There is no Death.

[The following poem has been attributed to E. Bulwer Lytton; its authorship is really unknown, however.]

There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in Heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forevermore.

There is no death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellowed fruit,
Or rainbow tinted flowers.

There is no death! The leaves may fall,
And flowers may fade and pass away;
They only wait through wintry hours
The coming of the May.

There is no death! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved things away;
And then we call them "dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate;
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

Where'er he sees a smile too bright,
Or heart too pure for taint and vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

Born unto that undying life,
To leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them the same—
Except their sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there are no dead.

GREGORY'S SISTER.

BY L. W. REILLY.

Every one that knew her in the years gone by spoke of her as "Gregory's Sister." To them she had no other name. If they ever heard what she had been called when she was christened, they forgot it in following the family custom that identified her by means of her relationship to her only brother.

And, indeed, her life was strangely bound up with his.

Their father was a doctor. He had inherited a small patrimony that had consisted of a stony farm adjacent to a hamlet in Massachusetts and a half interest in the village paper. If he had been contented to concentrate his energies on the practice of his profession, or on his land, or on his weekly! If he was attending a patient, his mind was busy with his fancy fowl; and sometimes when he should have been tending his stock he was composing verses for "The Poet's Corner."

"He is a genius," said the priest of the parish. But less considerate critics declared: "He is daft."

When his wife died—and she, poor thing, was a gentle creature, too much like her dreamer of a husband to rouse him from his rainbow plans—Gregory was nine months old and Gregory's sister entered her eleventh year. There were two other girls in the family—Stella and Agnes—one older and the other younger than Gregory's sister, but to her the child clung when his mother could no longer care for him and from her no one could take him away.

"You must be a mother to him, my dear," said the doctor. And Gregory's sister accepted the trust as if she understood its full solemnity and foresaw the self-immolation that it would entail.

For three years Gregory's sister was the doctor's housekeeper, for his eldest daughter inherited his poetic temperament and had no talent for administration. It must have been during that period that she lost her name and had her identity merged, as it were, into the personality of her brother, for it was then that he asserted an exclusive ownership and had his claim allowed. Almost as soon as he could talk, he spoke of her continually as "My Sister." The name stuck to her. The other members of the family gradually adopted it, so far, at least, as to call her "Sister," and their neighbors followed suit by referring to her always as "Gregory's sister."

In the third year of his loneliness, the doctor took unto himself another helpmate. She was an energetic woman. Almost before the honeymoon was over, she had turned the house upside down, and from that time on she kept it full of her presence. The old order changed. The doctor parted with his interest in the Chronicle six months after his second marriage, and before the year was out he sold his patrimonial fields in order to purchase a house in the centre of the town, with the intention of devoting all his energies to his profession. Thenceforward for five years he went about bewildered at his own activity and secretly lamenting for the halcyon days of old. He could not get used, however, to the bustle and the uproar of his new life, and it was a dazed worry more than sickness that brought him to the end.

"Good-bye, Father Mapes," he said to his pastor, when the latter had anointed him. "Good-bye, and take care of Gregory." And with one hand clasping a crucifix and the other around his only son, the weary doctor died.

From the first day that Gregory was introduced to his new mamma, he would have nothing to do with her. He did not dislike her nor treat her disrespectfully, but he avoided her, and neither caresses nor chidings could draw him to her lap. He fastened his arms around his favorite sister's neck and nestled his head on her shoulder, and from the coigne of vantage, laughing or crying, he resisted all attempts to coax or compel him away.

The step-mother soon quit trying to wean him from this partiality—selfish and cruel and burdensome as it was at times—and left his sister in full charge of him. He did not suffer on this account. He was dressed and fed and sung to sleep, nursed in sickness and watched at play, kissed and corrected and carried, taken to school and helped with their lessons, loved and worried for and cried over, with the affection of a mother and the devotion of a slave.

Life was hard for the family after the father's death. The income of the money received from his life insurance policy and invested in mortgages was not sufficient to support them. They were getting into debt.

"Let us go out to work," said Gregory's sister to Stella. So one of them found a situation as assistant teacher in the district school and the other obtained employment in a store.

The step mother became fretful and fault-finding in the early days of her widowhood and grew more severe and vexatious as the melancholy months went by.

"Be patient," was the advice of the priest, "and all will turn out well."

So the young folk never resisted their step mother but once, when Gregory's sister decided that he should go to college.

"He shall do no such thing!" exclaimed the step mother, when the project was broached to her."

"Oh, yes, he will," his sister replied with a tremor in her voice. "Father Mapes says that he ought to. Besides, it is my money that will pay his expenses, and it is his desire to go."

So go he did. When the next scholastic year began, he was a pupil at a well-known Worcester institution conducted by the Jesuits.

It was about this time that Gregory's sister received her first and only offer of marriage. She had little leisure to receive attentions from gentlemen, but one good man, attracted by her Madonna face and cheerful disposition, asked her to be his wife. The high compliment—the highest that a man can to a woman—was flattering to Gregory's sister and elated her during the week that she took to consider it; and it might well delight her, for the maker of it was a gentleman, refined, honorable, manly and well-to-do. Her brother, however, had lately shown an inclination to be wild. His love for her and her devotion to him were barriers that kept him back. She must be free to serve him. So the offer was refused. Expostulation was vain. "I cannot leave Gregory," she finally said. And that was the end of her romance.

In the middle of his second term at college Gregory was called home to attend the funeral of his step-mother, who had fallen a victim to paralysis. Two weeks later he returned to his class. There he remained until he was graduated, an event which occurred when he was in his twentieth year.

On his return home Gregory knew not what to do. He had shown no conspicuous aptitude for any special pursuit, unless a love for literature, that was probably inherited from his visionary father, could be so considered. He wrote a few communications for the Chronicle, but they brought him little glory and no pay. He submitted essays, stories, and poems to the magazines, but they were returned to him as "not available." He thought of going to New York to look for work as a reporter.

Gregory's sister comforted him in this time of trial and stimulated him to further effort. She believed in him. To her his sketches were charming. She wondered why the unappreciative editors could not see their merits while they published articles that in her biased judgment were much less worthy of praise.

"Never you mind, Gregory," she chirruped, "you'll make your mark yet."

"If I had no education," he replied, jocosely, "I should make my mark now."

She thought that this repartee was characteristically witty, and she insisted on entering it into his note book, for him to use in his next short story.

When Gregory was pretty well discouraged a college friend of his, who had gone West and started a book-store in Kansas City, invited him to become his clerk. After careful consider the invitation was accepted, and speedily thereafter Gregory went out to Missouri.

But his favorite sister could not endure to be separated from Gregory, nor did he get along satisfactorily apart from her, although he did not appear to suffer in his affections from her absence so much as she did from his. So, three months after he went from home, she resigned her post as teacher and made preparations to follow him.

By this time Stella was married and living in Boston, and Agnes was a novice in a convent in Maryland. The old home was rented, and a little later it was sold and the proceeds were divided among the heirs.

Just when Gregory and his sister began to feel contented in their new surroundings a new trouble arose—the young man's employer received a munificent offer from a publishing house in Chicago and decided to accept it. But what was to be done with the store? And would the new proprietor keep the old clerk?

After much deliberation Gregory resolved to buy out his friend. He gave him in payment his own and his sister's share of the price of their father's house and the savings of the latter from her salary as teacher. Then, behold! the sign over the store was changed. Gregory's name was substituted for that of "Harold Kent, bookseller, printer and stationer." A more accurate name for the proprietorship would have been "Gregory's Sister & Co," for it was her money chiefly that bought the business, it was her energy that emboldened her brother to take it, and it was her tact that was to make it a success.

Gregory did not appreciate all that his sister was to him. He took her presence, her love of him, her fidelity to his interests, and her helpful advice, as a matter of course, to which he had been used all his life, and which could not be expected to falter or to fail any more than the sunlight, or the coming of evening after day, or the growth of the flowers in the spring. He did not realize the extent of his indebtedness to her. He gave himself credit for ideas that originated with her, he congratulated himself on avoiding mistakes that had been pointed out by her, and he assumed to himself all the honors of the concern.

Shortly after Gregory purchased the store his sister went to his assistance while his salesman and bookkeeper were off on vacation; and, when at the end of a fortnight the latter wrote from a ranche in Colorado that he had become a cowboy for good, she persuaded her brother to let her do the work. Accordingly she became the keeper of the accounts and general assistant.

The brother and sister were conspicuously happy during the next three years. They rented a pretty frame dwelling near the suburbs of the city and, with the aid of one servant, began housekeeping. Their cottage, with its beds of flowers in the front yard, reminded them of their home in Massachusetts before their mother died.

At last Gregory's fancy turned to thoughts of love. It was somewhat of a shock to his sister when he told her that he contemplated matrimony. She had noticed his liking for the young woman whom he had chosen for his bride, but she never dreamed that this fondness would lead to a marriage. She could not get rid of the notion that he was still a child, and every successive stage in his manhood's development was a surprise to her. But, as his happiness was her passion, she seconded his plans when he determined to take a wife. There was a pang in her heart, however, when she discovered that her affection was not sufficient for him, as his had been for her; but when she considered the affair that night before saying her prayers, she reproached herself for wishing to engross his love.

"May God forgive me," she said, "for being so selfish!"

So she stifled all repining and set her face resolutely toward the new conditions that were about to confront her.

After the wedding life in the cottage went on pretty much as usual. The monotony of its history was broken only by the purchase of the little home and by the coming of five children, who in the course of a dozen years made their appearance and claimed their share of love.

As soon as each babe began to take notice it went trustfully to its aunt; and as it grew older this fondness increased. It was "Auntie" that had to dress them in the morning, give them their food at breakfast and tea, and put them to bed at night. Into her arms, too, they cuddled when they were sick, and on her lap Rose, the lovely darling, died. Mary and Gregory, jr., Leo and Grace, she loved them all, but if she had a favorite, was it strange that Gregory, jr., should be the one?

At one time, Gregory thought that his sister ought to stop working in the store, which had now become a large establishment, and—possibly urged thereto by his wife, who was somewhat jealous of her sister-in-law's influence in the business—he entreated her to stay at home. She consented at last, reluctantly but not unpleasantly, and for five weeks she took a rest, helping in the household, visiting the shops and the parks, and going on a trip to her sisters in the East.

But the store missed her. The clerks missed her. The customers missed her and inquired for her. Worst of all, the proprietor missed her every hour in the day, and it dawned on him that he had deprived himself of a helpful coadjutor. Just then, too, everything seemed to conspire to worry him. He became exceedingly abrupt and irritable, and many a joke the facetious porter cracked with the chipper errand boy about the amiable temper of their employer.

"Come back soon," Gregory wrote to her, "the store cannot get along without you."

From that time forward her services were valued at their proper worth, even if, as of old, she drew nothing from the business but her board and clothes and these of the plainest sort, for she was abstemious at table and her gowns were neither numerous nor rich.

Sometimes of a night, when the work had been trying to her nerves, or her brother had been more than usually preoccupied with his own happiness, or the little ones had been exceptionally troublesome, Gregory's Sister would sit in her room alone, questioning her own heart and brooding over what might have been.

She did not yield often or long to these wretched feelings. The remembrance of Gregory's temporary waywardness, of his docility that was made possible by her devotion to him, of his return from the downward path, and of their peaceful years together comforted her.

"Our Lord knows that I acted for what I thought was best," she would say, "and I will accept what He had sent."

It was hard at times to be cheerful and resigned, for Gregory was absorbed in the future of his children and Gregory's wife was not always considerate. Once she said something about "a prim old maid," and on another occasion she remarked that "somebody was not worth her salt," words which fell on ears for which they were not intended and cut to the quick.

"Remain where you are," was Father Maples' advice in the last letter he ever wrote, "for Providence placed you there, and Gregory will yet need you more than ever."

No one but the priest knew the sorrows of her heart, for her face was always placid and her tones were low. She was blithe by nature and she methodically cultivated cheerfulness as a habit. Only those who observed her closely could notice the lightening of the lines of the mouth that was her only signal of distress.

After ten years of married life, Gregory fell sick with typhoid fever. In spite of the best medical attention and the most devoted nursing, he sank under the malady. Inside of a week he was dead.

After the interment, a fortnight passed before the bereaved family could resume the regular order of their life. But Gregory's Sister had to return to the store two days after the funeral, for she could not spare more time to the luxury of grief. The widow and the children had to be supported and they depended on her. So she brushed away her tears, saying to herself: "My heart can cry, if my eyes are dry," and she went back to the drudgery that brought in their daily bread.

She is there still. She has consecrated the rest of her life to the task of rearing Gregory's children. Quiet, unassuming, diffident, she does not realize that she is one of life's heroines. "I am of little use in the world," she said yesterday, "and soon I shall be of less." But the Angels of God have a different opinion of her worth, and some day when her unselfish work is all done, they will throw open wide the gates of Heaven to welcome her to her abiding home.

A lady in Syracuse writes: "For about seven years before taking Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery and Dyspeptic Cure, I suffered from a complaint very prevalent with our sex. I was unable to walk any distance, or stand on my feet for more than a few minutes at a time, without feeling exhausted; but now, I am thankful to say, I can walk two miles without feeling the least inconvenience. For female complaints it has no equal."

Fathers and Sons.

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A MOMENT OF TERROR.

We had all come up on deck after dinner. Before us lay the Mediterranean without a wrinkle on all its surface, across which a big calm moon threw rays that gave it the look of watered silk. The great boat glided along, throwing out against the sky, which seemed sown with stars, a long serpent of black smoke; while behind us the water, all white, stirred by the rapid movement of the heavy ship and beaten into foam by the screw of the propeller, seemed to writhe and set in motion so many lights that one would have said they came from a boiling moon. We were there six or eight of us, silent, admiring, looking toward the distant Africa whither we were bound. The captain, who was smoking his cigar in our company, took up the topic of conversation at the dinner table.

"Yes," said he, "I was frightened that time. My ship lay for six hours with the rock through her hull, tossed about by the sea. Fortunately, we were picked up by an English coaler that had caught sight of us."

But a large man, with a bronze face of grave aspect, one of those men that you are sure have been through unknown lands, and whose tranquil eyes seem to preserve in their depths something of the strange countries they have seen—a man that you feel is tempered as it were, with courage, spoke up for the first time.

"You say, captain, that you were frightened. I do not believe it. You deceive yourself in the word and in the sensation that you experienced. A man of energy is never frightened in face of pressing danger. He is moved, agitated, anxious, but fright is another matter."

Then the man with a bronze tint went on in a deliberate manner to explain, and to tell us an incident from his own experience.

It was last winter, in a forest in the northeast of France. Night had come on two hours too soon, the sky had been so thick. I had for guide a peasant who walked at my side along a very narrow path, under a roof of pine trees, from which the uncurbed wind drew piercing shrieks. Through the tree tops I could see clouds put to rout, as if they were flying before some terror. At times all the forest bowed under tremendous blasts of wind with a groan of pain; and the cold seized me despite my rapid walk and my heavy clothing. We were to get our supper and stay over night at the house of a keeper of the forest, not far off. I had come to the place to hunt. Once in a while my guide raised his eyes and murmured, "dreadful weather." Then he spoke to me of the people to whose house we were going. The father had killed a poacher about two years before, and ever since he had been very sober, as though haunted by a memory. His two sons, both married, lived with him.

The shadows were overwhelming, I saw nothing before me or around me and the branches of the trees, all tangled together, filled the night with an incessant clamor. At last I caught sight of a light, and soon my companion knocked against a gate. Some sharp cries of women answered us. Then a man's voice, a choking sort of voice, called, "Who goes there?" My guide gave his name. We entered. Within was a picture not easily forgotten.

A bright-eyed, white-haired old man, holding a loaded gun, awaited us. He stood erect in the middle of the kitchen, while two tall fellows, armed with hatchets, guarded the door. I distinguished in a dark corner two women on their knees with faces turned to the wall. They explained themselves. The old man put his gun against the wall and ordered them to make ready a bedroom for me; then, as the women did not move, he said to me abruptly:

"You see, sir. I killed a man two years ago this very night. Last year he came back to summon me, and I expect him again to night."

Then he added, in a tone which made me smile:

"So we are not all at our ease."

I reassured him to the best of my ability, glad enough to be here on this very night and to see an exhibition of this superstitious terror. I told them stories and succeeded in calming nearly everybody. Near the fireplace an old dog almost blind, with a hairy face, one of those animals which resemble men whom you know, was sleeping with his nose between his paws. Outside, the furious tempest beat against the little house, and through a narrow pane, a sort of peep hole set near the door, I caught a sudden glance, in vivid lightning flashes, of a confused mass of trees, tossed about by the wind. In spite of all my efforts, I saw plainly that a profound terror held possession of those people, and whenever I stopped talking, every ear was listening intently.

Tired of witnessing this idiotic fright, I was about to ask to be shown to my bed room, when the old guard suddenly made a bound from his chair, seized his gun again, and stammered in a wild voice: "There he is! There he is! I hear him!"

The two women went down on their knees again, hiding their faces, and the sons took up their hatchets. I was about to resume my attempts to quiet them, when the sleeping dog awoke with a start, and, raising his head, stretching out his neck, and looking toward the fire with his nearly dimmed eyes, he burst into one of those mournful howls which sends shivers over those who hear them at night in the country. All eyes were turned on him. He was now motionless, erect on his feet, as though haunted by a vision, and began to howl toward something invisible, unknown, frightful without doubt, because all his hair stood on end. The guard, deathly pale, cried out: "He knows him! he knows him! he was there when I killed him!" And the women, beside themselves, both began to howl with the dog. Despite myself, great chills ran down my back. The sight of the animal in this place, at this hour, amid these distracted people, was terrible. Then, for one hour, the dog howled without stirring; he howled as though he were in the anguish of a dream; and fear, overwhelming fear, took possession of me. Fear of what? I do not know. It was fear; that was all.

We remained motionless, pale, expecting some frightful event, with ears alert, with throbbing hearts, startled at the slightest sound. And the dog set out to go around the room, sniffing at the walls, trembling all the time. This beast was making us all crazy! Then the peasant who had brought me to the place threw himself on the dog, in a sort of paroxysm of furious terror, and opening the door leading to a little yard, flung him out. He was quiet at once, and we remained in a silence still more terrifying. And suddenly, all of us at once, we had a start. A being glided against the wall on the outside where the forest was; then it passed against the door, which it appeared to try with hesitating hand; then nothing more was heard for two minutes, which drove us wild; then it came back, rubbing against the wall and it scratched lightly as a child might scratch with its nails; then suddenly a head appeared against the peephole, a white head with gleaming eyes like those of a deer; and a sound came out of its throat, an indistinct sound, a plaintiff murmur. Then a formidable noise resounded in the kitchen. The guard had fired; and the sons had rushed forward at once, closing the peephole by setting up against it the large table, which they steadied with the sideboard. And I swear to you that at the noise made by the gun, which I was not expecting, I had such anguish in my heart, my soul, and my body that I felt myself fainting, ready to die of fright.

We remained there until daybreak, unable to move, to speak a word, cowering in an unspeakable terror. They did not dare to take down the barricade of the door until they saw a slender ray of light making its way through a crack over the door.

At the base of the wall, against the door, the old dog was lying, his jaw broken by a bullet. He had come out from the yard by burrowing a hole under a fence.

* * * *

The man with the brown face was quiet. Then he added:

"That night, however, I really ran no danger. But I would much prefer to live the hours in which I have suffered the most terrible perils than that single minute when the gun was fired at the bearded head in the peephole.—Illustrated Catholic American.

THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY TEACHES THEY ARE ENTITLED TO SUPPORT BY RIGHT.

Father Finlay, the distinguished Jesuit priest of Dublin, preached a sermon in St. Francis Xavier's Church, in that city, in which he made some striking and interesting remarks on the social question as it presents itself in the existing order of things. From Father Finlay's remarkable discourse we give the following extract:

"When we come to deal with the needs of the poor, and with the obligations of the men into whose hands the goods of this world pass to relieve them, it is not as a question of large heartedness, of generosity, of gratuitous benevolence we should discuss it; it is a question of simple elementary rights—of what the owners of wealth are bound to by the very terms in which God regards the matter—as a point of duty which men may trifle with and on which seek to excuse themselves, but in reference to which He is inexorably exacting. He has numbered the hairs of every human head, and to Him every one of us, the lowest as the highest, is of more value than any sparrow. Do you think He looks on it as mere graciousness on the part of the owners of the fruits of this earth of His that they should admit His famishing children to a share of the common inheritance. Do you think He has not imposed it as an *obligation*—in the strictest sense of that word—on the owners of wealth, and conferred a corresponding *right* upon the poor? Within the domestic circle God has made the father owner and controller of the family possessions; does He therefore exempt him from all duty of providing for the children? Have the children no righteous claim upon the means of subsistence because their parent happens to be the owner of them? He has made the men of wealth owners of the possessions of the human family; does he thereby exempt them from the duty, the inexorable duty, of providing for those who must depend upon them or perish? Not so by any means. If there is in the sphere of human conduct a duty on which He peremptorily and stringently insists before all others, it is this. There is no cry which reaches quicker from earth to Heaven than the cry of the poor whose miseries are degraded here below, and none to which the ears of God are more promptly open. In proof of this the preacher referred to several passages of Scripture."

He then continued: "The teaching of the great exponents of Catholic theology follows closely the lines indicated in these significant passages of the Gospel. For them, too, every man born into this world is born with a right to the means of decent human subsistence, and they will not respect or recognize any human institution or social law which would debar from the use of this right. It is his by the institution of nature—that is of God, and no human statute can abrogate it. To quote the words of St. Thomas Aquinas, 'Human law cannot abrogate the Divine or Natural law. And accordingly to the natural order instituted by God's providence, material things are destined to meet the needs of men. Hence no partition or appropriation of these things can avail to prevent their being employed to meet men's needs. The things, therefore, which any one may possess in superabundance are, by natural rights, due to the poor.'"

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