


WHAT A LITTLE SEED DID.

NCE upon a time there was a German countess who was wealthy and proud, and, we are sorry to add, an infidel. That is, she did not believe in a God, or the resurrection of the body, or the blessed place of peace and joy hereafter. So when she died she left these directions: that her grave should be covered with a solid granite slab, and around it should be placed solid blocks of stone, and the whole should be fastened together by strong iron clamps. On the stone these words were to be cut: "This burial place, purchased to all eternity, must never be opened."

Here, you see, she defied the Almighty, and showed disbelief in all that He has revealed concerning the resurrection of the body and eternal life. But through the almighty power of God, just see what a tiny seed, or, rather, a little acorn, was permitted to do.

It was lodged between the heavy covering to the grave, sprouted there, and sent forth a shoot that crowded its way to the surface between two of the slabs and grew there, slowly but surely, until it became thicker and stronger, when this little weak plant, watched over by nature—in other words, the Creator of all things—burst the clamps asunder and lifted the immense blocks of stone.

As it grew and grew the whole structure ere long became a confused mass of rocks, among which, it is said, "In verdure and beauty grew the great oak that had caused the destruction," leaving neither name nor record to the countess who had purchased her grave for all eternity.

She had exalted herself only to be abased, while a little acorn became a mighty tree, to spread its branches in splendor above her mortal remains. There too, no doubt, birds collected to lift up their voices in praise to their Creator. For we love to think of the birds as doing so night and morning, when they sing so loudly and joyously.

WHAT IS SHE DOING ?

That is the brief question asked of a young girl who is, as we commonly phrase it, "Out of school." It is taken for granted she is doing something, for it is not to be supposed that, having spent years in study, she becomes an idler so soon as her school days are over. The answer, no doubt, must be a general one. She is taking up new studies, beginning a course of reading, seeking a school, or starting out as a teacher, opening an office as stenographer and type-writer, learning to make bread, or even studying medicine. Any one of these is good. A single one of them, perhaps, is all that a few persons need care for. But for the average girl it is safe to advise that she should, if she has not done so already, give careful attention to household duties, and thus learn to cook, bake, sew, mend—in

short, "keep house." And then along with this she should seek such cultivation of her mind as her training in school and her present opportunities make possible.

In California, during the first mad rush for gold, it chanced that one of a band of miners died rather suddenly, and having been much respected by his companions, they resolved to give him what they called "a square funeral," instead of burying him in their usual rough manner.

Accordingly they sought the services of a digger, who, before he left his native state, had been held in reputation as a local preacher; then, in the fashion of the Far West, the comrades of the dead man knelt round the grave, while a long religious service was held.

The men conducted themselves with perfect propriety till one of them, growing rather weary of the prolonged service, began to finger the earth, digger fashion, about the grave. Suddenly his eyes lighted up. He whispered to his nearest companion; then looks were exchanged, whispering increased, until it became loud enough to attract the attention of their parson. "What is it, boys?" he said, as he looked round upon his restless congregation. Then, as his eyes suddenly lighted upon sparkling scales of gold, he rose to his feet. "It is gold, boys!" he cried, "and of the richest kind! Lift the body; we must bury him elsewhere." No sooner said than done. The body was removed, and the eager miners began to prospect the new diggings. They proved to be so valuable that the incident gave its name to the neighborhood, and "Dead Man's Gulch" was noted as one of the richest localities in California.

THE great Indian Rajah Montja, it is said, had but one son, to whose education he gave much time and thought, in order that the boy might be fitted for his high place. Among his devices for the wise training of his son was the placing near him an old man whose duty was to say to the prince, whenever he was enjoying any pleasure keenly, "The day hath but twelve hours."

When the lad, on the other hand, was sick or in trouble, he changed the warning to, "The night is but twelve hours long."

The poor lad struggling through college in a crowd of wealthy classmates, fancies the mortifications and humiliations which he endures will last as long as life itself. He forgets how swiftly in this country social condition changes. In twenty years not a man in his class probably will stand where he does to-day. Each man will have found his place for himself. There are among our readers, too, many plain, unattractive girls, who find themselves neglected while their prettier companions are admired and courted. Their suffering is not a thing to smile at; it is real and sharp. They are at the age to which beauty and grace are fitting, and they have neither wisdom nor experience to bear disappointment coolly. But they should re-