

The Little Middle Daughter.

The little middle daughter, just eight years old to-day; Her hair is bright as sunshine...

TALE OF A DEAD MAN.

By what means the subjoined reached me is a matter of no consequence. It relates to commonplace experiences which are not often elaborated...

As to the existence of astral bodies there is unquestionably a general unbelief. Still, there are thousands of men and women of high culture and intelligence who are firm in the faith...

It is in the nature of a vitalized sentient shadow of the body, and yet with a species of tangibility that permits it, under certain favorable conditions, to become perceptible to, and hold converse with, some in the flesh.

I who write this am the astral body of a man who lies dead before me. As his double, although I am living, I am, in a sense, also the dead man, and as if I were he, I shall speak.

The gradual approach of dissolution, the illness, the physical, mental, moral and emotional disturbances which precede and accompany it, are rarely related with exactness. What is often presented as characteristic of the moribund is a perversion of the facts.

My life, including its course and ending, was not especially remarkable, I was of a robust youth; was religiously educated in the straightest fashion; had a fair education in the schools and business, and pursued an occupation which without overexertion furnished me with a moderate competence.

It was at this period that slight ripples began to disturb the level of the hitherto pacific surface of the sea of life. Sleep, always undisturbed and refreshing, began to be broken. Always had I fallen asleep when my head touched the pillow and the rest would last for hours without interruption.

My splendid appetite began to fail; my disposition for physical and mental exertion lessened; my average good nature became tainted; my nerves, always shielded in impenetrable defenses, became bare, as age wears the enamel from a tooth, leaving its tender fibers exposed to incessant and painful contact.

All these changes did not come in a month, or a year, or in five years. They were almost imperceptible in their approach. It was a half score of years before all these changes forced themselves on my attention, and I discovered that I had grown thin and was losing my strength.

Well meaning friends contributed to the hastening of my awakening from the unconsciousness of failing health.

"What in the world ails you? Have you been sick?" "No, I never felt better in my life," I would reply, at the time a chill shuddering along my nerves as their remarks forced themselves on me as a deadly portent.

"Oh, you're so thin and pale. You want to see a doctor."

Another effusive acquaintance: "Why, old boy, you're getting old. Anything the matter with you?"

Then I suddenly began to notice the deaths among my acquaintances. It came to me with the suddenness and pang of a dagger thrust that So and So, who were younger than I, were dead.

I began unconsciously taking an absorbing interest in the death notices. "Younger than I!" was the sinking comment when such was the fact, and for a moment I came to the verge of hating those who had thus set an example of death at their age.

I grew weaker in health and demoralized in temperament. The slightest obstacle ruffled me, I fell into despondent moods, and lost my taste for society, amusement, labor and study.

Meanwhile, so far as I know, I was possessed at that period of no malady, and yet my fancy supplied scores of diseases. I felt the languor and waste of consumption, knew absolutely that I was affected by organic heart difficulty, and at times felt the premonitory gnawings of a cancer, the insidious symptoms of Bright's deadly disease and the warnings of paralysis.

I consulted medical men, who examined me and found nothing—"a low nervous tone; a little tonic, less work and a rest. No organic trouble; some little functional disturbance of no consequence."

At times, after awhile, clouds, as it were, drifted over the sky of my brain and shrouded everything in a mist. I could not always think with clearness. I now and then lost cohesion in thought; my memory occasionally was impaired, and I would forget names, dates and faces. I apprehended softening of the brain.

It was at this period that night became a gloomy and dreaded inferno with infinite tortures. Sleep was in brief snatches, disturbed by atrocious visions. I swung over the brows of heaven high precipices; I was chased through caverns of hideous night by monsters, and constantly awoke shivering and sometimes screaming with fright and bathed in perspiration.

The waking period between the moments of sleep were more intolerable after a time than the nightmare of slumber. They were the arenas of retrospection in which memory and conscience fought unceasing battles. A blow that I had given a baby brother; a flying cripple in the playground whom I had kicked in a moment of rage; the reproachful, gentle blue eyes of a dying dove, that I had wantedly shot in a grove one glorious June afternoon; meannesses that I had been guilty of, even to the most minute details; neglected opportunities; misdirected action—all these on such occasions gathered about me and broke the solemn stillness of the night with clamorous upbraidings.

After a time the most terrible phantom, the most pertinacious monster of them all, made its appearance, and hovered leering at me in the somber night. It was the suggestion of death. "You must die!" it said and flew away.

"Well, what of it? Tens of billions have died, and everybody living must also die. There's young Blank, with all his youth and wealth, he is sure to die some day, and so has the beautiful Miss Fleurette and the newly married couple, the Jennesses—all of them; not one of them will be spared! Suppose I must? They'll all follow sooner or later."

And yet these reflections, that every son and daughter of man must undergo the same fate gave me no consolation. I was not willing to share the common lot; I wanted to live, only to live! It may be that I was not more of a coward than the majority of human beings when they first begin to contemplate the approach of the great butcher. For months and months I fought his appearance; I felt for myself a great commiseration, an acute sorrow that I was obliged to die. It was only when I found him close enough to feel the breath of his nostrils that I ceased to fear him.

Early, orthodox, religious training made itself felt potentially, and there were moments when the child taught idea of an "angry God frothing with rage," and an ocean of flame rolling on forever its sulphurous billows, with its shrieking and damned souls, filled me with indescribable terror and apprehension. Again, the suggestion of annihilation would possess me with its awful menace. To be obliterated, to be separated forever from friends whom

I loved, was even more terrifying than the anticipation of eternal torture.

In the inspection of these various horrors dulled their hideous intensity, as the victim on the wheel is said to become insensible to pain after the first few blows. A species of numbness, a lethargy permeated me. The subject grew wearisome. I said:

"I am but an indescribably minute speck in the universal collection of human atoms. I am of no possible consequence compared with the stupendous mass. If there be a future in which there is a judgment of human actions it is no more than just that I pay the penalty of my offenses. All the trillions of specks that have lived and died, and who will live and die, will have to meet the same fate. Why should I distress myself in regard to a future life any more than one of the animalcule which inhabit a drop of water in the mid-Pacific? I am of no more consequence in the mighty aggregate of the illimitable universe than this tiny and invisible creation. I will worry no longer."

In time all these phantasms, visions, doubts and apprehensions disappeared. Then a profound peace took possession of my soul. It was not the pacific repose of hope, but the belief which came from the disappearance of the black broods that incessantly threatened dire results. It was a subsidence of the thundering waves and the east-gating winds.

The turbulent sea melted into gentle swells which bore me on with a soothing, cradle like motion. The incoming tide drifted me along a shore from which a delicious perfume, balsamic and lethal, filled the atmosphere. Twilight came, as tranquilly by the heavy odors, I floated languidly and painlessly on and on, till the twilight deepened into eternal darkness.

VICTORIA'S DRAGOONS.

The Famous Regiment of Which England's Queen Has Become Chief.

The First Grand Dragoon regiment, of which Her Majesty has become chief, is not only one of the most distinguished cavalry regiments in the German army, but in military history it will live as one of the participants in those episodes which occurred at critical moments in the great battle of Vionville-Mars-la-Tour on the 16th of August, 1870, when there depended for the moment on a mere handful of horsemen the fate of some thousands of their comrades.

Twice during that battle did the German cavalry, in order to avert the impending catastrophe, ride to certain destruction; and on one of these occasions it was the First Grand Dragoons that, single-handed, first arrested the almost triumphant onward march of the enemy and thus helped to beat back the well-nigh overwhelming tide of advance. The formation of the regiment dates from the 21st of February, 1815, on which day King William Frederick the Third issued an order to the following effect: "I have determined to raise three new guard cavalry regiments in place of the existing light cavalry regiment, and to form from them the three national cavalry regiments which have fought with the army during the war, in order, not only to give to the provinces to which these regiments belong and to which they owe their origin a fresh proof of my kindly feelings toward them, and which they deserve, but also to testify my satisfaction with the spirit shown by the light guard cavalry regiment during the war."

The three regiments thus formed became the guard dragoons, and the guard hussars. The dragoons were composed of the guard dragoon squadron, two squadrons of the Pomeranian national cavalry regiments, and a squadron from the Queen's dragoon regiment. The men and horses from the national regiments were selected with care. Those men who had obtained, during the war the decoration of the Iron Cross were first chosen, and then preference was given to any who had served during the war.

To Introduce India and Ceylon Texas.

Prominent among the arrivals of San Francisco recently from Australia was R. E. Pinco, late inspector of Estates and Chairman of the Haputall Planters' Association, of Ceylon. He comes to America as the representative of the tea planters of India and Ceylon, to introduce Indian teas into this country. He claims that India and Ceylon teas are supplanting those of China and Japan in England, 125,000,000 pounds having been shipped to Great Britain this year. He says the tea of his country is now handled entirely by machinery, and declares that it is a great deal cleaner than that produced in China and Japan, which is prepared by hand.

Retriever to the Last.

A gentleman was out shooting near Totnes the other day when he had the misfortune, which has previously occurred to other sportsmen, to shoot his dog. For a moment he was too much overcome to see what damage he had done, and before he had recovered himself the animal, a black retriever, had come up to him, bringing in its mouth its own tail, which had been shot clean off. The dog's name was Ponto.

GLADSTONE'S PORTRAITS.

Variety of Phases of the Old Man's Countenance.

Mr. Gladstone is not an easy subject, though he is one in whom painters may well delight. His strongly-marked features, the deep lines and furrows which time and thought have plowed upon his face, the lustrous speaking eyes, and the heavy locks, once black, but long since whitened by the passage of the years, provide the artist with tempting materials for the display of his powers. It might seem, indeed, that his was one of those faces which it is impossible to mistake, and which even the least skillful of painters can portray with accuracy. So far, however, from this being the case, there are few men of distinction whose likeness it is more difficult to fix upon canvas. For the expression—which alone can give life to the portrait—varies in the case of Mr. Gladstone from hour to hour, almost one might say from moment to moment. Those who know him well will tell you that he has one face for the House of Commons, another for society, and yet a third for his own library. And in Parliament what an infinite variety of moods it is that he presents to those who watch him! Now, with head sunk deep within the folds of the collar, the dimensions of which are by no means so extravagant as the caricaturist seeks to make us believe, he presents a picture of extreme old age, wrapped within itself, lost in reverie that deals with men and scenes undreamt of by the present generation. As you scan the drawn and wasted features, over which is spread an ashen pallor that is almost startling, you find it difficult to believe that the veteran can ever again be roused to any interest in the affairs of this world. But in an instant all is changed. The eyes flash forth the fires of youth, the head is raised as though in defiance, not merely of the crowded benches opposite, but of Time himself, while, as the feeling of the moment dictates, the mobile lips express anger, triumph, scorn, or a certain subtle persuasiveness which is peculiar to Mr. Gladstone. It is impossible for the artist, however great may be his mastery of his art, to combine in a single portrait all these varying phases of the statesman's face. His business is to select some happy moment in which he is seen at his best in a particular mood, and to fix that moment upon canvas.

Scotch Names the Queerest.

In England there is a great variety of personal nomenclature, and though we have plenty of Smiths, Browns and Robinsons, we have nothing approaching to the poverty, in this respect, which characterizes many localities in North Britain. In certain parts of Scotland, not only have the surnames been few, but there has been a strong disposition to ring the changes on a very few Christian names, with the result that the community, in its desire to distinguish between persons of precisely the same name, has been obliged to provide each with a special label, or "to-name," by which he can be known. A contributor to the Scotsman says that in the official list of voters in a Scotch fishing town occur such "to-names" as "Deadly," "Pum," "Den," "Cock," "rost," "Bo," "Sandyke," "Helen's James," and so on.

Such appellations as these are not necessarily nicknames, as we understand them. Sometimes they are patronymics, sometimes they are local in allusions, sometimes they refer to individual occupations, sometimes they are personally descriptive, sometimes they are mere identifications "signifying nothing."

Occasionally they are simple variations upon a single Christian name. Thus it may be, one John Bruce, popularly called "Jock," has a son named William, who becomes "Jock's Will." His son, again, who is called William, becomes "Jock's Will's William," while the last named's son, if also called William, becomes "Jock's Will's William's Will." A further form is "Wullskie," but that, probably, is rarely used. The system still obtains in Scotland, and if it were introduced into this country it might prevent some of the confusion which exists among our John Smiths, Thomas Browns and William Robinsons.

Rats Not the Culprits.

The Lewiston (Me.) Journal tells a story about a West Minot farmer who, to save a barrelful of apples in his cellar from the supposed depredations of rats, set two traps in the barrel. It appears, however, that it was a female member of his family who had a fondness for the fruit. Happening in the cellar the morning after the farmer had prepared to "bag the rodents," she started to help herself as usual. On putting her hand in the barrel she found herself caught in a steel trap. In her attempts to free her hand she placed the other one in the barrel, and, as luck would have it, put it directly into the jaws of the other trap. As there was no one in the house at the time, her cries for help were not heard for a while. When aid at last arrived the woman had nearly fainted from pain.

An unfair thing in this world is that we never know there is an ounce of prevention until after we have taken our pound of cure.

PRICE OF CHAMPAGNES.

What the Epernay Grapes Cost—The Sancerre Crop.

The following extract from a French paper, relative to the price of some champagne grapes of this year's harvest may prove interesting in these times of a talk about a champagne trust: "People are often astonished when they hear of the price of a bottle of champagne of some high-class brand. But it is known that in the Epernay district a basket full of Cramant grapes was sold at the rate of 3 1/2 francs a kilogram (two pounds). This has put up the price of a cask containing 200 litres (about 200 quarts) to 1,400 francs, or \$280. It has been calculated that this year a fine bunch of grapes, with big grapes, is worth to its proprietor 1 centime (one fifth of one cent) for each grape."

So much for the true, genuine grape harvested in the old province of Champagne, or rather in a small portion of it, around Epernay and Ay, says the Pittsburg Dispatch. But all champagne wine, which is drunk by hundreds of millions of bottles throughout the world, could not be produced in the French province. For instance, one reads in a review of a wine crop published this year in the Journal Des Debats of the 8th instant, in regard to the crop of white grapes in the district of Sancerre, some 250 miles distance from Champagne, that "a large portion of the crop has been sold, before harvesting, to the makers of champagne, at the rate of fifty francs (\$10) the hectolitre, or 100 litres, just as it comes out from the press machine," therefore containing a great deal of froth.

How different this price is from that of the Cremant or the genuine grape of Champagne. Still those white wines from Sancerre and other districts give a good champagne after having passed through the making process.

It must be known that it is due to that process that champagne sparkles so strongly, much more actively, indeed than the natural sparkling Burgundians. The Champagne wine, previous to its being treated and improved, is a quiet, delicious, still wine, with an admirable light, rose-tinted color, the wine for home, the twin brother of the champagne of restaurants and official banquets.

They Sin Against Their Mothers.

The lamentations of a mother over the conviction of her son in the district court of Douglass county, drove the judge from the bench and turned lawyers to tears. There is something infinitely sad about the devotion of a mother and the human heart can never resist a throbbing sympathy when that mother's love asserts itself. Courts and bailiffs, judges and lawyers, court rules and stern decrees, all yield for a moment to the overwhelming power of woman's love. All bow in reverence and all sorrow in sympathy. But it is only for a moment. From his mother's arms the one who is ever a boy to her but a man in the eye of the law, is dragged by inexorable justice to the punishment he has merited. And then we wonder why that mother's love which appeals to all humanity with irresistible power, was not strong enough to keep that boy from evil ways and evil acts. She would have given her life to save his a minute. All she asked in return was for him to be true to himself. Yet he was not. The sin which wrong doers commit against society is very small compared with that which they commit against their mothers.

Quong Lee's Revenge.

Quong Lee, a Brideport (Conn.) Chinaman, is preparing to go into the trucking business. The Bridgeport Farmer said Quong thought he had been overcharged by a truckman. He continues: "Quong was mad, and, calling at the Rossdale freight office yesterday morning, he expressed himself as follows: 'Me no like the truckman in this place; make Chinaman pay too much. In my cloutie man owns horse and wagon, charge you six cents and carry your goods five miles. Man and horse here charge 25 cents. Too much. Chinaman washes three shirts for 25 cents; take two hours. Truckman makes 25 cents in five minutes. Me get a horse and truck velly quick. Horse cost \$80 and truck \$100. Get truck painted red in Na York this way: 'Quong Lee, move goods all over city, six cents.'"

Technical Education in Japan.

It is reported from Japan that Viscount Enomoto, the new Minister of Education, is giving special attention to the introduction of technical education into the primary schools of the empire, and that he has turned to Italy as a model. His scheme is to include technical education in the curriculum of the preparatory schools, and to give children technical training from the outset.

A "Noble Passion" Rare.

A great love does not of necessity imply a great intelligence, but it must spring out of a great nature that is certain. And where the heart has spent itself in much base commerce it has no deep treasury of gold on which to draw. It is bankrupt from over-trading. A noble passion is very rare, as rare as any other noble thing.

Women hope that the dead love may revive, but men know that of all dead things none are so past-recall as a dead passion.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

The boughs that bear most bang lowest.

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

A true philosopher is a citizen of the world.

Even reproofs can be kindly given. The greatest good is done most quietly.

He who does not look before, lags behind.

The greatest cunning is to have none at all.

Happiness is not perfection unless it is shared.

It is the guilty man who makes explanations.

Some men should never be seen except in a crowd.

Great possessions may bring great misfortunes.

Life is half spent before one knows what life is.

Wise men avoid dangers. Fools create them.

He who allows smells trouble is sure, by and by, to find it.

You cannot always tell the amount of gas in a poem by its meter.

Envy is just as natural to the heart of man as blood is to his body.

Everything that is nice grows on the other side of a barbed-wire fence.

He who will flatter another will rob him, if he gets a good chance.

If you care to boss your own ranch at sixty, save your cash at thirty.

One of the first exhibitions of wisdom is to avoid the company of fools.

A man who is good company for himself is always good company for others.

Six women can talk at once and get along first rate, and no two men can do that.

There are people in this world whose only wisdom consists in suspecting everything.

There are more people who can forget themselves than govern themselves.

The pensioner is mightier than the sword-wielder in reducing the surplus.

It takes live men to make a live town. Dead men are only fit to inhabit cemeteries.

I think I would rather be swindled every now and then than to lose faith in everything.

A whipping never hurts so much as the thought that you are being whipped.

If you want to sleep late in the mornings, make up your mind to get up early.

If you put your eyes on your neighbor's row, the weeds will grow up in your own.

It is safe to say that half the people who try to go to heaven are going out of curiosity.

Never think. Thinking of a trouble makes it larger, and thinking of a joy makes it less.

When a man steals he steals for himself, but when a woman steals she steals for others.

We sometimes teach others by our actions the very things we do not want them to know.

"That girl has so much money," said a man on the streets to-day, "that she is almost good-looking."

Only a very pretty young girl and a very rich old man can afford to be independent of pleasing others.

When a thief steals a thing, his first action after getting away is to start a start that some honest man is a thief.

You are even with the weeds now that the frost has come; but the killing frost always comes too late to do any good.

Any boy will save money to buy a gun. It is the boy who saves money who has no gun in view, who deserves the most credit.

If your heart is larger than your head you injure yourself, and if your head is larger than your heart you injure your neighbors.

A big man can be excused for walking on the streets with a little man, but a little man appears to a poorer advantage beside a big man than at any other time.

The doctor who cuts a man open after death and tells what is the matter with him has the advantage of the doctor who is compelled to guess what is the matter with the patient before death.

Cheered by the presence of God I will do at the moment, without anxiety, according to the strength which he shall give me, the work that his providence assigns me. I will leave the rest; it is my affair.

If all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in the praise of women were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during the war.

Kind words produce their own image in men's souls, and a beautiful image it is. They soothe and quiet and comfort the bearer. They shame him out of his sour, morose, unkind feelings. We have not yet begun to use kind words in such abundance as they ought to be used.

Pessimists are wont to portray in bitter, burning language the woes which must surely accrue to a state of civilization wherein the sale of fair and virtuous women to rich husbands obtains. And those who constantly look for new depths of depravity which did not exist in bygone times eagerly take up the hue and cry, forgetful of the fact that marriages for money have been made ever since money came into use. But now even the so-called pessimist must hold his tongue while fair and virtuous women, so far from being on the market herself, is saving and scripping on her pocket money and denying herself new bonnets and going without bonbons in order that she may save up money enough to buy a spend-thrift princeling. Our fair countrywomen certainly have been maligned.