THE MEMPHIS DAILY APPEAL.

BY M'CLANAHAN, TROUSDALE & DILL. MEMPHIS, TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 1860. VOLUME XI—NUMBER 54.

Daily Appeal.

THE UNKNOWN CHAMPION.

The front door of Lyale Hall shut so heavily that it shook the house, startling a young girl sitting at the window seat in the bow-window of a window, apparently waiting for a neighbor or some person. The girl was dark-haired, dark-eyed, and extremely pretty, though her lips curled rather haughtily, and an imperious glance shot from her large, dark eyes, which told of a proud spirit. The boy was pale and golden-haired; while unlike his companion and sister, Arnold Dudley, though his pale, thin lips had the same proud curl, and his blue eyes grew dark with pride, a poor, weak thing was Alfred Lyale, his right arm laid by being withered—had been so from his birth. He was gentle, affectionate, high-spirited and talented, the idol of his widowed father and proud sister. There were times when his spirit chafed, and he almost caused the poor maimed body which was such a clog to him.

Alfred read aloud, while his sister Agnes busied herself with a piece of embroidery, giving, if the truth be told, a very divided attention to the words of her brother.

"Was not that a glorious description?" asked the boy, raising his face all glowing with poetical enthusiasm.

"Yes, I think I never heard a extract described more beautifully."

"Why, Agnes! I got long past the cataract and reached the meadow!"

"Oh, forgiven, dear! Well, Alfred, to tell you the honest truth, I got thinking of something else. It so kind as to read it over again, and thrice-gifted surely listen to it."

The boy laughed gaily, as he crossed—

"No sue, Aggie—your wits would be woolgathering again before I had read three lines. I will not torment you any longer. Shall I talk to you, instead—or would you rather be silent?"

"Talk, if you please, Alfred."

"What think you, sister Agnes, will be the result of this conference?" asked the boy, in a low tone.

The girl raised a troubled face, and answered, very slowly—

"Indeed, Alfred, I scarcely dare think. The Dudleys are not famed for generosity, and—"

Bang! bang! It was the hall door, closing so heavily that it stopped her words and caused both the young persons to start.

"Gone at last!" exclaimed Agnes. And she rose to her feet just as the door of the room where they were sitting opened, and an old gentleman entered.

"What now, father? I thought Mortimer Dudley would never go. How is it settled?"

"The matter stands just as it did before. He will not abate one inch of property, he will. He thinks his claim as good as mine and day after to-morrow we meet on the debatable ground, and with sturdy lances settle the question."

"Good, father! I feared you might be compelled to yield, and I couldn't bear to think that in your old age you would be obliged to give up your home to a stranger. Remember the case has been carried from court to court, and years have passed away in futile wanderings, a well-directed blow and the proud Earl of Dudley will be overthrown. Aye, charge at him, father, and may God and Saint Mary guide your weapon so that you come off conqueror."

The old man smiled and patted the glowing cheek of his pretty, spirited daughter, then seated himself beside his son and read with him.

Sir Henry Lyale was about fifty-five, handsome and high-spirited, as upright, honorable and kind father. For two generations, between the houses of Dudley and Lyale had been a long-standing quarrel, concerning some property, which, however, bordered on the boundaries of the Lyale estate. The dispute had been carried from court to court, without any decision being made in favor of either party. Lately, Robert, Earl of Dudley, had died, and his son, a dashing young man of twenty-five, had tried of the old time quarrel, proposed to settle the dispute by single combat, to be held on the debatable territory—then, in the fourteenth century, a very common method of settling disputes. Thus the matter stood, and with conversation and reading the hours passed the evening.

After Alfred had retired, Agnes lingered behind, seemingly engrossed in her work, yet her manner betrayed her hesitation, and, putting an arm around her waist, and stroking her dark curling hair, he said earnestly—

"Day after to-morrow, my dear, I shall mount my good steed and battle for my right and our home. If I fail, as fall I may, we are homeless. Should anything happen to present you entangling in this world—"

"But nothing can happen to prevent you, father," eagerly interrupted Agnes.

"Nothing but sudden illness or death, my child."

"O, father!"

"We must look at possibilities, my dear child, and I trust you do not think, as I say, anything should prevent me from fighting my fight. I know not what you will do. A little money I have, yonder lies the dilapidated cabinet beside my bed. With that, you must go with your brother to our relation beyond the border. Never mind, my child; I fee! that you tremble. We'll only look on the bright side; and now, good night!"

Then they parted, with one fond embrace. As Agnes entered her chamber, her heart sank heavy with presentiment of coming evil.

About midnight Agnes was aroused from a deep though troubled slumber, by a hand laid firmly on her shoulder. It was Margery, the old nurse.

"O, dear, Miss Agnes! Get up—work—as quick as you can, for you are wanted."

"Are you in earnest, Margery?"

"No sue, Aggie—your wits would be woolgathering again before I had read three lines. I will not torment you any longer. Shall I talk to you, instead—or would you rather be silent?"

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