing my distress. When they passed, I was ashamed of having thought of begging, and yet angry within myself that I had not done so.

I was standing at the corner of a street, thinking what I should do—for I could not go home to Milly, my poor hungry, sick wife, empty handed—when I received a hearty slap on the shoulder and turning round saw Glidden, the music publisher.

"Well, Burdon," he cried, "you don't seem happy. You look as pleasant as if you had lost a sovereign and found a farthing."

"Happy?" I exclaimed,—"happy with a wife dying of consumption—and starvation?"

"Dear me! that's very sad! Why don't you work?"

"Work! I have sought it far and near I have done everything, but without success."

"The music trade is bad, and no mistake; but still I think something might be done. Your songs have succeeded pretty well. Now what time would it take you to write me four songs?"

"That all depends upon what kind you want," I replied.

"They must be bacchanalian—full of life—you understand?"

"Yes."

"And I must have them the first thing in the morning."

"That is a short time."

"It is, but ready money, you know," he replied.

"On these terms, I agree."

"Very well, then. Now about the price. You know the music trade is very bad at present; I can't give you much—so we will say three guineas for the lot."

"What!" I exclaimed, "three guineas for four songs? Why you gave me more for one!"

"Things were different then. Three guineas for four songs, and one guinea in advance. I can't give you a penny more."

As he spoke he drew a sovereign from his pocket, and held it invitingly between his finger and thumb. The sight of the money was too tempting; so without further demur, I agreed to write the songs.

"Mind I have them early tomorrow morning," he said. "If you do not bring to me by ten I shall send for them."

I hurried away to purchase some food for my wife, and also to procure her some medicine. I bought a roll and ate it, so that I could tell her I had dined out; for I needed all the money for her. Amongst the things I bought was some brandy, the doctor having ordered Milly to drink it. Laden with these poor things, which to me looked heaps of riches, I hurried home ar.

Poor Milly, when I reached her bedside and showed her what I had brought, met me with a smile of patient love that nearly broke my heart. She tasted a little food and drank a small glass of weak brandy and water, then fell into a light sleep. Illness at the best of times terrible; but when we sit alone, and see all we love fading fast the disease aided by want; to see the thin pale face, so like death in life; to know that before long even the sad pleasure of tending it will be lost, and that before we can give it proper comfort—this, indeed, is awful.

As I sat watching and thinking I became desperate; my brain seemed on fire, and my mouth parched. Seizing the brandy bottle, I poured out a large glass of spirits, and drank it off. It steadied my nerves, and I sat down to commence my songs.

For some time I could gain no thought. The dull silence of the night, broken only by the heavy breathing of my wife, and a low purring sound that rattled at her chest, palled upon me, the dull, glimmering light of candle, that threw a melancholy light over our wretched room; the thin, wedge like face, half in shade, that rested on the pillow; the ghost like hand that lay so still, stretched out on the coverlet—all seemed to crush me. How, with such things around me, could I write of mirth, drink, and jollity.

I pressed my fingers over my eyes, and the hot tears forced themselves, through my fingers. I grew hysterical; I felt as if I could have screamed with laughter. I could not write; but the songs must be done, or I should not get the money. In hopes of gaining more calmness, I drank more brandy. I poured glass after glass of the burning fluid I gazed down my throat, I felt mad, not tipsy, but delirious, I could hear the rattle of glasses, the merry shouts of laughter, strange tunes, such as we had

suited orgies held in praise of Bacchus rang in my head. I seized my pen and wrote rapidly. Some fiend seemed whispering the words to me they full of recklessness and abandonment.

My candle burned out, but I continued writing by the gray cold light of daybreak that came slanting over the housetops. At last my task was done, and springing up, I hastened to my wife to tell her my success, and to cheer her with the assurance that these wild songs would make my name. I felt my blood rushing through my veins as I fondly leaned over to kiss her. Our lips met; but I started back with a cry of terror—she was dead!

I do not remember anything after that for some weeks. I had the brain fever. When I recovered she was gone. I had never again kissed her dear, dead lips. It was some time before I was able to crawl out; but orders for songs came in thick and fast. My last songs had been a success; their wild dissolute tone had suited the young fools with money, and had become a small wealth to the publisher.

Years have passed since then, but from that time I have never written a song of that kind, although large sums of money have been offered to me. I hate them. Day and night I hear them buzzing in my ears. Scarcely a week passes out I hear some of them shouted out by some drunkard as he staggers home, and then the whole of that terrible night comes back to me.

They are evil spirits which have haunted me night and day; they have made me shun my fellow men; they have made me live in utter seclusion. Day and night, day and night, I live in terror of hearing them. Sometimes in dreams I hear Milly singing the first song I gave her; and in the midst of this happiness, some fiend seems to clout those dreadful songs in praise of wine.

Hush! I hear her voice; she sings the song I gave her in those happy, happy days. She is going away. I must follow her. Hush! she is singing me sleep. Milly! my own dear Milly.

The New King of Sweden.

The number of eccentric monarchs in Europe has been increased by the accession of King Oscar II, of Sweden and Norway. Like nearly every member of the illustrious house from which he has sprung, the new Scandinavian ruler is a highly gifted man, and, in spite of the stormy youth through which he has passed, and the peculiarly wayward temper which he has exhibited on many occasions, the people of the two northern kingdoms look forward to his reign with the confident expectation that the liberties of the country will be safe in his hands, and that he will perform his arduous task as successfully as his illustrious grandfather, Bernadotte. They remember gratefully that Oscar always lent his influence to the liberal party during the political struggles in Sweden of the past few years, and they recall an incident to illustrate this fact. During one of the most important debates on the reform of the election laws in the Swedish House of Lords, he related with pride the remarkable answer of his grandfather to the French historian, Ampere, during a visit which the latter had paid him at the royal palace at Stockholm. Ampere had expressed his surprise at the simplicity of his reception at the hands of King Bernadotte. "Oh," replied the latter, laughing, "that is nothing! What am I but a Republican on the throne?"

The history of King Oscar up to the present time is full of the most interesting incidents. He was a precocious child, and would have been the pride and delight of his teachers but for his wayward disposition. His father, Oscar I, was a great disciplinarian, and insisted that his two sons should be treated by their teachers with the same severity as ordinary school boys. He himself would examine their compositions after school hours; and, when he found that they were not satisfactory, he would administer with his own hands the required correction. Having received several rather painful castigations in this manner, the young Prince Oscar, in his 12th year ran away from home, and succeeded in finding his way to Copenhagen, where emissaries of his distracted parents found him playing in the streets at marbles with some ragamuffins. No European Prince ever presented a more ludicrous aspect than young Oscar when he was thus found, barefooted and his clothes soiled

and torn. But he asserts to the present day that he enjoyed himself gloriously during his brief absence from home.

In his 17th year he was sent to the University of Upsala, where he took part in all the practical jokes, of which the students at that ancient seat of learning are so fond. After remaining there about six months he shocked his royal father by coolly informing him that he had fallen desperately in love with the daughter of one of the University professors, and was determined to marry her.

As a matter of course, King Oscar would not permit this; and the young man was recalled to Stockholm, where he was not long in becoming very popular by his unaffected manners, and by the simplicity of his conduct. He delighted in walking through the streets of Stockholm after nightfall in a humble suit of clothes; and many an act of brutality on the part of the police was prevented by his gallant and timely intervention. He has also invariably present at fires in the capital, and nothing could prevent him from working on such occasions with the utmost vigor at the engines.

In 1852 he and a young friend of similar disposition made an excursion to Christiania in Norway. They traveled incognito, and registered assumed names at second-class hotels. Strolling after dark through the city they were unfortunately attacked by a gang of robbers, who knocked them down and rifled their pockets. Without a cent in their pockets the two distinguished gentlemen returned to their hotel. Next morning the landlord presented his bill to them. They confessed they had no money, owing to their mishap the night before. The landlord utterly refused to believe their story, and threatened to invoke the interference of the police. Vainly did they try to dissuade him from his purpose, but, rushing from the room, he not only locked them in but placed at the door a stalwart porter armed with a club.

The position in which the future King of Sweden was placed was so ludicrous that he could not help bursting into a peal of laughter. When the irate landlord re-appeared and brought two policemen with him, the two gentlemen explained who they were, but they had some difficulty in establishing their identity. When the Court of Stockholm selected a German Princess as consort of the wayward Oscar the latter went secretly to sea, in disguise traveled with her on the steamer that conveyed her from that port to Stockholm watching his intended bride with the closest attention. What he saw of her satisfied him that she was an excellent young woman, and he has ever since proved an affectionate husband to her.

The people of Stockholm know many other amusing stories about eccentricities of their young King; but they know, also, that he warmly sympathizes with the people, and they are convinced that his reign will be prosperous and beneficial to the country.—N. Y. Evening Post.

The meteoric shower of the 9th, 10th, and 11th of August last was observed at several points on the continent of Europe, and the following results were obtained: At Turin Italy, during the first night 127 shooting stars were counted; a fine aurora also took place, lasting 13 hours. On the second night 334 meteors were noted, accompanied by an auroral light lasting three hours from midnight. The third night being cloudy, but 54 stars were observed. At Marseilles France, 164 were counted on the first night, and 170 on the second. The point from which all seemed to radiate was the constellation Cygnus. A faint auroral light was remarked. At Geneva, nearly half of the stars composing the shower came from different directions. At Alexandria, Egypt, 167 meteors were noted on the second night, and at Barcelona, Spain, 886.—Scientific American.

An exchange paper says in an obituary notice, that the deceased has been for several years a bank director, notwithstanding which, he died a christian, and universally respected.

"Wife," said a man looking for his boot jack, "I have places where I keep my things and you ought to know it." "Yes, I ought to know where you keep your late hours, but I don't."

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