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The New Northwest.

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[Written for the New Northwest.]

Upon the Scene of a Battle-field.

BY STEPHEN MAYBELL.

I stand amidst a field of waving grain,
Where armies met and there were thousands slain;
Here host met host with war's dread armament,
And slaughter's echoes shook the continent;
Here the hoarse cannon's mouth with flaming tongue
Spat death, and ruin o'er the valley rung;
Here came the charge, and there stood the defense,
And death gave death in deadly recompense;
To yonder hill, now crowned with nodding corn,
Through blinding flash and fire, a "hope forlorn"
The soldiers rushed—ah, rushed into a hell!—
And where I stand a whole battalion fell,
And lay, the dying buried 'neath the slain,
Beseeching, praying, calling help in vain,
Till fainter, lower came the sinking breath,
Till all was quiet, hushed, for all was death.
Yet o'er this scene prolific Peace now smiles,
Her golden seas of plenty bloom for miles.

The world is sick of drums and generals,
And swords and guns and wholesale funerals.
Man, come acknowledge, are ye man or brute?
If brute, continue still in war's pursuit.
If man, let man's intelligence hold sway;
Stand forth in the broad light of reason's day;
Rise in the great image thou wast made,
And sheath forever war's degrading blade.
Yes, sheath the sword—the sword that poets sing,
That hirelings swear by to defend their king;
The sacred sword—the scarred veteran's pride—
The ornament that dangles by the side;
The sacred sword—ambition's carving tool,
That hangs so well upon the plumed fool;
This harmless toy, forsooth, to butcher man;
This pretty relic, used 'fore sense began;
From first to last, o'er history's red page,
The argument of Despotism's rage.

ELLEN DOWD, THE FARMER'S WIFE.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by Mrs. A. J. Duniway, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington City.]

CHAPTER XVI.

Ziek Hamilton's heart was touched. Never before had he been frightened about the precarious state of Sarah's health. And now, as he stood bending over her, with a look of intense solicitude changing every lineament of his fishy features into an expression of concern and tenderness, the long dormant better side of his humanity was roused, and he called her by the old girl name in soothing, gentle tones.

Then, turning to one of the barefoot, uncouth brood of sun-browned, sturdy boys, he directed him to go for Aunt Betsey, Ellen and her husband, and send Jacob Graham to the village for Dr. Goff.

The setting sun was tipping the maple forest with a tinge of splendor, lighting up the fleecy cloudlets in the eastern sky and shedding a pale halo of glory over lawns and cornfields.

Ellen Dowd, arousing from her stupor, sat in an easy chair beside Aunt Betsey's window, toying with her transparent hands and drinking in the quiet beauty of the rural scenes, when her nephew arrived, all breathless from his haste, and proclaimed the news of Sarah Hamilton's sudden hemorrhage.

"I thank Thee, oh my God!" said Ellen, fervently.

Her husband knelt at her feet, astounded.

"Ellen, darling, are you crazy?"

"*Crazy*, Peter? *No!* I am happy to realize that my poor, enslaved sister stands with her blistered feet upon the portal of eternal freedom; that the domination of her stupid master will soon cease forever, and that the carking cares of life are left behind her. Let us go to her," and starting up with renewed strength and vigor she began to make preparation for the short journey to her sister's home.

Jacob Graham's two-horse wagon was placed at their disposal, and Aunt Betsey, Peter, Ellen and the nephew departed for poor Sarah's home, while Uncle Jacob, mounting another horse, rode off in quest of Dr. Goff.

Ellen continued in a placid, fervent, hopeful mood, and yielding herself to old time memories, gazed with abstraction upon every object along the shaded road with which, in her early childhood, she had been familiar.

Crossing the ford below the foot-log, they came out in full view of the neglected graves of Ellen's parents and the tumbling down old cabin home where she had, for the first time, opened her wondering eyes upon the flickering, uncertain light of a primitive saucer lamp and gazed upon the most squalid poverty which the mature imagination can conceive.

The moon had risen, and was casting a pale glory over the sloping landscape. The maple tree that stood near the rough chimney, which was the object of Ellen's particular veneration in her childhood, had acquired much increased proportions, and as it spread its emerald foliage in the mild spring air, casting shadows of blackness upon the sward below, and throwing grotesque figures upon the moss-grown roof of the cabin, from which a screech owl sent forth warning notes, she fervently exclaimed, "My eyes have seen the full fruition of long cherished dreams. I have lived long enough! Dear Aunt Betsey, let me die!"

"Why, honey, whoever heard of such a thing? *Die*, indeed, when your poor sister is at the p'int o' death, an' you the only blood relation, 'cept old Ziek, to look after the house full of young ones. You have more to live for than anybody else I know of."

The horses were urged onward by Peter Dowd, who, in his anxiety to reach the scene of suffering, evidently felt no sympathy with Ellen's peculiar views. He was intensely practical in all his notions, and really feared that his wife's wits were deserting her.

Soon the outline of Ziek Hamilton's cabin, with its ragged rail fence, dotted with groups of unkempt children, gazing anxiously up the highway, appeared in the limpid moonlight.

The cabin was as still as death, except that, as they entered, the feeble wailing of a fretful infant of six months struck upon Ellen's soul like the wierd notes of a funeral dirge.

A tallow caudle shed a sickly light through the shabby room; and sitting beside the bed, whereon the scarcely breathing form of the half conscious sufferer lay, sat poor Ziek Hamilton, a sad victim of his own false notions of life, himself at last reaping the bitter reward of his own mistakes in his prospective bereavement.

Aunt Betsey, with a motherly solicitude for suffering infancy, which her fast increasing infirmity in no way diminished, went quietly to the cradle and began cooing softly to the wailing babe.

Ellen, speechless with contending emotions, took a seat beside the bedhead and planted a fervent kiss upon her dying sister's brow, as she lay breathing audibly, while at short intervals her gurgling life blood came frothing from her throat.

Sarah, evidently with much effort, aroused herself to consciousness.

"Sister," she whispered, "you are just in time. I've lain here for many weary weeks, wondering if you wouldn't come and be a mother to my babes. I'm ready to die now. But remember what I tell you, darling—don't you ever get married."

A deep blush suffused poor Ellen's face, and bending over her sister she whispered, half audibly, "Your admonition comes too late, my darling. I am married already, but I will do my best for you and yours."

"Hope is dead, then, sister, for a wife has no right to life, liberty or happiness unless her husband wills it. What made you get married, dear?"

"I was compelled to marry; but don't worry about me. All will soon be well with us. Have you any message to bequeath to your children?"

"I have a sort of diary. You will find it under the pillow. I have written it at intervals during many years. If it contains anything which you think the world would be the better or wiser for seeing, you may do with it as seems best to you. At any rate, show it to my daughters as they grow older."

Several moments of exhaustion followed, and the patient sufferer again opened her eyes.

"Aunt Betsey, are you here?"

The good old woman tottered forward, bearing the now quiet infant in her motherly embrace.

"What d'ye want, honey?" she asked, sobbingly.

"I want to thank you for your love, Aunt Betsey. If it hadn't been for you I should have died long ago. You've been my more than mother. Help Ellen to take care of my poor children, will you?"

Aunt Betsey did not answer, but clasping the dying woman's hand, she sat beside her, the image of despair.

Soon Uncle Jacob came in sight, accompanied by Dr. Goff. The bevy of hounds, that had been absent on a hunt when the other friends arrived, were now at home, and rushing out pell-mell upon the new comers, made a din and racket that jarred discordantly on the air in the death chamber.

"I'm glad I'll soon be out of hearing of those hounds," whispered Sarah. "They've annoyed me all my life."

Ziek Hamilton aroused himself from his apparent lethargy and, going out, commanded the beasts to be quiet. But to Ellen the bay of a hound never after lost its sad remembrances.

Dr. Goff looked inquiringly at Ellen, somewhat contemptuously at her husband, and anxiously at the closed eyes and pallid lips of the dying woman.

"Mrs. Hamilton, Sarah, do you know me?"

"Yes, Doctor. I thank you for coming to see me die," and a sweet smile lit up her emaciated features and played over them like a dream of ecstacy.

"Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, you can promise me to come sometimes to visit Ellen and Ziek and the children. That's all. I don't suffer any more."

After this the dying woman gradually sunk away into complete unconsciousness. Throughout the long hours of the night she lay breathing tranquilly, while her large family of ten children were sleeping like litters of pigs, upon piles of bedding in the cabin loft, and Ellen Dowd was calmly reposing by her sister's side, with all the others keeping silent vigil.

Morning, with her bright spring sunshine and clear, limpid air, arose upon the earth. Just as the slanting sunbeams entered the low, patched window panes and kissed the sunken cheeks of the unconscious sufferer, her spirit took its flight, leaving the rent body rigid and motionless, yet beautiful even in its total wreck of health and vigor.

Ziek Hamilton's faculties were well nigh paralyzed. Ellen, who had temporarily forgotten her morbid interest in herself at sight of so much other suffering, was busy in needed preparation for the coming burial. Much as Ziek had loved to boast about his capabilities as a "provider," his family were in rags from the least to the largest; and, although it never could have been said that they had gone hungry, certain it was that their lack of comfortable surroundings was pitiably palpable.

I will not linger over the sad burial rites. A grave, containing one of the Dowd sisters, who had departed during Ellen's absence, had for a number of years kept watch and ward beside the remains of her parents. And next to this another grave was made, where the remains of the poor eldest born, another victim of life's sin and ignorance, was lain away beside her sister's form to sleep the last long sleep.

Peter Dowd and Ziek Hamilton turned together from the band of mourners at the newly heaped-up mound which marked poor Sarah's resting place, and slowly walked away.

"Ziek," said Peter, "it occurs to me that your idea of 'toughening' women, as you term it, has been a failure in the case of your wife. Don't you believe it would have been better for you both if her married lot had been a little easier?"

"Oh," replied Ziek, swallowing away at a great lump in his throat, that was trying its best to choke him, "all that any woman needs is clothes and victuals. It would have been well enough with her if she hadn't always been a-frettin'. But I do believe she fussed and fretted till, when she made up her mind to quit it, it jest killed her to give it up. I do wish now that I had never growled about it, for a peevish wife is better than none, especially if you've a houseful o' younguns to care for. It's true the oldest girls are much older today than her mother was when I married her, but they hain't got her faculty—never had. It's a comfort that Ellen's here, though; and if you don't mind the fret and worry, and will join with me in buyin' this piece o' land, that belonged to Government in the early days o' Peter Dowd—it's for sale at a bargain now, two hundred acres, two-thirds prairie—I shouldn't wonder if we'd get along."

Peter Dowd the younger liked the plan. It had but one drawback—he had not sufficient means to buy the land which had been the hunting ground of his father-in-law, but if he could make one payment, and buy a little stock, he could manage the rest.

The two men talked this matter over in their lonely homeward walk, and did not reach Ziek's cabin until after Ellen, with the children, had been long left alone by the Goffs and Grahams to endure the desolation of her own sad heart. She had been assisted by the weeping girls and dear Aunt Betsey in putting the disordered room to rights. The bed upon which her weary sister had been slowly dying for weeks was placed upon a scaffold in the yard and the bedclothes put to soak in a barrel.

A dinner was got of boiled pork and dodgers, which Ellen's weak stomach loathed, but to which the half a score of hearty young Hamiltons betook themselves with a keen relish, despite their great bereavement. Ellen ate what little she could in silence, and tired, discouraged and sick, she dropped her weary form into an uncouth chair, and taking up her sister's baby, tried to sing him to sleep. Her sobs choked her utterance. Her head-ache was terrible, and her heart-ache worst of all.

The brothers-in-law entered the cabin together and called for dinner, which was re-served for them by the eldest girl of the family, a stolid, phlegmatic, overgrown and ignorant creature, who partook of few of her mother's natural capabilities.

Peter Dowd addressed his wife in tones of tenderness. The scenes of poverty, bereavement and wretchedness which he had witnessed had aroused his better nature, and the thought that his own frail wife might also droop under the hardships of frontier life and motherhood, stirred him with emotions of protection and motives of manliness. Had he possessed the love of Ellen all might from that moment have gone well with her. But at the best she could but passively receive his affection, without even appreciating or reciprocating it.

No woman can commit a greater wrong upon herself, her husband or her children than the self-stultication of marrying without a feeling of self-denying and all-consuming affection for the man to whom she pledges and perils her life for better or for worse.

Dinner being over, Peter Dowd asked Elleh to give the baby up to the charge of its father and take a walk with him. Passively and listlessly she obeyed, and they rambled out together to the foot of a prostrate, bark-shorn elm and sat down upon its weather-bleached body.

"Wife," said Peter, tenderly, "it will avail you nothing to give way to grief like this."

"I am not grieving, Peter. I wish I was lying beside my sister—that's all."

"There's no use in your indulging in vain wishes, Ellen. The old home of your childhood is for sale, for a fraction over Government prices. If you will be to me the true and dutiful wife that I have a right to expect you to be, I will try to purchase this land, by making a small advance payment and the balance in installments as I can earn the money."

"I'd like to know how you're going to earn a living there. Perhaps, however, as you've learned from my sagacious brother-in-law how to 'break in' an unruly wife, you'll provide for me after the Hamilton style," was the sarcastic rejoinder.

"Wouldn't you like to own the old homestead, Ellen?"

"*Wouldn't I!*"

"Then it's settled."

"But how are we to live?"

"I will work."

"Peter, see here!" and Ellen produced the roll of bills, the gift of good old Aunty Harris, of the D'Arcy estate, and unfolded them before his eyes. "Here is money to build me a cabin home and stock the farm. You may manage to pay for the land. I will buy some cows and sheep and chickens, a horse and wagon, and housekeeping outfit. I am resolved to be acquisitive and ambitious. Your determination inspires me."

"And I am resolved to grow rich and powerful," was Peter Dowd's reply.

Reader, are the richest families the happiest ones? We shall see.

(To be continued.)

MRS. MILLER'S LECTURE AT SALEM.

SALEM, April 13, 1872.

EDITOR NEW NORTHWEST:

I have just listened to Mrs. M. M. Miller's lecture at the Opera House on "Man—his past, present and future," and am of the opinion that the lady is doing herself considerable injustice—injustice to herself because she is unjust to others; unjust to those true, noble-hearted, self-sacrificing women who have had the hardihood to speak out in defense and justification of just such women as Mrs. Miller herself; unjust to herself because she ignores the only feasible remedy to right the wrongs she complains of; unjust to herself because in ignoring the elective franchise in the woman question in her lecture, she attempts to play Hamlet with Hamlet left out. Why it is she cannot see that *equality before the law* is the one thing needed to right all the wrongs she sets forth is more than I can tell, and I would make this suggestion for her benefit, that she so amend her lecture as to include the *whole* woman question, cast her manuscripts aside and put her *whole soul into her work*, as she then could do, and she would have such a future before her as an angel might envy. Her fine-toned voice and clear enunciation and commanding figure would make her a power in the land second to none. But, as it is, she lacks enthusiasm herself, and therefore fails to create enthusiasm in her hearers. She says many pleasing and interesting things which one is gratified to hear, but having heard feels none the wiser.

Mrs. M. at heart I believe is a Woman Suffragist, but because she does not so declare it, thus ignoring the great maxim, "Be ever what you seem," she cramps and dwarfs her own best thoughts and feelings.

Hoping that she will speedily discover the error she is now in, wheel into line and take command of a division of the grand army that is now marshaling for battle and "fight it out on that line," (Equal Rights to all) help win the battle, enjoy the fruits and receive the welcome plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; since thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many," is the sincere wish of Yours truly, ***.

CORRESPONDENCE.

This department of the NEW NORTHWEST is to be a general vehicle for exchange of ideas concerning any and all matters that may be legitimately discussed in our columns. Finding it practically impossible to answer each correspondent by private letter, we adopt this mode of communication to save our friends the disappointment that would otherwise accrue from our inability to answer their queries. We cordially invite everybody that has a question to ask, a suggestion to make, or a scolding to give to contribute to the Correspondents' Column.

H. W., San Francisco: Your letter of April 7th is at hand. The change has been made as directed. Very sorry to hear of the ill-health of your son. Hope your new position will be satisfactory and pleasant to you. Should have been pleased very much indeed to have seen yourself and wife, could you have made it convenient. Have no doubt, however, but that we will meet in San Francisco sometime during the present year.

E. G. B., Virginia City, Nevada: Your note inclosing subscription received.

"Gipsy:" The poem will hardly "pass muster." You have ability as a writer, but we would advise you to give your thoughts to the world in prose. Poetry is overdone. None but those who are "born to sing" can ever become proficient. You wished plain criticism, and you have it.

Annie W. wants to know if our subscription list is increasing. No other paper in the State has ever made such progress in adding names to its subscription list as has this one. Subscriptions are rapidly coming in all the time. And yet some say the people of Oregon care nothing at all for Woman Suffrage!

(From the S. F. Chronicle.)

Saturday Night.

The long routine of the week's work is over, and the weary hands and brain that have toiled without intermission during the six allotted days find a dear rest in the cessation at evening.

The markets are crowded—the dealers are reaping a rich harvest in supplying the material for the Sunday dinner-table; the early Spring violets from the flower stands are in demand to breathe of the sweet country in those city homes. The calm of the Saturday night is an old theme and withal a strange period of contradiction. For though while some are drinking in the peace of the fireside, the cellar and the drinking saloon are also the scenes of orgies and revels.

There are so many loveless lives; so much of driftwood and so little of home attractions; so many havenless vessels and so few strong anchors of domestic affections in this feverish city, that the boil and bubble of dissipation is kept well alive.

Passing into the lighted streets and taking up our position in the shadow of a doorway the other evening, we watched the stream go by us and wove links and fancies round each action of the current. The first we chose was a tall

LONG-BEARDED MAN,

With a singularly placid expression, attired in a shabby genteel costume, and with an air and carriage that suggested at once Thackeray's Colonel Newcomb. He was evidently a widower or an old bachelor. Did a woman's hand hover over his household, that rent in the coat sleeve and that frayed collar would never be a blot on the venerable garment. The old gentleman, after a long stare at a comfortable overcoat in a tailor's window, turned with a sigh to the shelter of a friendly awning, for the rain began to fall heavily. Taking a cigarette from his pocket, he rolled it carefully, and after many efforts with a damp match he succeeded in lighting it.

Immediately we wove a warp and woof of Southern life around him, saw him dallying with pine apples in shaded porches on sultry afternoons and sipping sherbets from silver goblets. Jointly ruined by a Mexican revolution or in the "late lamented fatricidal." That neat turn of the fingers was never learned under a northern sky. He examined his memorandum book for a car-ticket, holds it up to the light, hails a passing car and is gone, leaving his history a book to us under the doorway—perhaps one that might be as black as a black-edged letter, long delayed, from a waiting friend.

A newsboy shouting his full accounts of the horrible something or other, a family man with a well-filled basket, a young clerk clapper, and others sheltered beneath a silk umbrella go by, and we wonder how many will be received into comfortable homes; and how many will pass into the dim cheer of bachelors' quarters.

FLOATING DOWN THE BOSPHORUS.

Some twenty years ago there lived in a great city, a silent, dreamy man of great talent, but objectless life—a poet, translator, essayist, scholar; but withal a dreamer, without energy or purpose. His daily haunts were the rooms of a library; his only companions the books that stored the shelves; his only ambition the needs of the hour. Like hundreds of his kind he never knew his power. His sole pleasure was the opium dream—his only ambition the grave and Lethe. When he died in neglect and poverty, among his writings appeared a poem, grand, rythmical and tender. It was entitled, "Boating down the Bosphorus," and told of the sad reflections of the gray and worn votaries of pleasure who had ever striven after the glow and glitter of life, and whose old age was nothing but saddened memories.

From our corner we look at these boatmen of the Bosphorus, full of vigor and hope, whose only creed is *carpe diem*—grasp every fruit, heedless of the ashes at the core. But the sad lesson of the poem,

"All we've learned amounts to this,
Life's a sad experiment."

It is not always the experiment of the mariners of the Bosphorus.

"I think you might settle that little account, sir; four months standing, and only a single deposit."

Heavens! that a train of reflections like these should be broken in on thus rudely by a vile collector. We told him, gloomily, and with absorbed air, to call again and left the corner, mourning for humanity and the persistence of tradesman.

The most remarkable evidence of the mechanical science and skill of the Chinese at an early period, is to be found in their suspended bridges, the invention of which is assigned to the Han dynasty. According to the concurrent testimony of all their historical and geographical writers, Sangleang, the commander of an army under Kaou-tsoo, the first of the Hans, undertook and completed the formation of roads through the mountainous province of Shense, to the west of the capital.

Hitherto its lofty hills and deep valleys had rendered a communication difficult and circuitous. With a body of 100,000 laborers he cut passages over the mountains, throwing the removal soil into valleys, and where this was not sufficient to raise the road to the required height he constructed bridges, which rested on pillars or abutments. In another place he conceived and accomplished the daring project of suspending a bridge from one mountain to another across a deep chasm. These bridges, which are called by the Chinese writers, very appropriately, flying bridges, and represented to be numerous at the present day, are sometimes so high that they cannot be traversed without alarm. One, still existing in Shense, stretches 400 feet from mountain to mountain, over a chasm of 500 feet. Most of these flying bridges are so wide that four horsemen can ride on them abreast, and balustrades are placed on each side to protect travelers. It is by no means improbable (as M. Pauthier suggests), that as the missionaries to China made known the fact more than a century and a half ago, that the Chinese had suspended bridges, and that many of them were made of iron, the hint may have been taken from thence for similar constructions by European engineers.

Eloquence when at its highest pitch leaves little room for reflection or reason, but addresses itself entirely to the fancy or the affections, captivates the willing hearers, and subdues their understanding. Happily, this pitch it seldom attains.—*Hume.*

A Life Romance.

Two persons lately sailed from New York for Europe, whose history is so strange that, but for proof not to be gainsaid, it might even be thought incredible. No wild romance devised by the most cunning weaver of sensational plots can surpass this history for triumph over time, space, and the ordinary rules of probability. Again premising that the story is well authenticated, we proceed to tell it.

Nearly twenty years back there lived in Rio Janerio an English merchant whose life seemed entirely devoted to the pursuit of fortune. He had come to Brazil poor, and by resolute work and some luck, acquired a competency. This done, after many vicissitudes, he went home for a visit. While at home he met a beautiful orphan girl. She was lovely in mind as in person, and the compassion wrought by her folorn situation in life ripened in our merchant's breast to a warmer feeling.

In brief, as the story writers say, the pair were married, and returned together to Brazil. Two children were born to them, and life glided on for a space like a single summer's holiday. Worldly prosperity, too, still attended the merchant, who from time to time repeated his visit to England. On one of these occasions strange rumors came to his ears, prejudicial to his wife. They were little heeded at first, but like the poison of Iago soon "burned like the mines of sulphur." By degrees, suspicion became jealous fury, and the wife was directly accused by her lord of infidelity. The lady being proud and sensitive to a fault, indignantly denied the charge, challenged her accuser to produce evidence, and withdrew as much as possible from his society. The tender affection of former days now gave place to indifference and almost aversion. No guilt could be fixed on the wife, but some efforts for reconciliation were coolly received. In time their mutual relations became unbearable to both. A separation was agreed upon, an annuity was settled on the wife, and the day of wedded love that had opened so brightly ended in darkness and sorrow.

Heartsick and weary of all associations, the merchant wound up his affairs in Brazil and came to North America. Wandering vaguely about in the West he fell in with a party of Red River traders and subsequently did a good deal of business in and about St. Paul. In that town he made many friends, while avoiding close intimacies, and was notable for his grave taciturnity and the strict honor of all his dealings. He refused invariably to mingle in any social pleasures whatever, and impressed all who came in contact with him as a man who labored under ineradicable suffering. Thus years rolled on, and the wife had married again—the terms of separation under Brazilian law allowing that step. She, however, forfeited her annuity by it, which proved in the end a serious misfortune. Her second husband was poor, although an educated gentleman, fell into bad health, and died a year or two after the marriage.

This left the wife and her two children in destitute circumstances, and she scarcely knew where to turn. She, then, like her first husband, became an uneasy wanderer up and down the earth. Led by some mysterious influence she, too, was in St. Paul. It is a surprising statement to make, but there is no doubt of the fact, that the couple had met once more, that the old feeling revived, that the lady conclusively established her innocence in the mind of her husband, that they were married again, and have lived in the utmost felicity together ever since. Rochefoucauld says that a love *rechauffe* is of no value, but here is a direct case to the contrary, defying all likelihood and exploding cynical epigrams. With an ample fortune, and, we may hope, both wiser for their painful experience, the twice-wedded pair have once more started across the sea to settle down for the remainder of life in their old home.

A DYING NATION.—The accounts of the famine in Persia, which continue to arrive in greater detail, bid fair to treat the world to the spectacle of a calamity the like of which has not been witnessed, in historic times at least—the sudden extinction of a nation for the want of food. This has really been the fate of the great States which filled the Valley of the Euphrates, and it is a fate which has for centuries been threatening some modern States—Spain for instance. Man has stripped the soil of trees; the absence of trees has brought droughts, has slowly diminished the productive powers of the ground, and finally destroyed them—the population in the meantime, dwindling in numbers and vitality. Spain had forty millions of people in the time of the Romans, and flowed with milk and honey; it is now an arid region, only half of it under cultivation, with only sixteen millions of inhabitants, and, if modern science had not come to its aid, would probably go the way of Babylon. Persia was one of the most powerful States of antiquity, and even in the fourteenth century was able to support the army of Tamerlane, who marched without commissariat or baggage, during a bloody contest. It is now almost a wilderness, with a population of two millions—about half of them nomads, which is rapidly perishing from famine brought on by three years of drought. The worst of it is, that owing to the absence of either common roads or railroads, it seems to be impossible for the charity of the rest of the world to reach the sufferers, so that there is really a strong prospect of the total depopulation of the country. The moral of this horrible story is—look after your trees.—*The Nation.*

RULES OF CONDUCT.—1. I never lose any time. I do not think that lost which is spent in amusement or recreation every day; but always be in the habit of being employed. 2. Never err the least in truth. 3. Never say an ill thing of a person when thou canst say a good thing of him; not only speak charitably, but feel so. 4 Never be irritable nor unkind to anybody. 5. Never indulge thyself in luxuries that are not necessary. 6. Do all things with consideration; and when thy path to act right is most difficult, feel confident in that Power alone which is able to assist thee, and exert thy own powers so far as they go.—*Mrs. Fry.*

Sammy thinks he would learn much more at school if he did not have to attend to his own books all the time. "Because," he says, "if I study my own book all the time I shall only learn what is in it, but if I hadn't any book to study, 'I should know all the whole school are reciting."

The New Northwest.

A Journal for the People.
Devoted to the Interests of Humanity.
Independent in Politics and Religion.
Alive to all Live Issues, and Thoroughly Radical in Opposing and Exposing the Wrongs of the Masses.

Correspondents writing over assumed signatures must make known their names to the Editor, or no attention will be given to their communications.

A Little Sermon.

At a railroad station, not long ago, one of the beautiful lessons which all should learn was taught in such a natural, simple way, that none could forget it. It was a bleak snowy day; the train was late, the ladies' room dark and smoky, and the dozen women, old and young, who sat waiting impatiently, all looked cross, low-spirited, or stupid.

Just then a forlorn old woman, shaking with the palsy, came in with a basket of little wares for sale, and went about minutely offering them to sitters. Nobody bought anything, and the poor old soul stood blinking at the door a minute, as if reluctant to go out into the bitter storm again. She turned presently and poked about the room as if trying to find something, and then a pale lady in black, who lay as if asleep, on a sofa, opened her eyes and saw the old woman, and instantly asked in a kind tone, "Have you lost anything, ma'am?"

"No, dear. I'm looking for the heatin' place, to have a warm 'fore I go out ag'in. My eyes are poor, and I don't seem to find the furnace nowhere."

"Here it is," and the lady led her to the steam radiator, placed a chair and showed her how to warm her feet.

"Well, now, ain't that nice?" said the old woman, spreading her ragged mittens to dry. "Thank'ee, dear; this is proper comfortable, ain't it? I'm most frozen to-day, bein' lame and aching; and not selling much made me sort o' down-hearted."

The lady smiled, went to the counter, bought a cup of tea and some sort of food, carried it to the old woman and said, as respectfully and kindly as if the poor soul had been dressed in silk and fur, "Won't you have a cup of hot tea? It is very comforting such a day as this."

"Sakes alive! Do they give tea at this depot?" cried the old lady, in a tone of innocent surprise, that made a smile go through the room, touching the glummiest face like a streak of sunshine. "Well, now, this is just lovely," added the old lady, sipping away with a relish. "That does warm the heart."

While she refreshed herself, telling her story meanwhile, the lady looked over the poor little wares in the basket, bought soap, pins and shoe-strings, and cheered the old soul by paying well for them.

As I watched her doing this I thought what a sweet face she had, though I had considered her rather plain before. I felt dreadfully ashamed of myself that I had grimly shaken my head when the basket was offered to me; and as I saw a look of interest, sympathy and kindness come into the faces of those around me, I did wish that I had been the magician to call it out. It was only a kind word and a friendly act, but somehow it brightened that room wonderfully. It changed the faces of a dozen women, and I think it touched a dozen hearts, for I saw many eyes follow the plain, pale lady with sudden respect; and when the old woman, with many thanks, got up to go, several persons beckoned to her and bought something, as if they wanted to repair their negligence.

There were no gentlemen present to be impressed by the lady's kind acts; so it was not done for effect, and no possible reward could be received for it except the thanks of a poor old woman. But that simple little charity was as good as a sermon, and I think each traveler went on her way better for that half-hour in the dreary station.—*S. S. Worker.*

A SKELETON CLOCK.—A watchmaker in an Illinois town has constructed a peculiar time-piece, and the local journals describe it as follows: "It is a simple dial plate with two hands—an hour hand and a minute hand. One dial is twenty-four inches in diameter, with a large opening in the center. The minute hand is twenty inches in length, and the hour hand is nine and a half inches, fastened in the center of the dial upon a small pivot. That is all that can be seen by looking closely on the large ends towards the center of the dial, and on the reverse side you will see what appears to be weights, intended to balance the hands, but which in reality contain the secret of the movements of the hands. Within these small weights are miniature works like those of a small watch, strong enough to control the large hands. A person may whirl the hands until they spin like a top, but each will return invariably to its proper place and indicate the time correctly. The hands may be taken off and laid away for an hour, two hours, or ten, or any length of time, and when placed upon the pivot they will instantly point the precise hour and minute. There is no electricity or anything of the sort. The dial hangs by a tiny hook from a nail. It may be suspended by a string or held in the hand, and the movements of the hands are always the same. It is really a remarkable piece of workmanship, and excites much comment. Nothing is seen by looking at it, save the rim of the dial and the hands. This is all; and when they do correctly mark the time of day it seems as though some unseen spirit must represent and impel their movements.

OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.—The common schools give to the mass of the people the key of knowledge. I think it may with truth be said, that the branches of knowledge taught therein, when taught in a masterly manner—reading, in which I include the spelling of our language, a firm, legible handwriting, and the elementary rules of arithmetic—are of greater value than all the rest which is taught in our district schools; but the young person who brings these from school can himself, in his winter evenings, range over the entire field of useful knowledge. Our common schools are important in the same way as the common air, the common sunshine, the common rain—invaluable for their commonness. They are the corner-stone of the municipal organization which is a characteristic feature of our social system, they are the fountain of that wide-spread intelligence which, like mortal life, pervades the country. From the humblest village school there may go forth a teacher who, like Newton, shall bind his temples with the stars of Orion's belt—with Herschel, light up his cell with the beams of before undiscovered planets—with Franklin, grasp the lightning.—*Edward Everett.*

A little boy was lisping his prayers with his twin brother at his mother's knee. When he came to "Give us this day our daily bread," he was astonished to hear a fraternal whisper, "Ask for cake, Johnny, ask for cake."