

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Devoted to Social, Political, Literary, Musical and Dramatic Gossip.

VOL. II., No. 48.

VICTORIA, B. C., SEPTEMBER 9, 1893.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM

TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

TIMES had all gone to eternal smash. There was no possibility of any longer delaying the end. Gray knew that before the next day noon his business would be in the hands of the sheriff. He sat in silence. It was hard. Work and ability had failed and honesty had availed nothing. He grimly considered future possibilities. He could get a job in some other fellow's office, he supposed, and he thought that he might, perhaps, get on his feet again. The latter possibility was no inspiration, for he was tired—deathly tired of it all. He didn't feel like fighting any more. Then he thought of Molly. It was unfortunate for her that she had married him. This made him gloomier. He had ruined two lives instead of one. Poor little girl. How would she feel as the wife of a clerk?

The picture aroused him to a new mental effort. He had stopped trying to break the weight of his own blow, but could he not do something to make it easier for Molly? The whirl of figures began in his head again, but he promptly stopped it. Arithmetic could not make failure spell success. He thought for an instant of dishonesty—other men saved money from their failures. But he quickly kicked that idea out. No, there was nothing he could do to make it easier for Molly. Hold on!—there was one thing. His face grew a shade paler. But the thought staid and grew and grew. He would be better off, for it would give him rest—the

long, long rest that seemed to his weary brain the only thing in the world worth having. She would be better off, because she would be free. She was lashed to a wreck now. It would be wicked to make her sink with it. Of course, she would feel sorry for a while, but grief is not eternal. She could go back to her father, and need not, after all, know the bitterness of poverty. It was lucky that they had no children.

Like a thief he stole through the house. Molly was asleep. He softly kissed her. Then he passed into his own room. He pulled out the bottom drawer of the dresser. An odor of camphor came from it; it was packed with some of his winter things. He took them out one by one. What he was looking for was at the bottom. Under an old dress coat he came to a soft, pink knit affair. Some of his wife's fancy work, he supposed. The needles were sticking in it. It was so thin that the shape of the revolver lying underneath showed plainly. He lifted the fancywork with a trembling hand. He was about to throw it aside when he saw what it was. His face flushed and paled and tears came to his eyes. Finally he turned slowly and went back to Molly. He did not take the revolver. He touched her on the shoulder and held up—a baby's shirt, partly made.

"Oh, Jack," she cried, instantly awake when she saw what he had. "And I had hidden it so carefully."

* * * * *
Molly is now the wife of a clerk, and he is not too discouraged to try to get on his feet again.

Many a mother in Victoria

mourns the loss of her child. The Grim Reaper has been busy within the last few weeks, and the light has gone out of the once happy home. The other morning I observed a woman hanging out on the line a little dress and a little pair of stockings. After she had finished her work she stood back some distance and with tears in her eyes contemplated the clothing which her precious darling used to wear. She carefully folded and put them away, but years hence she will steel a look at them and drop a tear in memory of the sweet departed little babe.

Why do people talk so much of the force of eloquence? It is the force of the unexpressed things that moves the tides of the world. The sovereign weapon and remedy is this of occasional humans. Wielded by a woman, its force is tremendous, unanswerable. Witnessing its all-powerfulness, one finds himself marvelling that more people should not practice handling this mightiest of moral arms. Recently I watched it in the house of a friend. My friend is a woman. She is a gentle, gracious, spirituelle, sympathetic angel, married to a big, burly, brutal man. They have not been married nearly a year. He is jealous and fretful and abusive, frequently so, although he claims to love this young wife of his. She meets it all with the tremendous weapon of silence.

Calm-eyed and outwardly meek, though pale, she seems always to triumph over him. There is, of course, the inner strain, the tense nerves, the heart beating madly, the dryness of the throat, the

K O D A