

DAN'S WIFE.

BY KATE JANNATT WOODS.

Up in early morning light,
Sweeping, dusting, "setting right,"
Oiling all the household springs,
Sewing buttons, tying strings,
Telling Bridget what to do,
Mending rips in Johnny's shoe,
Running up and down the stair,
Tying baby in his chair,
Cutting meat and spreading bread,
Dishing out so much per head,
Eating as she can by chance,
Giving husband kindly glance,
Toiling, working, busy life,
"Smart woman,"
Dan's wife."

Dan comes home at fall of night,
Home so cheerful, neat and bright,
Children meet him at the door,
Pull him in and look him o'er,
Wife asks "how the work has gone?"
"Busy times with us at home!"
Supper done—Dan reads at ease,
Children must be put to bed—
All the little prayers are said;
Little shoes are placed in rows,
Bed-clothes tucked o'er little toes,
Busy, noisy, wearing life,
Tired woman,
Dan's wife.

Dan reads on, and falls asleep,
See the woman softly creep;
Baby rests at last, poor dear,
Not a word her heart to cheer;
Mending basket full to top,
Stockings, shirts and little frock—
Tired eyes and weary brain,
Side with darling ugly pain—
"Never mind, 'twill pass away!"
She must work, but never play;
Closed piano, unused books,
Done the walks to cozy nooks,
Brightness faded out of life,
Saddened woman,
Dan's wife.

Up-stairs, tossing to and fro,
Feet hold the woman low;
Children wander, free to play
When and where they will to-day;
Bridget loiter—dinner's cold,
Dan looks anxious, cross and old;
Household screws are out of place,
Lacking one dear, patient face;
Steady hands—so weak, but true—
Hands that knew just what to do,
Never knowing rest or play,
Folded now—and laid away;
Work of six in one short life,
Shattered woman,
Dan's wife.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

BY S. J. CARLETON.

Why did I renounce my profession? I will tell you, but do not think I take a pleasure in telling the story; it is anything, everything but that. Like Carden's, I cannot bear interruption; therefore do not say a word after I commence.

To my everlasting regret, I once performed that most terrible of all midnight operations—the raising of a body. I was not afraid. I never was afraid of the dead. I can take hold of a dead man's hand as calmly as I can take yours. If there was not a higher and holier principle involved, I could unseat a human body as calmly as I can eat my supper. But there is something that whispers to the inward consciousness, and says, "Let the dead rest." I have heard it ever since, and cannot turn therefrom.

I waited several days for a dark, rainy night, but no dark, rainy night came. The sun set without a cloud. The moon came up serene and beautiful, and shone down upon the new-made grave. The girl had slept longer than Lazarus; for she had been shrouded and earthed a week. I knew well where she lay; I saw them when they placed her there, and flung the clods upon her; and afterwards I saw them go there at mild eventide to weep. The mound had been raised with great care. Green turf had been cut, and laid over it with mechanical nicety. Love could do no more than this; for the weepers were poor. Affection would have reared a column of marble, but poverty sternly forbade it. The name of the sleeper was written only in tears, and her memory embalmed only in loving hearts.

I was thirsting for knowledge. My sharp scalpels had never tasted human gore; I had never imbrued my fingers in human mortality. I longed to look into the organs of mind, to trace the aqueducts of the heart wherein courses the subtle principal of animal life, and examine the infinitude of nervous expansion and ramification. I had waited long for an opportunity, and struggled with my better nature. An "opportunity" was now offered.

It had been whispered to me that she was wasting away and dying. The thought flashed through my mind with the rapidity of lightning—the thought which some will call fiendish—to wrest her from the grave when she was given over to the worms. The suggestion seemed too cool and deliberate, and I strove to banish it; but in vain. I found myself almost involuntarily maturing and carrying out the idea. At first there was something terrible in it. It was too much like waiting for Death and encouraging him to a deed which he was in no haste to accomplish. At length the idea became familiar. I inquired daily of the villagers if she was dead. The struggle was over at length. The spirit went back to its origin, and the earth to its kindred clods.

The slow, solemn pealing of the bells startled me. I seemed to have some agency in the death

of the girl. There was something reproachful in the woe-begone appearance of the humble mourners as they passed me with their stricken heads bent low. I followed the funeral cortege. I saw the body lowered to what they destined to be its final resting place.

The prayers said for the poor are brief; and those were. The mourners tottered away from the sound of the falling earth, more crushed in appearance than before. I was ready to forego my purpose, for those sobs and those tears were directed at me.

An hour over "Wistar" and "Bell" restored me to myself and my purpose. But time did not favor me. I wanted, as I have said, a dark night; for the churchyard was in the heart of the village, and I could not perform the deed without a mantle of darkness around me.

Several times it clouded up in the morning, and I flattered myself that a favorable night would set in. But no; the clouds lifted, the fine, misty rain ceased to distil, and the sun went down leaving a clear sky and starry nights; and the benign moon still looked down upon the new-made grave. For a week the shrouded girl waited for the worm.

The seventh night was propitious. Dark clouds coursed across the heavens, and a drizzling rain came down. With the necessary implements for exhuming the body, I awaited the hour of midnight in my office. Various emotions filled my bosom, as I paced impatiently up and down and across. Melancholy sounds crept through the keyhole. Chilly gusts of wind sighed fitfully through the window-casements and made spiteful dashes at my lamp. The fire burned with a sort of meek solemnity, and made uncouth shadows upon the wall, which danced about like living things.

I tried to sleep in an armchair until the hour arrived; but I heard the clock tell the hours, and, though I closed my eyes, the shadows on the wall flitted before me, while my ears were open to the dirges the wind seemed singing for the departing minutes.

I was conscious of mysterious influences hitherto unfelt, unknown and unfeared.

Reason came to my aid. I thought of the course I had marked out for myself, the great arcana of science which it was mine to explore; and strove to brush away the illusion I had conjured into life as I would brush away cobwebs.

The clock struck twelve at last, and I made preparations to go forth. First I drew on a large overcoat (borrowed for the occasion), which covered me from head to foot. Through the handle of the spade I passed a handkerchief, which was made fast about my neck. Over this I buttoned the capacious coat, which effectually concealed it from view. Then taking a chisel and mallet in my hand, and a large coffee-sack under my arm, I opened the door and stepped out into the dark midnight. The crusty breath of the dreary storm met me with a mysterious chillness, as if to warn me back. Slouching my hat over my eyes and grasping my implements tighter, I directed my steps to the graveyard. I crossed a long bridge, keeping assiduously in the middle, instead of on the walks at the sides, for fear the wind in a sudden fit of anger might lift me up and dash me down into the tumbling waters beneath.

A thousand whimsical and exaggerated ideas and fears rushed into my brain at once, to deter me from the contemplated deed; but I was nerved up to it. My thirst for knowledge had become a mania, an impulse capable of bearing down anything in its way.

My own footfall upon the bridge had an indescribably hollow, sepulchral sound—something like the first clods falling upon a coffin in midwinter, when the ground is frozen. I quickened my pace, and felt relieved when I could no longer hear the sullen roar of the waters and the solemn echoes. No lights were gleaming in the streets, and none from the windows, save where friends kept untiring vigils by the sick. The whole village, as I caught dim and shadowy outlines thereof, took on the air and aspect of some ancient burial-place. I looked about me for the ghouls and gnomes that flit mournfully about uncanny places.

As I neared the last home of mortality, I felt a sickly coldness at my heart, as though an icy hand had been laid upon it, checking its free and healthful motion. I passed the old church where prayers had been said over the girl before they laid her away to sleep. In fancy I heard the subdued tone of the man of God, and saw the bereaved ones pressing close to the coffin as they came out.

Without pausing I clambered over the gate which opens only at the approach of death. When would it make space for me to enter? The Maker of the world only could answer, and He was silent; for why should He commune with the earthly born?

I stood among the graves—I who hoped one day for a peaceful grave. How dismal that night was! I groped along cautiously, stumbling over the graves.

Strange sensations are experienced in walking among the graves at midnight—an undefinable creeping of the flesh, which it is utterly out of my power to describe. Few have the coolness and courage equal to the nameless terrors of such a situation.

I fell upon a mound, and, by a rapid operation of the mind, measured it, and knew it to be precisely my own extended length. There was something revolting in the consciousness that my length corresponded with that of the grave. I sprang from the wet ground as though a deadly serpent had fastened his fangs upon me.

I stood beside her grave, at last. I knew it by the new turf that had been laid upon it.

It was the year's Autumn. The earth was slightly stiffened with frost which the misty rain had not yet thawed. This circumstance was against me, for the cut and approximated edges of the turf were frosted together, and could not be replaced so as to assume their present appearance, and would not until cold nights had again exerted their influence.

I hesitated; but it was for a moment only. Throwing off—or, more properly, striving to—the superstitious fears that assailed me, as I threw off my overcoat, I endeavored to imagine myself as calm as the marble monuments about me, or as those who slept beneath them.

Upon my knees, and bending over the grave until my face nearly touched the earth, I examined it as well as the intense darkness would permit. A flat stone, vertically placed, marked the head. With my hands I carefully removed the turf about one-third the length of the grave. Fortunately, the sods clung together so tenaciously that the piece was not broken, but retained its peculiar and original form.

Grasping the spade with a kind of desperation, I forced it into the ground with my foot. How loud the harsh, grating noise sounded! How it jarred upon my nerves! I threw out spadeful after spadeful, until out of breath. Reeking with perspiration, I paused to rest. As I stood there a large mastiff, belonging to one of the nearest dwellings, came out, and, putting his forepaws upon the fence, barked and howled furiously. He was large enough to tear me limb from limb, and I feared that such was his intention.

But I had met the fellow several times in the village, and he had always recognized me with a good-natured leer of the eye, a friendly wag of the tail and a manifest desire to cultivate my friendship; what, then, ailed the dumb creature, and why such demonstrations of hostility?

Did he know I had no business there? It would seem so, for he kept up such a fierce barking and growling that I began to fear for the safety of my enterprise. I sat down upon the grave and remained perfectly motionless, in a frame of mind which no living creature could envy—not even the dog that bayed at me.

After what appeared an interminable age of suspense, the savage mastiff ceased his noise. Congratulating myself, I recommenced operations with an energy almost superhuman.

An agonizing fear of discovery, and its terrible consequences, together with a feverish wish to succeed, and certain unaccountable, nameless terrors, were sufficient incentives to such exertions. Imprisonment and disgrace would be the inevitable results of detection. I knew all this; and what a blow it would be for me! But, happily, it was very dark. At that moment I looked up, and, to my consternation, the rain had ceased to fall; the heavy clouds had lifted, and the round, full moon was looking down upon the grave I stood in. I dropped the spade in sheer vexation and alarm. A score of the villagers might look out of their windows and see my operations. My ruin seemed inevitable. What should I do? Should I steal from the graveyard and leave my work unfinished, or should I risk all by staying to accomplish it?

I quickly decided on the latter course. The very desperation of the undertaking gave me strength, and an irresistible desire to succeed. My nerves grew firm, and my mind became calm. I weighed all the chances for and against me, and looked the danger in the face without flinching. If I succeeded—exhumed a body in the middle of a populous village on such a night, within a stone's cast of a dozen dwellings—I should accomplish a deed of daring no other person would have thought of. I grasped the spade, and worked as I have never done before or since, save on one occasion, when I worked for life at a pump with a sinking ship beneath me.

I had soon heaped the cold, damp earth all around me. A nauseous odor, oozing through the porous earth, came from a neighboring grave, the occupant of which had long been with the worm and winding-sheet. Oh, what a sickly savor of mortality! Poor human nature, to what villainous dost thou sink at last!

A sound indescribably hollow and disagreeable assured me that my spade had struck upon the coffin. I scraped it bare as far as the lid turned back. Friends had taken their last look of the dead face by means of that same lid.

This done, I commenced cutting through with the chisel and mallet; but here another difficulty excited my alarm—my blows might attract too much attention and lead to my detection. To avoid this, I wrapped my handkerchief about the mallet, which deadened the sound of the blows. This expedient answered my purpose. In a short time I had effected my object, and removed the movable portion of the lid. I involuntarily started as I caught a glimpse of the winding-sheet—the dress of Death.

But a more terrible sensation crept over me, when stooping, I put my hand into the coffin, and laid it on the cold, cold face of the dead girl. Merciful Father, would my body ever become so icy in its coldness?

With a half-expressed wish that God would pardon what I was doing, I wound my fingers into the long black hair, lifted her head from her hard pillow, and dragged her forth. The aperture I had made was small, and it required all my strength to wrest the body from the grave. Once I thought I could not succeed; but, throwing my arms about the corpse, I wrenched it away with a sudden effort.

I laid her down by the desecrated grave, and

the quiet moon and the twinkling stars threw their pale beams upon the wasted face. How white and ghastly it was, with the contrasted hair lying disordered upon the cheeks!

Conscience-smitten and awe-struck, I stood irresolute, and gazed upon her who came forth "bound in her grave-clothes," though not as Lazarus. But it was no time for nice reflections. Thrusting the body into the sack, I turned my attention to other matters. The grave was to be re-filled, and all traces of my work obliterated. Adjusting the lid as well as I could, I threw back the earth as fast and with as little noise as possible. I was not long in accomplishing this; then, laying aside the spade, I scraped up the loose earth with my hands, and replaced the turf I had removed with the greatest care. This part of the transaction required patience and coolness, and the exercise of no little ingenuity. It was accomplished at length, and I breathed easier. I examined what was so recently a grave from every point, and straightened up the grass I had trodden down.

I had still a dangerous part of the business to perform—to carry the subject through the village upon my back. Putting on the overcoat which had answered my purpose so well, I arranged my implements as at first, and then lifting that strange burden, threw it across my shoulders.

How heavy mortality is!—how the living flesh shrinks from it! I have carried many burdens, but never one like that. It was thin and wasted, too; but the laws of gravitation seemed to act upon it in a wonderful degree. I asked myself, with a shudder, if the "spirits that walk in darkness" and the vampires that suck up human gore, were not seated on my shoulders to weigh down and tantalize me.

That load of mortality chilled me, and I constantly changed its position, the sensation was so unpleasant.

Once, when I stumbled and came near dropping it, by some "catnap art" the bony arms appeared to grasp and cling to me. I instinctively quickened my pace, as if for fear the uncanny beings who had power there at midnight, and who had been beholding my work and menacing me, would not permit me finally to escape.

I reached the bridge without interruption. To my alarm I saw a man pacing back and forth upon it like a sentinel. Laying down the "subject" and crouching by it, I observed him for some time. Once he came quite near me, and I was obliged to lie flat upon my back, in the shadow of the wall, and motionless as a stone.

When nearest, I recognized him. It was J—, an acquaintance, who had evidently had his suspicions excited by some of my movements, probably by seeing a fire in my office so late. Perhaps the fellow saw me go towards the graveyard, and was congratulating himself with the idea of a grand discovery and a fright.

Now, as good luck would have it, there was another bridge, about a quarter of a mile below, by which I could reach my office. When J— turned on his heel and walked away from me, I availed myself of the opportunity to walk off toward the other bridge.

A cold sweat stood on my forehead when I reached my office, and I felt a weary ache in my eyes. I deposited the body in a box prepared for the occasion. Strange sensations came over me as I stood there alone with the dead in the dim lamplight.

Often since that night, in the illusion of dreams, and the delirium of fever, the vision of that pale, wasted face, and the disheveled waves of contrasted hair has been present with me. I could not forget them; they were always at my pillow—ever pictured on the field of mental vision. I have seen her everywhere. Yesterday I met her in the streets; last night I saw her in my dreams; and I shall to-night. She never speaks; but her look tells me, "You have broken my rest."

I never meet those who wept for her, when I can avoid it. I shun them as I shun my enemies. They are my enemies, and their presence seems to accuse me of some crime. One of those who went to the grave, "to weep there," had her eyes, and her face, and I never look at her. I feel reproved, guilty, unhappy, when she is near.

But I will dwell no longer upon this picture. I will not tell of the weary, dreary nights I spent over that poor body. Deeply the features became engraved upon my memory. For many weeks I was alone with her and the scalpels. I sacrificed my best feelings to my thirst for knowledge; I hardened myself to the work; but I never did it again—never wrested the dead from the "still house" where loving hearts had laid them. I will not say it is a crime; but it is revolting.

When I sleep, like Lazarus in the "cave" of death, and the "great stone" (which is affection) is rolled up to its mouth, let me rest there with my sleep unbroken, save by the bright dreams which eternity may reveal.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma and all throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellow-men. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES 119 Power's Block, Rochester, N.Y.