

Where Shall Baby's Dimple Be?

Over the cradle the mother sang; Softly crooning a slumber song; And these were the simple words sung...

Mr. Fordyce's grandmother had small, inexpressive black eyes. She had deeply sorrowed and suffered, and here and there amid her descendants appeared large dark eyes, with a weight of sorrow...

Mr. Fordyce bent those eyes on Meb. His voice grew tender and gentle. In his musical generalizing he had alluded to the power of the human voice to stir the heart.

"I am always tired—lately." This old friend of the days when she played the church organ and took lessons in French and water-colors—he seemed so well fitted to sympathize with her.

Two or three bright, irrepressible tears fell over her cheek. Agitatedly she laid her hand upon the sofa arm. Mr. Fordyce's chair was at the end of the sofa.

She drew away her hand; but Mr. Fordyce understood that his sympathy was not offensive. After this, constraint slightly stiffened Meb's manner. They talked of agate and opal, opal and jacinth, and all the secondary stones.

After this, constraint slightly stiffened Meb's manner. They talked of agate and opal, opal and jacinth, and all the secondary stones. Mr. Fordyce said a design once cut in jacinth was never obliterated.

Meb stepped into an adjacent room to ascertain by the mirror how her hair looked and whether the cardinal loops under her chin were not disarranged.

She sat down again. The snow had melted off the circular verberna mounds. Winn helped her set those borders. He had always helped her. She covered her face with her hands, conscious only of her own ingratitude.

The prolonged whistle of a locomotive at the station started her—only a call for switch.

Meb sat for a few minutes, her face buried in her palms; then parted her hands and looked out—to see soaked snow stiffening; water-filled foot-prints and wheel-marks growing blue and chilly.

Orton was employed in a very humble capacity at the office. The company had a habit of falling back upon him when bad news was to be communicated.

Meb had strength to open the outer hall door; then sank back upon the lower stair.

"Don't tell me, Orton, don't! Is he dead?"

"The Lord help you, Mrs. Wright; we don't know how bad 'tis. The Bucephalus is off the track—down Deep Gully—thirteen cars down. They hadn't taken him out when the last telegram came."

Meb clutched her nails into her cold palms. "Must go; has the wrecker started?"

"Just gone; but Ellis'll find an engine to take you up. Perhaps you'd better not go, though. It may be pretty bad."

"Great strain"—"nervous system"—"a little something stimulating." The shattered Bucephalus had been drawn out, and fires that had started up from the scattered coals had been extinguished; but no man knew what flames might be slyly creeping on beneath the mass.

The men working in the debris did not observe Meb until her voice, like a steel javelin, smote the sides of the gully: "Winn!"

Involuntary every hand paused, and the cry broke through the silence: "Winn, Winn!"

Then, faint and feeble, only a few feet away—a little black, a little beneath came the response: "Meb; here!"

Then clustered upon that part of the ruins; they piled ax, and pulley, and lever—lifting wheels and trucks, tossing aside grain, throwing off girders and fragments of sidings.

Upon the track stood three petroleum cars; a fourth lay half way down with its stout guard broken, its sides battered, but thank God! whole. A fifth hurried on the sharp projecting rocks, had been rent, and poured its contents through the wheat. A dozen grain cars had been crushed and piled in between this place and the engine, but how rapidly the petroleum would penetrate, or how quickly it might be ignited by some unextinguished ember, no man could tell.

A sudden pause in the work—they had reached Winn. A silence like that following Meb's cry—they have drawn him forth. Up the sides of the ravine struggled the procession—stretcher, woman, physicians, men with axes, axes, shovels, crowbars.

No one observed a slender spire of blue smoke that curled up at the edge of the saturated grain; but in less than ten minutes all the wreck was a mass of crackling, roaring flame—flame blazing up in red and blue points to the cool, moon-lit heavens, lapping the weather-beaten shingles of the bridge and snapping through the branches of the overhanging hemlocks; but Winn was safe, safe upon the track.

He had lain with his lower limbs too near the escaping steam. Fastidious people, reading of the accident in the morning papers, wished reporters would spare the public such horrible details.

The doctors administered brandy and injected morphine, and Winn was unconscious of much pain. While the train backed rapidly down to the Clinchey turn-table he lay with his head upon a pillow in Meb's lap, looking up at her silently. His eyes fell at length from her face to her shoulders.

"Oughtn't you to have worn something to keep you warm?" "Oh, don't, Winn; you'll kill me if you think of me now!"

The first fears Meb had shed since those elicited by Mr. Charles Fordyce's tender sympathy rained on Winn's upturned face.

"The 'Flyer' was racing through the tortuous defile now. On and on to the open plain again, and familiar buildings rushed past.

"We're almost home, Winn—home! Do you understand?"

Meb bent, covering one side of Winn's face with her tears and kisses; wiping it dry with the precious illusion that had unfastened and dangled from her throat.

ful audience of switch-tenders, brakemen and oil-boys: "I tell you what 'tis, boys; 'tisn't so much what we have or where we are in this world that tells, as 'tis keeping kind of a calm and cool and satisfied with what we got—Elizabeth A. S. Chester, in Good Company."

Qual-Bagging in Texas. "Mebbe you'd like to go qual-baggin' to-night, young friend?"

It was a Texan who spoke, and he turned in his saddle, composing himself as if to allow time for due contemplation of the proposition.

"There'll be six of us—four to drive the birds, and two to mind the bags," he added, persuasively.

I consulted another friend of recent acquaintance, who, though a stranger like myself in that region, was versed in the ways of Texas.

"We've invited to go qual-bagging to-night. Is it hard work? Have you ever been? Do they bag many? Will you go?"

After a little reflection my friend assented, and an hour later a little group was very busily engaged upon the porch of the hotel in properly adjusting a couple of gunny sacks to barrel hoops, the work progressing but slowly, in consequence of the aggressive advice offered by a circle of qual-baggers and other bystanders.

The moon came up through a yellow fog, and a sextette, supplied with ample drinkables (not forgetting the bags and candles), left the hotel and filed down the main street, attracting so much attention from citizens generally as to lead to the conclusion that a qual-bagging expedition was regarded as an event of considerable importance.

Three miles of tramping through fields and woodland by a faintly marked track brought us to a stream, where a precarious boat afforded us the means of crossing. Within five minutes' walk beyond lay the chosen field of operations. A halt was made, and considerable debate ensued in a low tone, concerning the bags, and which of the party should hold them. It was finally decided, very kindly, by the Texans, to allow the two strangers the posts of honor.

Ten minutes later we were both loaded, somewhat smart, guarding a pair of bags suspended from tripods made of branches, and each with a candle to attract the expected game, while the forms of the Texans were rapidly disappearing in a direction opposite to our line of approach. My fellow-watcher moved about a little while, and then came to my station.

"Seen any qual yet?" said he, somewhat quizzically. "Now, see here—don't you understand that those fellows will be back at the hotel in about an hour, laughing at us, while we sit here and hold bags to catch moonshine? Put your candle on a stake and follow me."

A light broke upon my mental vision. Walking rapidly after my guide, we were so fortunate as to gain the ferry ahead of our entertainers, though they had almost circled the candles, and as we paddled quietly across the stream their footsteps were heard approaching. Concealed by a deep shadow on the opposite shore, we struggled almost vainly with our risibles, while the discomfited practical jokers sought helplessly for the boat, and finally departed for a ford two miles up stream, using language more emphatic than coherent.—Harper's Monthly.

The Drink Difficulty. Drink has always been a difficulty. In all ages individuals have made great mistakes as to the quantity of intoxicating liquor which it was beneficial for them to consume.

"Under the circumstances she can't wish him to live." Mr. Charlie Fordyce had remarked upon his way down.

Once, in passing through the hall, Meb encountered Mr. Fordyce.

THE BENEVOLENT INTEREST taken by the sovereign of Japan in the condition of his subjects has been frequently manifested. His majesty, the mikado, has now made presents of five thousand yen to the inhabitants of Kioto, and three thousand yen respectively to the people of the districts of Tamba and Iago in Yamashiro. The donations are to be applied to measures of precaution against cholera.

Leadville, Col., is having a relapse. The feverish excitement which marked its early history is dying out. Cash producing properties have advanced in value, but prospects have declined enormously and most of them are unsalable at any price.

A French journal publishes an approximate calculation of the probable number of newspapers in the world as follows: America, 9,129; Asia, 287; Africa, 569; Europe, 13,625; of which latter, 2,500 are credited to England, 2,000 to France, 1,230 to Italy, 1,200 to Austria, 500 to Russia. The words of Lamartine, who said that "journalism would almost supersede and absorb all other literature before the close of the present century," will not fall far short of the actual truth.—Eschwege.

California has other phenomenal rifle-men besides Dr. Carver. Charles Emach, a young man in Sacramento, considers it a not extraordinary feat to hit ninety-eight out of 100 small apples thrown into the air, and John Ruth, of Oakland, is about to depart for Australia to give exhibitions of his skill.

The Mexican volcano of Orizaba, 17,300 feet above the sea level, has been ascended by M. Ataxelva, a resident of Puebla. Thirteen persons accompanied him, one of whom died at the top from radiation of the air, and another a few days afterward from erysipelas caused by the reflection of the sun on the snow.

A learned German doctor has discovered a means of dyeing the eyes of animals in general and of men in particular any color he pleases. He is accompanied on his travels of propagation by a dog with a rose-colored eye, a cat with an orange-yellow eye, and a monkey with a chrome-yellow eye.

An American journal which makes a specialty of marine matters does not hesitate to make the bold assertion that "England is on the eve of losing her great prestige as the builder of ships for all nations, and that in five years from the present time we shall have built ocean-going steamers for all the leading nations of Europe, simply because we can build vessels of better material at less prices, of superior workmanship, and in less time, and we see no reason why we should not supply even England with an improved type of iron sailing vessels, just as we did in the days of our famous clipper-ships."

A church bell which has just left a Troy foundry for Persia will have certain peculiar associations attached to it. The funds for its purchase were given by a Presbyterian Sunday school in California, and it is intended as a memorial to Mrs. Hattie Lyman Stocking, who died at Assam, on the river Tigris, in Persia, 150 miles from the site of ancient Nineveh.

A Beautiful Dwelling. Jennie June, writing from New York to the Baltimore American, gives the following description of a remarkable dwelling: A well-known patent lawyer, Mr. Edward S. Dickerson, said by those who know him to be one of the most remarkable men that this country has ever produced, has just built a unique house in Thirty-fourth street, near Park avenue, which is attracting a great deal of attention.

What a Former Resident of Pittsburgh, Pa., Thinks of This Colorado Mining City. T. C. Wilcox, who emigrated from Pittsburgh, Pa., to Leadville last March, and who was consequently one of the earliest settlers of the great carbonate camp, and who recently sold his interest in the Matchless mine to Governor Tabor, thus writes in response to a series of questions from a friend: Now as to your questions—Question: "How are you?" "Well, I'm troubled some with the rheumatism. Sometimes 'tis located in one place, and in an hour it flies to another. This is an excellent country for rheumatism." Question: "What am I doing?" "I am mining; have interests in about a dozen claims, in different localities; indications are good. There is not a man of my acquaintance but thinks he is within ten feet of pay mineral. The business reminds me very much of boring for oil, in this respect. That you are on the look-out for certain strata of rock, as indication, etc., and you watch the changes in formation as carefully as a doctor will for changes in a patient."

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The doctor says the process of ocular transformation, far from injuring the sight, strengthens and improves it.

In spite of official warnings and notices almost without number, says a New York paper, people still continue to send to the postoffice articles which cannot be handled or delivered. In the New York office within a month the searcher department has found in the mail bags and held as unmailable matter the following:

Received Alive.—Rattlesnakes, black-snakes, copperhead snakes, innocasin snakes, cats, grasshoppers, bees, hornets, wasps, alligators, canary birds, potato bugs, horned frogs, tortoise, turtles.

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Miscellaneous.—Pistols, loaded cartridges, torpedoes, medicines, glassware, clothing, soiled undergarments, baby clothes, hosiery, hair brushes, combs, carpenter tools, pieces of machinery, fence wire, gold and silver watches, jewelry, notions and novelties of all kinds, shrubs, roots, scions, herbs, fresh and dried; fruits and flowers, six cases of dynamite, which were thrown in the East river to prevent serious disaster.

But it is not only in posting matter which cannot be mailed that the public is careless to a degree almost beyond belief. Hardly a day passes that letters unsealed, unaddressed, and containing sums of money, checks, and other valuables are not dropped into the boxes.

During the past six months 1,153 unsealed registered letters were received at the New York office. They contained, in cash, \$6,849.21, and in checks, drafts, etc., \$204,615.56, making a total of \$211,464.77 posted in unsealed envelopes. Not long ago a well-known city bank posted \$1,500,000 worth of United States bonds, which were unregistered and easily negotiable, in an envelope so flimsy that it broke open before it left the stamper's table.

Similar instances of carelessness could be repeated almost without number. Indeed, it is hardly to be wondered at that the officer that related these circumstances felt called upon to exclaim in conclusion: "The postoffice has to deal with a great many curious people."

A Menagerie Lion at Large. W. W. Cole's circus was in Defiance, Ohio, recently, and at night, about ten o'clock, just after they had got the animals loaded on the cars and the train started, and as they were passing the coal shutes one of the ropes from the shutes caught in one of the cages and brought down the apron that lets down the coal, which struck the cage containing two lions, throwing it off the train, opening the door of the cage and letting out the lions. The small one was got back at once, but the large one ran off down the track, passing several men at a distance of about thirty rods to a barn, where he snied a door open. The door was double, and the bottom was closed, the top part being open. He bounded over like a kitten and grasped a cow by the nose and in two minutes had sucked her blood and the cow was dead. The lion going into the other part of the barn and lying down. His master came, and leaving several men outside, went up in the loft and came down where the lion was. After talking to the lion sometime he laid down by him and played with him, and after two hours' work succeeded in getting the lion back into the cage, which was brought to the door.

ALONG THE LINE.

"There, Winn Wright, you have tracked your horrid boots over my kitchen floor! Won't you ever learn what doormats are made for?" cried Meb Wright, fastening her sleeves before the open door of the little sitting-room.

"I do detest these warm, sloppy February days. I wish when we freeze up in November we needn't thaw out until the first of April. The mud and the slop must be gone through with in the spring, anyway, and this freezing and thawing between whiles is just exhausting!"

Winn Wright, locomotive engineer, a big fellow, not graceful, sat absently gazing into the narrow front yard, and drumming on the window ledge. He looked tired.

"I'm tired, too," thought Meb. "It's a hard, tiresome world, harder for working women than for men—no use in whining over it, though. We must take life as it comes."

"I don't believe you care much for me nowadays, Meb," said Winn, bluntly.

Meb curried her lip. It seemed particularly ridiculous in Winn to talk sentimentally now, for he had a tar streak obliquely across his forehead, and wore coarse cloth with imperfectly-pressed seams and ragged buttonholes.

"I wish you wouldn't drum on that sill, Winn, you know how annoying it is."

After a half hour which Meb spent, for the most part, outside the little sitting-room, Winn said good-bye and started for the depot. Out to Plympton and back would make up his day's trip.

Meb put on her pretty brown cashmere with white lace and cardinal ribbon at her throat, and cardinal loops in her hair, and took the chair by the window.

She heard the occasional snush of wheels through the melting snow out side, or the thud of rubber shoe feet through the water on the spongy ice, the ceaseless drip from the roof into the conductors, and the drowsy chirp of the canary above the window-garden.

Meb left sad. Little did she think when playing the organ on Sundays in the Sweetville Methodist church, and taking lessons in French and water-colors at the Young Ladies' Institute, that she should one day be doing her own work, and economizing to pay for a little house with four rooms only, on the lower floor. She might "have done better." There was Samuel Fletcher who every summer now came to Sweetville with his carriage horses and his saddle horses, here was Charlie Fordyce and—why Winn was a good fellow. She loved Winn, of course; but Winn had a kind of honest stupidity that she feared would prevent his ever "rising." That stupidity wearied her. Life was wearisome anyway—cheerless and prospectless.

Meb's door-bell rang. She was familiar with the humiliation of answering it in person. Charlie Fordyce was on the steps. Charlie Fordyce had no tar streaks across his face. He was starched, brushed and polished to the last degree. Charlie was employed at the "Office." He inquired for Winn.

"Has he left the depot, think?" asked he as he followed Meb into the little sitting-room.

"I heard the Bucephalus signal at the Ferry-street crossing a minute ago."

"That's too bad! Ellis sent word to have McGregor take 'Little Rhody' out to Plympton in Winn's place, and the Bucephalus to go on to Sidon and come in with the night freights. We've just had a telegram that there are a hundred and twenty-five cars waiting to be moved from Sidon. They were delayed by the snow-storm on the Central and Shore Line last week, and have only just got through."

The chair Meb had set for Mr. Fordyce was very easy. He was tired after the slippery, sloppy walk, and, since the payment on just the same, why shouldn't he linger?

"Were you out to hear Januscheck last evening?"

"No; there was some delay a bridge gone—and Winn didn't get in until nine o'clock."

"Of course you were at the concert of the Glee Club last week."

"No; Winn seldom took her anywhere. He liked to settle down at home evenings."

Mr. Fordyce reviewed the performances, mulling the choicest of the art phrases culled from his daily paper with others of unknown derivation but legitimate sound.

Very humble and hard seemed the round of uneducated labor in which Meb moved to the circle of art and culture in which Mr. Fordyce ornamentally revolved.

Meb failed to recollect that Mr. Fordyce's monthly receipts were little more than Winn's, and that artistic revolutions, if continued for any length of time, must depend upon some considerable pecuniary steam power and quite tangible belief. She had all that blind confidence in the money-getting powers of a fluent man, which is one of the most curious segmes in that circle of faith from the center of which women look out upon the world.