

A Romance of the Clear Spring.

BY AGNES JOYCE.

Submitted in The Tribune's Short Story Contest.

I.—AT DESMOND'S HOME.

NO FAIRER spot is recorded than that in the vicinity of the Killarney Lakes, and here Thomas Desmond dwelt with his beautiful daughter, Nellie. Fortune had great regards for Tom, with the exception of robbing him of his treasure, when Mary, his wife, breathed her last.

At college he excelled in all his studies and surpassed all of the royal attendants, but always with such humility and cheerfulness that he attracted the love of all and classed Lord Ashleigh among his staunchest friends. This friendship was so enduring that after an elapse of twenty-five years Lord Ashleigh visited the noble Desmond, after many earnest solicitations.

Muttering to himself, he soon gained Grey's side, invited him to a tavern in the vicinity. Both partook freely and on the return decided to pursue the following course: Grey went to enter the smoking room on their return and remain there until Desmond would enter, then he was to rid his revolver of its contents and in the confusion that would ensue he was to escape from the room.

Jack turned into a side path and gained his destination in time to see Sir George and Nellie briskly walking up the gravel walk. He was to detain the victim of their plot lest Desmond should enter before Neville. Sir George excused himself, stating that he must communicate with his friends, as they might believe him dead. Neville entered the smoking room and prepared the speech that was to unite or sever his connection with Nellie Desmond. He did not observe his host entering, but turned when the report of a revolver echoed through the house. Desmond threw his hands above his head and sunk to the floor unconscious.

The shrieks of the women and stamping of feet called him to his senses, and realizing his strange position he ran to the spot picked up the smoking revolver that lay near the prostrate body. Then he bent over the still body of his unfortunate host.

Three weeks later the trial was held and as all evidence pointed to conviction the jury concluded that the prisoner at the bar was guilty and should be hanged by the neck till dead. The evidence was certainly convincing. The servant who delivered the message to Thomas Desmond stated the prisoner's request; the deceased and the accused were alone in the room, and the most evident proof was the posture in which he was discovered, revolver in hand, heading over the deceased. It was supposed that the deceased soul

and his guest had quarreled over some thing—gossip announced it as a struggle for Nellie Desmond's hand. Joseph was led back to prison where he craved the God of Mercy and Justice to establish his innocence and his weak conscience on the wretch who perpetrated this double murder.

The morning that was to seal Joseph's fate was lazily opening her azure orbs when a woman with a long black cloak sank exhausted on the prison steps. On her arm was a small black containing several delicious apples, but these were laid aside as the guard appeared. She appealed to him in the name of heaven to bring her a glass of water.

The guard, a good-natured fellow, hastened on his mission of mercy, and soon returned; when she had taken sufficient she thanked him, and in return for his kindness gave him the contents of her basket. Having consumed the tempting fruit his weary head dropped on his downy cot for a few adventures had administered a drug, which, though not injurious, produced a heavy stupor on the consumer.

At 2 a. m., as was customary, the lights were extinguished. Fifteen minutes later the heavy clang of the door is heard and the prison apparently sleeps. But from out its silent shadows two forms walk briskly, one a great bearded man and the other a lady previously recorded. When a considerable distance had been traveled the stranger discloses her identity, and there before him is the pride and joy of his life—Nellie Desmond.

She hastily relates all that has transpired since that dreadful night, briefly telling him of the madly drunk man, who, she thought, had been taken away by a man in a black coat, and concluding by stating that on hearing of his plight she determined to rescue him from the jaws of death. By the aid of Mary, her maid, she was enabled to secure the disguises both in and out of the prison, and the innermost recesses of their hearts, then vows too sacred for prying ears were registered before Heaven.

III.—IN THE HEART OF THE CLEAR SPRING. The miners of the Clear Spring were preparing to demand better wages, under the leadership of a certain Joe Blaine, and, after many meetings, bloodshed was averted by his influence. At last union principles were discussed and established. The colliery which once more rents the air with its piercing sound, and the men return to labor, blessing the God who sent this hero to them.

The impoverished condition of the poor families causes the young man's heart to ache. What a comfort and consolation to his weary heart to see the men return to duty!

It was discovered in many cases that the engineers reporting the survey had never been near the ground—that the road as laid out was impracticable. Marshes and quicksands were found where the drawings indicated solid ground, and dense jungles existed on the route where the foot of man had never set. Even the report of the existence of the engineers were doubted. The English company was obliged to expend largely in excess of the estimated amount, and had to face many grave engineering problems the Spanish engineers had not dreamed of while surveying the route from their comfortable office in Manila.

When children are born they belong entirely to the empress. She guides, instructs and cares for them with genuine love and pride. The real mother never has anything to do with the children, but she occupies a position of honor until the death of the mikado, after which she retires to some quiet place, where she is always looked upon as an honored widow.

IV.—THE RETURN. Our hero, Joseph Neville, alias "Blaine," took passage on the Lloyd and arrived on the verdant shores of "dear old Ireland" just one week after the event last recorded. Proceeding to the home of Nellie Desmond, or, rather, that which she vacated shortly after her sad bereavement, he was informed that she resided in the cottage by the lake. Thither he directed his steps.

As he passed an arbor laden with roses he paused to note the tranquility that hovered about and compared this calm with the conflict in his heart, but his attention is arrested by the matter of one, unseen. He pulled back and espied Nellie standing listlessly gazing into the placid area before her. She has not changed much since last we parted, except that her form is more perfect and the sheen of her golden hair increased.

Joe had knelt speechless all this time. The surprise was great, but he answered:

"May God Almighty forgive you, as I fully and freely do." A priest was summoned, and after his departure the spirit soul of Jack Grey winged its flight to Heaven. You are surprised that both came to the coal mines, but the Divine Providence is all-wise in its designs.

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Always the response is enthusiastic and prolonged shouts of "Ban-zai!" which means "ten thousand years of prosperity to the mikado."

V.—HAPPINESS.

The following morning the jury determined to try the case, but evidence is unconvincing. The lady discloses her identity, and there before him is the pride and joy of his life—Nellie Desmond.

VI.—WORTHLESS SURVEYS.

Inaccuracy of Spanish Records Leaves Much for Americans to Do.

With the possible exception of Alaska no transfer on a large scale has ever been made in modern times, and about which the history of the world either the old or the new owner as in the case of the Philippine islands, Spain, indeed, left many records, geological, climatic, agricultural, mining, etc., many of which were made with the greatest care and elaborate painstaking as to facts. These records present many a rosy picture to the new arrival. Clear, explicit, frequently accompanied by elaborate drawings, he feels he has but to follow to success a track made clear by his predecessors.

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The American Woman.

A German writer says of our countrywomen, in a current magazine article: The American woman is clever and ingenious and witty; she is brilliant and lively and strong; she is charming and beautiful and noble; she is generous and amiable and resolute; she is energetic and practical, and yet idealistic and enthusiastic—indeed, what is she not?

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ROYAL HEIR TO JAPAN THRONE

SPECIAL CAUSE OF REJOICING OVER THIS GRANDCHILD.

First Child in Three Hundred Years Not the Offspring of a Handmaid in the Mikado's Palace—Missionaries Pleased, Too.

Eso Inzaki Sugimoto in Chicago Record-Herald. The part the brave little Japanese took in the recent war with China, and their present uncertain position in regard to Russia, have lately brought the emperor in of divine origin and his mission is a sacred trust handed down from father to son for almost 3,000 years, there is added a personal interest which separates this nation from all others of the world.

There is a prevailing belief that the wiles of the "white" men, who, in the branches of the palace grounds never use the three topmost limbs when a girl is to be born; they build there only in honor of a boy. After the birth of a baby they rise and with widespread wings fly far into the blue sky, bearing the message to all Japan.

Always the response is enthusiastic and prolonged shouts of "Ban-zai!" which means "ten thousand years of prosperity to the mikado."

MISSIONARIES ARE GLAD.

Not only the Japanese rejoice over this. The missionaries, ever since the marriage last May of Crown Prince Haru and the Princess Sadoke, have been offering up earnest prayers, and about which the history of the world either the old or the new owner as in the case of the Philippine islands, Spain, indeed, left many records, geological, climatic, agricultural, mining, etc., many of which were made with the greatest care and elaborate painstaking as to facts.

AIR STILL OBSERVED.

One very peculiar custom, never omitted on the occasion of a royal birth, is the throwing from the palace roof of the koshiki, an ancient wooden rice boiler. This ceremony dates back 2,000 years to the reign of Ugyafoke-laezdi-no-Mikoto. All buildings of those days were very primitive, and tradition says when the emperor's son was born the roof proved insufficient to protect the empress and the imperial heir from the snow and rain.

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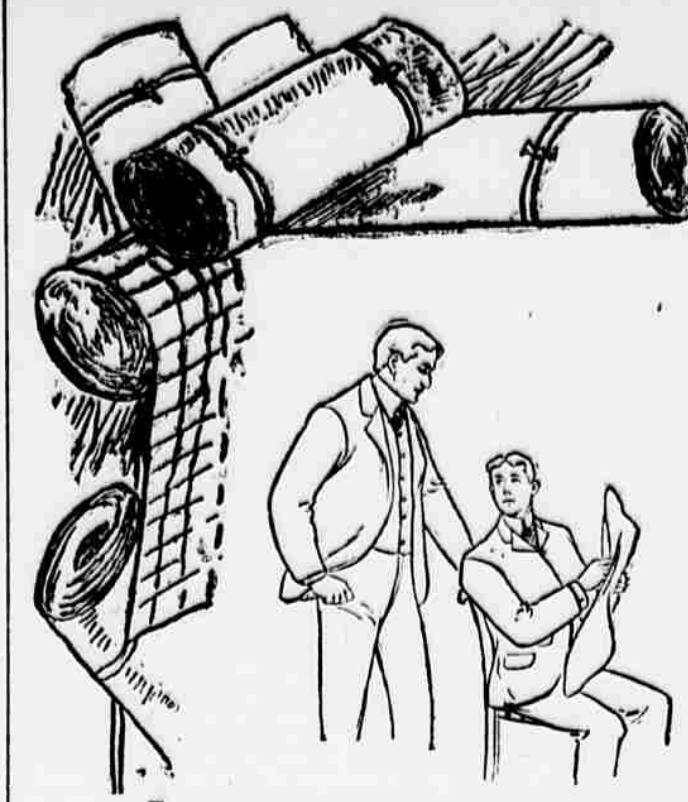
WAS CUT OUT FOR A CRITIC.

Handy Man to Have About a Newspaper Office in an Emergency.

The musical critic was unable to attend the pianoforte recital, but the handy man on the paper allowed that he could do the thing easily enough. And this is how he did it: "Herr Diapason's recital last evening at Acoustic hall was the most recherché event of the musical season. Herr Diapason is a master of cantilever, and both in his automobile and in his four de force he wrought wonders of tonic stimulation. He was especially potent in his doles far niente passages, and in his diminutive crescendo appoggiatura he displayed a technological skill that was simply wonderful."

ANTIQUE PALACE CUSTOMS.

The ancient royal customs of the "Great Mysterious Inside," as the mikado's palace is called, are little known by the outside world. For ages there was no more curiosity or wonder regarding the life of the imperial household than there is now among Christians as to the daily occupation of the angels in heaven. The sacredness was far beyond speculation.



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The "Atterbury" System of Tailoring

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Insomnia is caused by a derangement of the nervous system... (Insomnia advertisement text)