

Photograph
of
Grandmother

tribute. But father never said very much about it, although mother, whenever she showed the album to anybody, always mentioned it, because, as she said, nobody would ever know what grandfather had to put up with while he was alive. A photograph of his widow, taken in her weeds, was our constant reminder of him.

This grandmother had a marvellous memory. She could repeat the text of every sermon that had been preached in the Methodist church ever since it was, as she said, inaugurated. And she hadn't missed a funeral in those parts during twenty years. Nevertheless time began to tell on her, and naturally enough her memory weakened. But she never forgot the number of rigs that turned out to pay a last tribute of respect to her husband, and it would have helped her greatly to slip away happily in the end if she could have had any assurance that her own funeral would be even half as large. But before she died she gave all her near relatives a copy of her photograph, the one taken in her weeds, and to father she gave also, with tears in her eyes, and because, as she said, she felt it was father's due—she gave, appropriately framed in black plush, the nameplate from grandfather's coffin. We all were greatly moved. And what moved us even more was her last request, that we take the nameplate from her own coffin, have it framed to match her husband's, and then keep the two always hanging side by side on the west wall of our sitting-room, just opposite the photograph of all the flowers that decorated uncle Harry's coffin. *Ars longa, vita brevis!*

Brief in reality is the span of life as one sees it while turning over the leaves of the album. Many whose representations, especially near the front, reveal youth and beauty and virility, long ago returned to their original clay, and faces that were familiar and dear to us are held now only in memory. But towards the back there were likenesses of a younger generation, many of whom still are with us. There were, for instance, photographs of all us youngsters, taken when babies, some of us in mother's arms, and others all by themselves. There are George and Harry and Frank, and Mary and Margaret and Isabel. And then there is my own, taken when I was but three, when, standing on the chair and doing my mightiest, I couldn't see the canary bird that the man said would pop out if I just kept on looking into the glass without moving. How angry I became when the bird didn't appear! How I tossed up the hair that mother, taking great pains, had parted and combed and brushed! These photographs we

When the
Bird Didn't
Appear