Country

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The Lost Traveler.

An Illinois Story.

BY G. H. CHIPMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE NIGHT RIDE.

It was drawing near the close of a cold day in December, in the year 1826, when a traveler issued from the door of Broadrick's Tavern, an Inn standing on the southern edge of Grand Prairie, Illinois, and drawing his thick green coat around him as he felt the whistling wind prepared to mount his horse, a noble appearing charger, who stood champing his bits if impatient of delay.

He was accompanied by the landlord, a sleek-faced individual who had grown fat on the patronage the public had bestowed on him, as his chanced to be the only place of entertainment within twenty-five miles of the spot. He seemed to be remonstrating with the person upon setting out to cross the prairie at so late an hour.

'I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Lenox,' he exclaimed, as the traveler threw the reins of his bridle over the neck of his horse. 'I'ts my opinion you're going to have a stormy night of it, as those clouds in the North are filled with snow. Better stop until daylight for crossing the prairie. I've known many a good man to get lost in a snow storm on that big plain, and some that froze too before they got off. Better stay all night.'

'No, Broadrick, I thank you,' answered Lenox, quickly. 'It is impossible, I must be in Tremont.'

'Well, well, if you will go, I cannot help it. But mind my word, you'll wish you had taken my advice, before you're done with this night's tramp, or I'm mistaken. I'd almost as soon see you die, as to see you attempt what you are going to.'

'I would stay, landlord, but my honor depends upon my getting to Tremont at the time I told you. Good bye,' and Lenox held out his hand to the Landlord, who gave it a hearty shake.

'Good bye, boy, good bye, and I hope you may get over it in safety.'

The traveler replied by springing upon his horse, and waving his hand to Broadrick, as his gallant steed galloped from the door.

Edgar Lenox, the young man who set out upon the night ride from the tavern, was a person perhaps five and twenty years of age, of a sanguine and fearless disposition, and one who regarded his honor as the dearest thing of his life.—Some twelve months previous to the opening of our story, he had been engaged in business with a man named Cole, in the village of Pekin, but before they had been connected long, his partner committed a forgery on a mercantile firm in Peori, and its being discovered, fled the place, leaving Lenox to stand the blunt of his evil deeds. As the forgery had been committed in the name of the firm, Edgar was arrested and tried as a co-partner in the guilt, and held to bail in $3,000 to appear at court. An old farmer named Lincoln, residing in the edge of Grand Prairie, had went security, and given the necessary bonds for the appearance of Lenox, and he was permitted to run at large. He had been absent several months at Springfield, and he was on his way to Trenton to stand the trial, which was to come off the day after he left Broadrick's tavern: and it was his strong desire to be present, by so doing to secure his bailer that induced him to undergo the perils of a ride in a dark night over a gloomy prairie.

The wind cut keenly, and blew a strong breeze from the north as he mounted the first little knoll of the large plain before him, and cast his eyes over the dreary expanse in view. For twenty miles the road lay through a wide valley, with not a bush or tree to break the extensive haze, and Lenox shuddered as he beheld the sun sink behind the western horizon, and saw the gloom of night gradully settling upon the spot. But with compressed lips he gave a loose rein to his fine horse, who striking into a swift pace, bore his dauntless rider rapidly into the prairie.

Heavy clouds covered the northern sky, and driven by the wind, gradually spread over the entire surface of the heavens, and some two hours after Lenox entered the prairie, he felt flake after flake of snow begin to fall upon his face, and he became aware that he was about to encounter the most dreaded of all evils, a night ride over a wide valley in a heavy snow storm. Noislessly the snow came down, and the dark bosom of the earth began to grow white beneath the storm, and each moment the road grew more and more dim under the snow.

An hour passed, and in vain the eye of Edgar endeavored to trace the outlines of the highway over which he was traveling—he could discern nothing but one white expanse of unblemished snow, everywhere alike and hiding every indication of the road. Under these circumstances he allowed his horse to take his own way, and the noble steed pushed rapidly forward though going in a direction which seemed to the bewildered senses of Lenox exactly opposite the one which he wished to travel.

Thus three long hours rolled away, and ever and anon Edgar could distinguish the howl of the prairie wolf, as it rose wild and dismal over the wide waste around him and then died away, as still as the grave. No pale moon sent down her cheering rays upon the plain, no twinkling star glittered with its feeble light in the dark dome above, but one black cloud hid all from view, and as the lone traveler raised his wistful face to heaven, to catch a glimps of the sky, the cold snow drops fell thick and fast upon his chilled cheeks, warning him that the storm still raged on.

At last he gained the shelter of some timber. This he knew by the sudden darkness which covered the way, and the constant failing of the wind, and being benumed with cold he dismounted from his horse, which he found by feeling around him, and began to walk and jump briskly about and set the stagnant blood in circulation. This exercise he continued until day broke over the spot and as soon as it was light enough to see he began to explore his position, he found himself at the head of a ravine which run winding down into the woods and mounting the bank he looked around him. On one side of him the broad prairie spread out to view, and on the other the forest, but as far as the eye could reach no human habitation appeared in sight.

While Lenox stood gazing around him, a party of fifty horsemen suddenly rose upon a knoll in the prairie, and came galloping swiftly to him. The foremost of the band, and one who seemed by his dress and actions, to be a leader, carried a woman on the saddle in front of him, and the whole party seemed in haste as they came rapidly onward.

It was the work of an instant for Edgar to conceal himself behind a large tree, and in a moment the band came galloping by within fifty feet of him, and and swept on to the wood; but quick as they sped by, Lenox had recognized in the pale face of the maiden, the features of Ada Lincoln the only daughter of the old farmer who had went his bail, and in the person of the capturer, his former partner, Cole.

The whole circumstance rushed like lightning to the mind of Lenox. He had often heard his partner speak in rapturous terms of the beauty of the old farmers's daughter, who came occasionally to the store with her father to trade; and soon after the discovery of the forgery & the disappearance of Cole, a band of daring outlaws made their appearance upon the Grand Prairie, and began to infest the citizens, and the country around. Heretofore they had been content with stealing horses, and occasionally committing a burglary. But Edgar was convinced that they had now made a bolder swoop and forcibly carried off Lincoln's daughter.—He instantly formed the daring resolution of following the band, to discover where they had concealed Ada, and then to act as circumstances might dictate. Mounting his horse he followed at a rapid gait the trail plainly to be seen in the snow, and after going half a mile, descended into the bottom of a deep ravine, and found that the party had separated, some of them having here dismounted, and entered the mouth of a small ravine, while the trail of horsemen kept down the main gully.

Dismounting, also, Lenox fastened his steed to a bush, and followed the footman up the smaller ravine. He had not ascended over a hundred yards before he came in sight of a rudely constructed log cabin, from the chimney of which a thick smoke was rolling, and at the same moment he observed the figure of a man descending the ravine, and coming towards him. What was to be done. To retreat without being discovered was impossible, and if he concealed himself the man would see his horse, and his vicinity would threby be betrayed.

Scarcely drawing his breath, Lenox concealed himself behind a tree and awaited in stern silence the approach of the Stranger, and as he came opposite the spot, Edgar sprang like a panther upon him. Taken unawares the man was hurried to the ground, and the cold steel of a spring dirk which Edgar drew pressed hard upon his neck.

'A noise above a breath and thou diest,' muttered Edgar sternly, as he drew a small strong cord from his pocket, and securely bound the hands of the ruffian. His handkerchief was next put in requisition, and a few seconds beheld the prostrate vilain securely bound and gagged. Leaving him lying in the path, Lenox rapidly ascended the ravine towards the cabin.

CHAPTER. II.

THE ROBBER AND HIS VICTIM.

While these things were transpiring below a scene of deeper interest was taking place in the cabin. Seated before a large fire which blazed brightly in the stick chimney, was Ada Lincoln, her long hair disheveled by the rapid ride of the night before, and her countenance the very picture of agony and despair. Pacing to and fro over the floor was Cole, his features working themselves into a fit of passion, and his dark eye glancing with a look of triumph on the figure of the crouching girl. At length he suddenly paused in his walk, and drawing a watch from his pocket he glanced at the crystal, and hastily exclaimed:

'Come, come girl, you have but ten minutes left in which to give an answer, and I'd like to know your decision.'

Slowly Ada turned around, and fixing her eyes without quivering on the gloating face of the libertine, while her glance seemed unearthly as she replied,

'Are you in a hurry, Mr. Cole.'

'Yes, I am,' answered he.

'I do not wonder at it, for your coward conscience gives your craven heart little rest, & each moment you fear something may happen to mar your infernal plot.—I see you turn pale, and well you may, as you just now gazed in that fire. I saw the form of your former partner, Edgar Lenox, who now stands disgraced in the eyes of the world by your base actions, come like a flash of lightning across your path, and strike you dead to the earth. Villain, your vile plan will yet be overthrown, or else there is no justice in heaven or earth,' and with her features beaming with a newly inspired hope, Ada sprung lightly to her feet and proudly confronted her oppressor.

'No doubt the thoughts of my fair prisoner often wander to the smooth countenance and beardless chin of my partner, but thanks to my care and forethought, he is safely damned in the eyes of community, and his would-be bride securely in my possession. While he is working for the State in the big stone house in Alton, I will be reveling in all the charms of his lovely Ada, who though she pants a little, is beyond the hope of salvation, now forever mine.'

'Monster,' exclaimed Miss Lincoln, with a shudder at the cool assurance of the ruffian, 'your purpose and your will may be good enough, but you lack the power to put them in successful operation.'

'Ha, ha,' laughed Cole, 'you appear to speak knowingly, but still all your knowledge is the perfection of ignorance. Would you understand your situation—it is this: You are at present thirty miles from any human habitation, and surrounded by a trackless wild. No person but members of my band, all of my band, all of whom are doubly devoted to my interests, know of this lone wilderness, and none of them will interfere with my plans. Girl, I can here force you to submit to my will, be it as it may, despite your struggles and your screams. You are in my power beyond all hope of escape or rescue.'

'No, scoundrel, no, I am not alone with you,' replied Ada in a solemn voice as she raised her eyes upward, 'for there is an Eternal being who seeth and knoweth all things, who at this moment beholds us as we stand within the room of this isolated cabin, and who stretched forth his wand and summoned you to stand before his judgment bar for trial within this hour. I feel, I know your coils are not hopelessly closed around me.'

'Then I will instantly show you how surely they are, and prove to you my words are true,' and Cole took a step towards the maiden.

'May God curse you if you pollute me with a touch,' exclaimed Ada in a calm voice, as she folded her arms across her breast.

'Let him curse,' madly retorted Cole, as with trembling eagerness he sprang upon his victim, and caught her in his arms, bearing her to a rude couch in a corner of the room.

But at this very moment the cabin door was shattered in pieces by a powerful blow, and turning round the libertine robber stood face to face with Edgar Lenox. Had one of his many victims from the dead confronted him at that instant, Cole could not have been more astonished and have exhibited a greater degree of terror. His countenance became ashy pale, and his lips assumed the hue of death, as he staggered back and gazed with protruding eye-ball upon his foe. Edgar gave him no time to recover his scattered senses, but springing upon him, burried his dirk to its hilt in his bosom, and the scoundrel fell heavily on the floor. Here he partially poised upon his elbow, and pointing to a small square box lying beneath the couch, murmured—

'That box, Lenox, contains proof of your innocence—'twas a judgement of God upon me,' and then falling back, struggled for an instant, and then lay a corpse upon the floor.

In the meantime Ada had sprung to her feet, and threw herself weeping with joy, upon the bosom of Edgar, who raising her in his strong arms, bore her from the cabin. A moment or two sufficed to reach the spot where the bound robber had been left, but he was gone, and with a beating heart, Lenox hurried to the spot where he had left his horse. To his joy the noble animal was still hitched to the bush, and loosening him, he threw the fair girl upon his back, sprang up before her, and giving the horse a free rein, rode up the bank, and guided by the trail of the mauranders in the snow, followad at a rapid gallop the tracks into the prairie.

An hour passed by, and the two fugitives were some ten miles from the edge of the timber, when Edgar looking back saw a body of horsemen in swift pursuit. The bandits had discovered his flight, and were following with loud curses, the daring youth who had slain their chief. For another hour the race went on, but his steed with his double load, was not a match for the horses of the robbers, and Edgar beheld the dastance gradually lessening and became aware that ere another hour would be overtaken and Ada recaptured. His plan was immediately put into successful execution. He halted his steed, leaped from the saddle, placed Ada in it, and giving her the rein, said.

'Ada, both of us cannot escape, but that is no reason both should be captured. You alone can escape on that gallant steed. Fly home and tell your father for me, though Edgar Lenox did not return he rescued his daughter from shame and dishonor. See, those villains are nearing us fast—farewell forever!'

Ada Lincoln cast one despairing glance upon the face of Edgar, and swept the broad plain with her eagle vision. Suddenly her eye brightening, her face lit up with a radiant glare, and pointing far ahead of them exclaimed—

'God of heaven be thanked. yonder comes the bold band of the reserve. Edgar, Good-by for the present, for I know we shall meet again,' and giving the champion horse the reins, she bounded like an arrow from the spot.

Oh, how much like the goddess Mercy did that fair being seem as with her hair streamnig in the wind, her light form erect upon the saddle and her head bent partially forward. She took the reins in her left hand, and with the right beckoned on the distant band to renewed speed.

And foremost of that band who came sweeping like a tornado over the plain, rode Wilson Lincoln, the only brother of Ada. His quick eye had caught sight of his sister at the same moment she had saw him, and he also beheld Lenox dismount, and seen Ada come galloping all alone. His noble heart comprehended it all at once, and rising in his stirrups, he shouted in a voice of thunder—

'On, boys, on; yon noble fellow shall never die for that gallant act.'

'On, on,' burst from a hundred lips, and as many stalwart hands shook their glittering rifles above their heads. 'On to the rescue, or to avenge'—and with the breath bursting from the nostrils of each bounding steed, these iron men dashed forward.

The sun which was high in the heavens shone down with a beautiful lustre upon that wide valley of untrodden snow, which lay silent and heavy upon the earth. And even the iron shod hoofs of those running steeds made no sound; noiselessly one sunk footlock deep in the yielding snow.

Nearer and nearer they came that lone female rider and that body of avengers, until at last on the top of a knoll, which commanded an extensive view of the valley, they met and for an instant paused.

'Ada, are you injured,' was the first question asked by Wilson Lincoln, as he stopped his smoking steed beside the panting horse of his sister.

'But see they have captured my brave preserver who saved me from dishonor,' and the excited maiden pointed to the distant band of outlaws who had just encircled the form of Edgar Lenox. 'If you are men tarry not here, but hasten to his rescue.'

'Away,' rang loudly from many a lip, and once more they sped on, while in front like a person leading to victory, rode the sylph-like form of Ada Lincoln, side by side with her brother.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOOM OF EDGAR LENOX.

When Ada Lincoln galloped from his side leaving Edgar standing alone upon the prairie, the young man folded his arms and passed to and fro in the snow, occasionally casting a glance at the band of outlaws some fifty in number, who were riding rapidly towards him. Lenox expected no mercy, for he knew too well into whose hands he was falling, and he made up his mind to put a bold face upon the matter, and die game. The robbers were not long in reaching the spot, and the foremost of their number, the man who had been gagged by Lenox, reined in his smoking steed beside him.

'Well, my fine covy, you've played the devil with your ducks, that's certain,' he shouted, as he cocked his rifle and leveled it at the breast of Edgar. 'Have you said your prayers?'

'Fire, I am ready to die, and glad to escape further torment by a speedy death. Aim at my heart,' and Lenox bared his bosom.

'No, such a death would be too easy.—I'll take you back to camp and apply a little torture to your athletic limbs. You and the body of our chief shall burn together. What ho! a couple of you bind this man to Winfred's saddle and see that he does not escape.'

Two of the men dismounted to obey the order, when his eye caught sight of the advancing body of horsemen, led on by Wilson Lincoln.

'Hell and furies!' he angrily exclaimed, after a moment's gaze, 'can it be possible they followed our trail so soon. Leave that dog to me, and remount your horses,' he shouted to the two men who had approached and laid rough hands upon Lenox. 'We've no time for fooling now.

The men sprang again upon their horses and once more the villain leveled his gun at the form of Edgar, while his eyes blazed with ill concreated rage, as he pulled the vengeful trigger. Lenox sprang hastily on one side as the rifle exploded, and escaped the ranger sufficiently to save his heart, but the bullet passed through the right shoulder, and he fell heavily to the earth, the gushing blood stained the snow to a crimson hue.

'Away there must be riding for life now, yonder band is too much for us,' and setting the example, the cold blooded rascal spurred back for the woods, closely followed by his guilty comrades.

But eyes that flashed like fury saw that distard act, and beheld the brave Lenox fall to the ground, apparently a lifeless corpse, and a wild shriek of agony, mingled with a shout of revenge, fell faintly upon the out-law's ears and warned them that all hope of mercy was past.—A few moments brought the party of Lincoln to the spot where the bleeding Edgar lay, and while Ada halted her horse, and dismounted beside the bleeding youth the enraged settlers passed swifily forward in pursuit of the foes.

In the course of an hour the parties reached the timber, when the band of outlaws entered the shelter of the barrens, their enraged enemies were not three hundred yards behind them. Conscious that to fight such unequal numbers was but to die, the robbers immediately seperated, each one taking care of himself, and the open wood presented a scene of intense excitement and uproar, as the pursuing party also divided in the chase of individual outlaws, and the sharp crack of rifles broken upon the quiet stillness around.—Ere pursuit was over, one half the robber band were slain, and the rest utterly scattered, so much so that they never met together again.

In the heat of the pursuit the cabin in which Lenox had killed Cole, was discovered, and Wilson Lincoln had dismounted from his horse and entered it. The body of the chief still lay stark and still where he had fallen, and the box under the couch had attracted the attention of Lincoln.—He drew it forth and broke it open. A bundle of papers fell from it, which upon examination, proved to be a full confession of Cole's in which he exonorated his partner from guilt in the forgery, and completely cleared the accused Lenox from any participation in the crime for which he had been tried.

Carefully putting the paper in a safe place upon his person, Wilson left the Cabin, remounted his steed and rejoined his comrades assembled, two of whom had constructed a rude litter of bushes, designed to convey the wounded Edgar to the settlements; and the party returned where Ada still lent over the form of the exhausted youth. She had bound up the wound and staunched the flowing of blood. He was placed upon the roughly made litter, which was carried between two horsemen, and in this way the party reached the house of Mr. Lincoln just as the sun went down in the west.

The old man had been in a state of uncertainty bordering on despair, the entire day, and completely exhausted himself by impatiently pacing the floor of the sitting room. He had sent word to Tremont where the court was in session, of the abduction of his child and aske postponement of the trial of Edgar Lenox for one week, until he could be able to discover her whereabouts. Under these circumstances the request was instantly granted, but word sent him in reply, that his bail was probably forfeited to the State as the criminal had not made his appearance to undergo trial.

This, added to the absence of his daughter, had almost crazed the old farmer, who heaped imprecations alike on the head of Lenox and the ruffian who had carried off his Ada, and as the day rolled by, and night came on apace, he became completely exhausted, and throw himself upon the bed, where he soon fell into a quiet sleep.

During his slumbers the party arrived at the house, and Edgar was conveyed into it and laid upon a bed, while Wilson instantly set off for a surgeon to dress his wounds, and Ada, with a light step and beating heart tripped noiselessly into the room where her parent lay asleep.

In the midst of a fearful dream, in which the old farmer thought he beheld his child struggling in the arms of a powerful villain, he felt a warm hand laid softly on his forehead, and he awoke and beheld the smiling face of his daughter bent over him, and he felt a warm kiss from her lips as she pressed them upon his aged cheek With a murmur of thankfullness trembling upon his tongue the old man arose from the bed and folded his restored child to his bosom, while tears dripped from his eyes flashing upon her flushing face. And the first warm greeting over, he returned to the sitting room and bade her relate to him her adventures, which she did, dwelling with minute distinctness upon the noble devotedness of her preserver, and his wounds received at the hands of her capturers, but making no allusions to his name. When she had finished her story her father exclaimed—

'And who is that gallant youth to whom we are all indebted?'

'I almost fear to mention his name,' replied Ada irresolutely.

'Nay, nay, speak it out, though it be my direst enemy I could freely forgive him for this noble act,' continued Lincoln.

'Father, his name is Edgar Lenox.'

The old farmer started and turned slightly pale, then a look of joy stole over his countenance as he fervently exclaimed—

'Now I see t rough it all. This morning while I was cursing him for his non-appearance at Court, he was perilling his life to rescue my child. Lead me to his room Ada that I may thank him in person for his service.

With a countenance radiant with happiness, the fair girl skipped in front of her father, and both soon entered the room where Lenox was confined by his wound. The young man turned his pale face, haggard with suffering towards them as they came in and tottering to his bedside, Lincoln poured forth his thanks to Edgar in tones of earnestness which convinced the young man that every word was sincere. This done he left the room, after whispering in the ear of Lenox, that he had no doubt but that he would soon get well with Ada for a nurse. The predictions of the farmer were fully verified.—A few weeks sufficed to restore Edgar to health and in the meanwhile the papers found by Wilson fully established his innocence of the forgery, and the whole ended in a grand merry making at Mr Lincoln's during which the minister was called on to officiate, and Ada Lincoln became Ada Lenox with the full consent of all concerned and when we passed that way in 1833, old farmar Lincoln was dancing a fine boy upon his knee, at the same time patting his rosy cheek and calling him his saucy little grandson.

From the Cincinnati Commercial.

A Story for Young Folks.

BY ALICE CAREY.

Cousin Sally had come to see me, and we were going to the woods to find silver-white hickory nuts, and yellow walnuts and wild grapes, and to swing, for we knew of a nice swing in the woods; but we were selfish, and did not want my little brother and sister Dille and Albert to go with us.

Many times and ways we tried to get away from them, but they suspected our motives, and kept with us all the time. Now, we said we were going up to play in the garret, and asked Dillie to find the doll we had made out of rags, with black marks of coal for its eyes, and without arms or legs, but Dillie said she did't know where it was, and could not find it unless I could help her.

Then we said we knew where there were ripe pears, and asked Albert and Dillie if they did'nt want some—but they said no, not unless we would go with them to the tree. Albert was two years older than I, ten perpaps at the time I write of, and Dillie was nearly seven, as meek and sweet a child as ever lived. She was never cross, and never struck me in her life, but whatever I wanted her to do she almost always did, and in pleasing me seemed to please herself the best. The remembrance of all this goodness makes my own selfish conduct look so much the worse.

I can see her now just as she used to look, with a pale face and large black eyes that always seemed mournful, and brown thin hair hanging loose upon her neck, for it was neither braided nor curled.

I remember the dress she wore that very day—a pale blue calico that was almost outgrown, and the pink gingham bonnet that she held in her hand as she looked at us enquiringly, but said nothing.

Albert was a sturdy, independent boy, good natured enough generally, but with a temper that could be aroused.

He would like very much to go to the woods with us, for cousin Sally was always full of fun, and he delighted to be with her, but he no sooner suspected we didn't wish him to go,' than he called Dillie aside, and said to her, "you and I will go and swing in the barn, and not stay with folks that don't want us."—So Dillie put her little sunburned hand in his, and looking sorrowfully towards us, they went together to the barn.

We felt quite ashamed when they were gone, and we were half inclined to follow them and play together, and be friends again, but Albert did not once look back or seem to care where we went, so we got our bonnets that we had hidden under some burdock leaves, and then we set off for the woods laughing and talking as though we were very happy. But we were not happy at all—indeed, I think we were both of us ashamed and sorry for what we had done.

It was in the fall, and already the yellow leaves were dropping from the walnut trees; the water was all dried away from the runs, and there was only the hard baked clay, and the loose stones where the silver water had been. The branches were almost bare and the maples had here & there a limb of scarlet or orange. Along the edge of the woods where the pretty mosses had been so bright all the summer, there were now dry leaves drifting and surging in the wind. We stopped to listen, for at least to me, it had never made so dirge-like a sound.

As we waded through the dead leaves and over the mounds which you have all noticed if you have been much in the woods, Sally said that Indians were buried beneath them; and so we came to talk of other dead people beside Indians, and instead of making merry we became sorrowful enough. Often while we walked to and fro over the mounds, I looked towards the barn—for it was in full view—saw the door open, and the cattle standing about it, and knew that Albert and Dillie were there.

After a while we went deeper into the woods and gathered grapes and walnuts, and swung till we were tired, but all the time we kept thinking the woods would not be so lonesome if we were all together; so, long before we had proposed to do so, we set out for home, intending to go straight to the barn and make amends for our bad conduct in the morning. We were nearly there, when, all at once, we heard a cry, as if some accident had chanced. I tried to run but was so much frightened that I could not get along at all. "O dear," said Sally, "O dear;" and looking up, I saw Albert carrying Dillie towards the house, her head falling backward and her feet dragging, for Albert was so much frightened that he could not carry her, and when he saw us, he let her fall on the ground, and began to wring his hand and cry.

Poor little Dillie, she had been walking on a beam fifteen feet from the floor, and suddenly growing dizzy, had fallen, her head was bleeding and her face was white as death. What I suffered then I cannot tell. If we had not gone to the woods, or if we had taken her with us, it would not have been. Oh, how bitterterly these reproaches fell upon me.

Dillie was carried home and laid upon the bed, and Doctor Bigstaff, our physician, sent for, for we could not tell how badly she was hurt, nor whether she would even live till the doctor would get there. She was alive we knew, and that was all, for she lay quite still and insensible.

Poor Albert, when he had helped to carry her home, and there was nothing more for him to do, went out of the house and began to chop wood, not because he had no feeling, but because he could not endure to see her suffering without the power of doing her any good.

When Doctor Bigstaff came he enquired how the accident had chanced, and then I was so much afraid that he would learn my guilt, though no one knew it but myself, that I went out of the house, and with a stick, digged in the ground for a long time, having no object, and scarce knowing what I was doing.

I was told, when at last I dared to ask, that the Dr. said Dillie was very badly hurt, but there was a possibility of her getting well.

All the time I prayed to myself that she might recover, thinking of this and that, that I would do for her pleasure, when she was well.

So Sally's visit turned out to be a very sad on—we made no more effort to enjoy ourselves. How could we, and poor Dillie lying so sick.

At supper time, I said I did not want any, and would watch with her. When they were all gone, I called her softly, folding her hands close in mine, and kissing her over and over. As I did so she opened her eyes and smiled, and putting her arms around my neck, held me close to her for a moment,—then the hands grew damp and fell away; great drops of sweat stood on her forehead; her lips grew white and trembled. I ran to the stairs and called,

Old Mrs. Henry, who had been sent for, went close to the bed, and saying, softly, don't cry so, laid her fingers on the sweet eyes that had looked their last on me so lovingly. Then she reached her other hand and drew down her feet, and we all knew that she was dead.

The grass has grown over the grave of little Dillie long long, years. Many a time I have brought violets to plant about it from the very woods where Sally and I went to play, and never without shedding the bitterest tears.

All my life that memory has been like a dark shadow following me round. O, it is a terrible thing to have done wrong to the dead. No living voice can reproach us like their mute lips; no hands smite us like those that are folded on the hushed bosom.

If you who read this story would avoid such memories, be kind to one another. It is not long that we are children together: it is not long that we live at all, and if we would make life a blessing instead of a curse, we must do as we would be done by.

This is the great rule, the rule that is over and above all other rules of life, and if it were remembered and practised, the world would be like Heaven.

ANECDOTE OF CHARLES LAMB.—The following is an original "Lamb," as was, we believe, picked up by Fields, the poet. Charles was once traveling in the vicinity of one of the English watering places, in company with several ladies; one of them, who was more remarkable for prudery than good taste, took occasion to call forth the polished satire of the wit, after this fashion:

"Dear me, Mr, Lamb, that's very shocking?"

'W—wh—what, Madam?'

'Why, there! down on the beach; those boys—bathing.'

Charles looked, and saw some half dozen little urchins gamboling in nudity and unconcealed delight along the sparkling sands, and thus rebuked his companion;

'B—b—boys? these are g—g—girls, Madam, are they not?'

'Why, Mr. Lamb! no—I assure you they are boys!'

'Are—are they? Ah! well, ex—c—cuse me, Madam; at this distance, I d—d—don't know the difference!'

A GENERAL INVITATION.—The Boston Post tells a story of a down east militia captain who, on receiving a note from a lady requesting 'the pleasure of his company,' understood it as a compliment to those under his command, and marched the whole of them to the lady's house.

"The Editor."

The Richmond Mail throws off the following capital illustration:

They have a steamboat in the western waters by the name of "The Editor."—This is the best name ever given to a steamboat. We are surprised it has never been thought of before. The editor is a working engine whose fires are going both day and night. Now he sails against the tide, and now with it going along at a rapid rate, until suddenly he comes up, all standing, against some hidden snag, which nearly shivers his timbers to pieces. Whenever he moves, he puts the waters in agitation for a time, and leaves a wake of troubled waves behind him, which lasts about five minutes.—He serves everybody but himself, carries freight and passengers in any quantity, and goes *puff—puffing* down the stream of life. Often his powers are overtasked, but fortunately kills no one but himself, and who cares for an editor!