

air was laden with the "breath of Paradise," he sat beneath the grand oak trees, and to wife and children recounted glories of the past. He showed to the boy the dance of the warriors in the western skies as it appeared that eve of long ago when Pushmatahaw passed away. He saw all, and felt the grief of Cunecuh, the beloved grandsire. A day came when Imistowa no longer sat beneath the trees. He lay battling with death. When the news went forth that the friend of high and low was nearing the "unknown bourne," messages poured in to the afflicted family. One night the fevered brow cooled, the light of reason shone in the dark eyes, a smile lighted the pallid face, and the old melodious voice—"my wife." The end was near. Poor Marie! Her soul had relied on that strong man. What wonder that she sank sobbing wildly by his side. The wan face gleamed strangely as he strove to comfort her. The children knelt by the couch. Cunecuh, a youth of fifteen; Lola, Marie and Margaret. Listen!

"Cunecuh, son, I leave them to thee. They must be thy treasures."

Taking his wasted hand in his own, the boy spoke in a low, firm tone:

"Father, fear not. I will care for them ever."

Imistowa looked lovingly upon the young face. "It is well." All was quiet; the watchers thought the spirit had fled. A great sobbing cry, and clasping Marie in a last embrace, the noble soul was with its Maker. The last rite was over. All that was mortal of Imistowa lay beneath a giant oak in the quaint village of the dead.

The widow leaned upon her son. His was not a life that rouses the world—it was not fraught with deeds that men call grand—but in the Eternal Home angels record the "commonplace life" in letters of gold. I can not tell of the dark days of misery when but increasing effort kept gaunt poverty from the

door. Those who have quaffed the bitter cup will comprehend. Years fled; the sisters crossed the "brook" where "womanhood and childhood meet." Cunecuh saw them all come home bearing the laurel of success. Lola married, and for a few brief months all went "merry as marriage bells." Then the angels beckoned, and her soul winged its way to fairer lands. The second sister married also, and little children cluster around the happy wife and mother.

When winter joys abounded, Cunecuh met the maiden for whom his heart longed. When the June roses filled the air with sweetness, he brought his fair-haired bride to the newer cottage just beyond the spreading oaks, his boyhood loved so well. The weary struggles were past—God blessed him. A son and daughter shared their hearts. The memory of his father never faded, and he called the lad Imistowa. A happier home could scarce be found in all the country than that of Cunecuh Imistowa.

In the spring, after young Imistowa's tenth birthday, father and son were driving homeward the cattle. The story of a ranchman's life: An unruly steer, Cunecuh in pursuit; a deep ravine—one wild plunge—horse and rider in one tangled heap. The poor maimed body was borne home. The old cottage being nearer, he was carried there, and in the room where, years before, he had been born and his father died, he awaited the summons.

The sunshine shone gloriously, the birds twittered in the trees, all nature seemed bursting with life, and yet within those walls a human life was slowly ebbing. The mind of the dying man wandered; he was a child again roaming the forest with his father. He smiled in the old sweet way, and babbled of familiar things. Merciful heaven! It was hard to see the soul struggling in its prison house of pain. He saw only