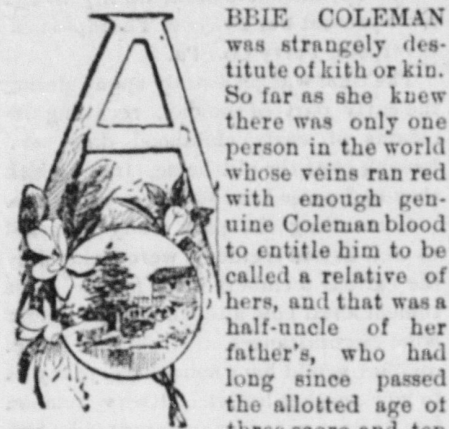


HOPE

We sailed and sailed upon the desert sea,
Where for whole days we alone seemed to be.
At last we saw a dim, vague line arise
Between the lonely billows and the skies,
That grew and grew until it wore the shape
Of eave and inlet, promontory and cape;
Then hills and valleys, rivers, fields and
woods,
Steeples and roofs, and village neighbor-
hoods.
And then I thought, "Some time I shall em-
bark
Upon a sea more desert and more dark
Than ever this was, and between the skies
And lonely billows I shall see arise
Another world out of that waste and lapse,
Like yonder land. Perhaps—perhaps—
perhaps!"
—W. D. Howells, in Harper's Magazine.

ABBIE COLEMAN'S NEPHEW



ABBIE COLEMAN was strangely des- titute of kith or kin. So far as she knew there was only one person in the world whose veins ran red with enough genuine Coleman blood to entitle him to be called a relative of hers, and that was a half-uncle of her father's, who had long since passed the allotted age of three score and ten and who was still fighting daily battles with his chronic aches and pains for the sole reason that Providence had never seen fit to let him die.

On the morning when she was thirty-two Miss Coleman thought sorrowfully of the unmerited plague that had swept away her kinfolk, and more than one tear rolled off the end of her nose and dashed in the cup of Inkewarm tea that stood on the table before her. She finally swallowed the last drop of the concoction of Oolong and waters of Marah, at the same time drying her eyes with the corner of her white linen handkerchief, that she might make sure of the identity of the messenger boy who came slowly up the walk and rapped the door of the dining room, which occupied the front portion of the north L.

He had a telegram for Miss Abbie. That worthy lady had learned to look upon telegraphic communications as the most potent disturbers of the public peace that were allowed unbridled circulation throughout the land; perhaps she had well grounded reasons for so regarding them when it was taken in consideration that every one she had ever received had notified her of the death of another Coleman. So that day she let the yellow envelope lie on the table where the boy had put it and eyed it suspiciously for several minutes after he had gone. Consoling herself at last, however, with the thought that there was only one more Coleman to die except herself, she opened it and read:

"Dear Aunt—Will arrive at 10.30 over the Wabash road. Your loving nephew,
"TOM COLEMAN."

She pinched herself as she had been wont to do in childhood days to assure herself that she was not dreaming and then she read it again. A second reading necessitated a second pinching. That reviving process having been brought to a satisfactory termination, she called in the man-of-all-work, who was trimming rose bushes just outside the window and proceeded to lay the matter before him, in the hope that both brains in conjunction might evolve some plausible solution of the strange message.

"John," she said, holding the telegram out for inspection, "I have just heard from my nephew Tom."
John laid down his pruning knife, which he had unwittingly carried into the house, and removed his hat.
"Have you, ma'am?" he said quietly.

"Yes," she returned, "he will be here this morning at half-past ten."
John shifted his hat quickly from one hand to another and looked at Miss Abbie wonderingly.
"I didn't know you had such a thing as a nephew," he said at length, his curiosity getting the best of him.
"I've been here fifteen years come next month and during that time I have seen everybody die off that was any known relation to you. Where's he from?"

Miss Abbie gave vent to her emotion in a shrill little laugh.
"You know as much about him as I do, John," she said, confidentially. "I never heard of him before in my life. Of course, I have no nephew, never did have a nephew and never can have a nephew, but what am I to do? There is no other Abbie Coleman within fifty miles of here, so of course, the telegram is meant for me. In some way this young fellow has gathered up a scrap of my history, and the only way I can get even is to investigate his pedigree in return. Anyway, it will be a comfort to shake hands with a young man who has for a time supposed himself to be my bona-fide relative. Let the rose bushes alone this morning, John, and get ready to drive down to the station and meet him."

The 10.20 train over the Wabash road was three minutes ahead of time that day and when Miss Coleman's man, who was five minutes later than he had intended to be, drove up to the unpainted wooden station, the only persons left in sight were the station master and a middle-aged gentleman, who seemed to be harassing that crusty official with numerous unwelcome questions about the topography of the country thereabouts and the means of reaching any desired destination.
"There's Miss Coleman's man now," said the station master, looking the door and throwing the mail sack

across his shoulder. "He can tell you whatever you want to know," he called back, as he started down the road toward the village, "and maybe give you a lift in the bargain."
John drew the horses up beside the platform, where the stranger sat, leaning against the wall of the station, and clambered out of the wagon.
"Are you Mr. Tom Coleman?" he asked, producing the telegram as he would a letter of introduction and handing it to the other as an evidence of good faith on his part.

The man took off his hat, brushed back his grayish-brown hair and nodded. Then, as if fearing that that silent acknowledgment of his identity was insufficient demonstration, he added:
"Yes, I am. Who are you?"

"I'm the general manager of Miss Abbie's place," John answered, with a touch of resentment at the brusqueness of the speaker. "She sent me down to meet you. Are you ready?"
For answer the gentleman climbed up to the seat beside the driver, and twenty minutes later he followed John up the path to the hall door; it was as a grave dignified exponent of an old-school politeness that he met Miss Abbie on the threshold.

"My dear aunt," he said, taking both her hands in his and drawing her toward him. "I am glad to see you. Can you honestly say as much?"
That clannish little woman's lonely heart was filled to overflowing with the joy of having some one who called himself by the family name come into her life and greet her affectionately, and her ever-ready tears trickled down on his strong white hand.

"Ah," she cried, forgetting that she had no nephew, never did have a nephew and never could have a nephew. "You are welcome, indeed. I am more than glad to see you."
At dinner, when Tom Coleman sat opposite his new found aunt, he had an opportunity to study her minutely.
"Do you know, Aunt Abbie," he said, ruefully, "it makes me feel like an overgrown schoolboy to address you so. I had you all pictured out in my mind. You were to be at least fifteen years my senior, and I am forty. Yet here I find you still in the thirties, and as pretty and fresh looking as a girl in her teens. I can't account for it. Had I not already known that you were much younger than my father, and only a half-sister, I would think I had made a mistake and got switched off on a side track somewhere."

Miss Abbie's face flushed and she was on the point of making a confession of her poverty stricken condition, so far as blood relations were concerned, but the delusion of fancying herself communing with some one bound to her by ties of nature was sweet and she hugged it to her heart and let the mistake drift on for future reparation.

"There are many things I want to know about my father's family," he said to her that evening, "and you, of course, are the one I look to to straighten out the tangle of circumstances that has been vexing me for several months. When are you ready that each of us should turn biography?"
"Not yet," she said, hastily. "If there are any unpleasant and unanswerable questions troubling you put them aside and let things take their own course for a time. We will consider them by-and-by."

"I bow to your superior judgment, my dear aunt," he said, with mock humility. "When, in your opinion, the proper time has arrived, let me know."
It was two weeks before he broached the subject again.
"I ought to go away to-morrow or the next day," he commenced abruptly one evening, when they sat on the steps watching John at work among the rose bushes, "and before I leave I think it only just that you enlighten me on the family history in general. But perhaps I ask that you will consider it a point of honor that I take the initiative and tell you what I know of my father after his family lost sight of him. I should have done this in the beginning, but you will remember that my attempts to lead up to any such a conversation were discouraged by you."
He paused.
"Yes," she murmured. "I remember. Go on."

"I have but little to tell, and I shall say that without any attempts at rhetorical embellishment. I was born in the far West. When I was less than a year old my father died. My mother lived but a short time after that and I was brought up—if bringing up you could call it—by her people, who had moved to a neighboring town the year before. From somebody, I presume it was my father, I had inherited considerable independence and ambition, and as soon as I was old enough I commenced to try to make for myself a way in the world. How far I have succeeded you can perhaps be the best and most impartial judge. It was only within the last few years that I have entertained any active interest in my father's family. One day I asked an old woman who had been my mother's nearest neighbor and closest friend if she had ever heard either of my parents say anything about his life before he came West, and she told me that just previous to his death he had spoken to my mother of a Judge in St. Louis to whom she could write if she ever found it necessary or expedient to make any inquiries about his past. There was but little hope that the Judge was living, or if so he could be found, but relying on that slight bit of information, I set at work. Strange to say, he was still well known in St. Louis, although he had retired from active life. All he could tell me was that my father had lived in the southern part of this State; that he had been wild and had run away from

home when only a boy. His father married again after several years and they had issue—a daughter named Abbie. I followed up branch after branch of the Coleman family, but nowhere could I find a woman with such a phenomenon. At last I heard of you and straightway started to see you. Guided by some strange and perhaps unpardonable impulse I telegraphed you the news of my expected arrival without taking time to notify you in a more formal manner of my existence and discovery of your whereabouts. So here I am, your wayward nephew, ready to atone, so far as it is possible, for my own transgressions and those of my fathers."

John had finished his work, and for several minutes after Tom ceased talking they looked out in silence over the garden of rose bushes and the fruit orchards beyond.
"I thank you for your confidence," she said at length, catching her breath between words, as if choking with some sudden emotion. "You have made a mistake. I knew it from the first, but for my own sake I did not like to undeceive you. My father and mother both died when quite young, as did my two little brothers. I never had a relative who could possibly have been connected in any way with your people. I knew it when your telegram came, but I told John we would find out who you really were. Then after you came it seemed very hard to set the matter straight. You see, I have been so lonely sometimes," she said in a tone of self justification, "and you cannot know what a comfort it was to me even to claim relationship with some one who only fancied I was his aunt. I am very sorry I let you drift on and on in your false impression so long. Of course, I saw it would all have to come out some time. Pray forgive me."

"My dear aunt," he said with a laugh, "for so I shall continue to call you in spite of the absurdity of the title when applied to you by me, I cannot blame you. I should not have plunged into the matter headfirst as I did. In spite of the mistake, I do not see why our relationship should be counted a thing of the past. I shall leave to-morrow, but it is necessary that I stay away."
"Certainly not," she answered. "You will always be welcome."
His interests demanded his presence in many places and John was trimming the rose bushes the next summer when he came again.

"I found out the truth of the case during my absence," he explained, when he again brought up the old subject of their relationship. My father's sister Abbie died when only a little child. The same scythe that has laid your own house low seems to have reaped a rich harvest in mine as well. We are the only Colemans left in which either of us has any interest. Do you think it well that we should spend our lives apart?"
She looked at John, who was toiling patiently over a refractory trailing rose bush, and then she glanced up at him.

"I don't know," she said, naively. "How can it be helped?"
He laughed again.
"By marrying your loving nephew, Tom," was the prompt reply.—Chicago News.

A Human Autograph Album.

A singular medical freak has been exhibited before the Cleveland (Ohio) Medical Society. The subject, whose name is Brokaw, and who works in a steel mill, is twenty-four years of age and finely developed physically. He went to Dr. Aldrich a few days ago to have his lungs examined, and as the physician tapped and hammered on his brawny chest he presently noticed that little elevations and ridges were appearing everywhere he struck.
Amazement succeeded interest as the doctor discovered in a few minutes that the man's whole breast was swollen and angry looking. He was informed that that condition had long existed and that the effects of irritating the skin in like manner lasted sometimes for hours. When the patient was placed on exhibition before the society a letter, which had been impressed upon his arm during the afternoon, was still visible.

Some of the physicians experimented with match sticks until the man's back was a veritable autograph album in embossed letters. Brokaw said he was in perfect health and that this peculiar sensitiveness caused him no trouble, the only sensation being a slight burning. Letters and words written upon him during the time the society was in session appeared with distinctness when he retired from the room.—Philadelphia Record.

Wanted to Steal Cars of Steel Rails.

A Chicago man undertook to steal eight car loads of steel rails, which were stacked up at Grand Island, Neb. He chartered the cars and began to load the rails in the night, but the station agent soon found what was going on, and the game was up. If the man had succeeded in getting the rails away from Grand Island he would have had an elephant on his hands, for he never could have found a purchaser, and would have certainly been caught. Such things are too easy to trace. One can hardly believe that Chicago has such a fool.—New Orleans Picayune.

Stone Sawing.

Did you know that stone can be cut with a saw, and marble, too? The saws look very like the big saws used in steam saw mills, but are heavier. Perhaps when you know that it takes one hour to cut through eight inches of stone you will realize what a hard substance it is. A man in Philadelphia has invented a saw which recently cut through a stone ten feet long and two feet thick in forty-five minutes, so that a great gain has been made in stone sawing.—The Outlook.



SUNFLOWERS.

It would seem as if the extensive cultivation of the sunflower were one of the probabilities of the near future in American agriculture. The merits of this plant as a feeding crop have been long appreciated in Canada, the heads being mixed with corn and other fodder plants in the silo, while the leaves are gathered as those of corn, and are found acceptable and nutritious. The seeds also are valuable, not only as a food for fowls but also for cattle, horses and other stock, while the roots make excellent fuel. The product of an acre is from thirty to eighty and sometimes more bushels of thirty-three pounds.

The sudden awakening in this country to the merits of the sunflower has been caused by the appearance on the market of sunflower meal, which threatens to become a formidable rival of oil meal. This product has originated in Russia, where sunflowers have long been largely grown for food and forage purposes. Sunflower cake has always been esteemed one of the best auxiliary cattle foods in that country. This cake is the residual product obtained after the extraction by hydraulic means of the oil of the seeds of the sunflower.

The oil has long been valuable for its superior quality for table and other uses, but the cake has not found a foreign market owing to its hardness. Now that the question of its disintegration has been successfully solved, it will doubtless soon be in general demand owing to its composition and palatability for fattening cattle. It has been found possible to prepare two qualities of the meal, one rich in protein and poor in fat and the other rich in fat and poor in protein. The crop is an easy one to raise, as sunflowers will grow readily on almost any kind of soil and it seems as if with our improved modes of farming it might be made a very paying one. At any rate, it is worth giving it a fair trial.—New York World.

WHEN AND HOW TO FEED.

These are questions that are answered in various ways. We will now compare a few of them to see which will accept as our standard, writes P. W. T. Herin, of Indiana.

There is a class of farmers that pay but little attention to their fowls and only feed them once a week, if at all, giving them all they can eat. They will have their fill, too, if he gives them a chance. Such farmers spend the greater part of their time walking in the garden and fields and say "It doesn't pay to keep 'em." The hens roost in the trees, for the hen house, if there is one, is full of lice and filth. The hens die of indigestion (he declares it's cholera though) from eating so much at one time in order to make up for the long vacations.

We come now to the man who feeds only once a day, that is in winter. Corn is his only food, too. His fowls are dying from indigestion and bowel disease caused by the fowls eating too much at a time.
A method that is hard to make some see is a mistake in feeding three times a day. They argue that man eats his three meals a day, why not the fowls. Fowls that are fed three times a day expect to do nothing but eat and grow fat. They have no reasons to exercise, and, of course, lay few eggs. Let fowls learn to work for themselves. It makes them hustle about, and their blood circulates more freely, which is sure to bring eggs soon. They cannot live on nothing, nor with no chance to even scratch for their living.

My way is to feed a half feed in the morning, warm mash is the best in the winter, then they still have an appetite to work or scratch for half pint of millet seed or wheat scattered among some leaves or oat straw on the hen house floor. What a time biddies have while they hunt for their other half of breakfast! Such talking, singing, cackling, flopping, jumping, running, fighting, pecking and scratching you cannot imagine unless you have seen it. It's all "hustle," "hurry-up" the entire day. Exercise seems to be more beneficial to fowls than to man. Just before dark, after the biddies grow tired of their work, I give them a full supper of wheat, corn or buckwheat, and they go to roost contented over their day's work.—Farm, Field and Fireside.

PROTECTION AGAINST FROSTS.

This is a vital matter to fruit growers and truckers, whose season's labor and investment may be wiped out by a single destructive frost. The more valuable the crop and the greater the risk of frost, the more effort and expense may be safely put into means of protecting against frosts. A famous California orange grower is equipped with a system of iron pipes through which water is conducted to nozzles at frequent intervals, the idea being that the spray will ward off light frosts. Barrels of tar and rubbish in different parts of the orchard are available for making a smudge of smoke, which is the most practicable means yet devised. In the case of a freeze, such as visited California two years ago and Florida last winter, or a real hard frost in other sections, neither of these methods is of much avail. Smoke is good against all light frosts, and is easily obtained. Strawy manure, leaves, rubbish, etc., should be piled in the lowest places and about

Chinese Are Good Haters.

The Chinese is a good hater, and thousands of years of semi-civilization have not taught him to control his murderous instincts nor to screen his contempt for the barbarians—that is, for everybody outside of the "celestial kingdom." Hopelessly whipped by the Jap, he could not bring himself to sue for peace, especially before one whom he had always regarded as an insignificant imitator of his own customs. Instead of sending a Viceroy to negotiate a settlement he first sent a couple of tax collectors to show his contempt for the country which was "poisoning" itself with Western ideas. It was not until Peking was threatened with destruction that John dispatched the proper personage to the Japanese headquarters.

China's deep-rooted animosity toward England is ineradicable. It has been kept alive by the upper class and the report that mandarins are responsible for the butchery at Wha Lang is no doubt true. The massacre comes at a very unfortunate time for China. The oriental question is opening anew and Great Britain will demand reparation which will give her a larger hold upon a certain desirable section of the Eastern Empire.—Chicago News.

Immigrants That Don't Learn English.

Among the thousands of Chinese in this city it is hard to find one who is able to speak the American language. Many of them have been here for twenty years or more without learning a dozen words of the speech of the community in which they live and wash. They are too busy to spend time over the Melian, even if they could utter the sounds of it. On the other hand, nearly all the Japanese who live here can speak the language of the country. You can find Japs who are almost perfect in it, and who can also write it with grammatical accuracy. Some of them learned it before they came here and others since coming here. Of all the Europeans who immigrate to New York, the Russian Hebrews are the most eager to gain a knowledge of the common speech, and both the young and the old among them take the right means to acquire it. As for the Italians, not one in ten of them, even after years of residence here, can speak the "Americanese." Lots and lots of the German immigrants also are negligent in this matter, and they suffer all the business and social disadvantages of their inexplicable negligence.—New York Sun.

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Spain's revenues from taxes have fallen off over \$500,000 as compared with last year.

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