

Beyond the World.

By Billie Burt, Winnipeg.



IT had been a sultry day—the sun sank to rest—the heavy evening dew fell—then the moon rose and the little stars twinkled. Not a leaf stirred, not a sound was heard—all Nature was still.

Down a narrow pathway was a little cottage, hidden in the trees. The window was open—an oil-lamp with a very much fly-speckled shade stood on the table near the window. A few feet away a wooden cot stretched its frail frame. Beside the bed sat an old darky-woman, the tears streaming down her black face. In low sweet tones she crooned a lullaby.

"Listen, don't you heah dem bells? Mammy, dey aw callin' me," whispered the little girl.

Her dark eyes became glassy, and the sombre skin took on a pallor.

The night wore away—while the breath of life grew shorter. Suddenly a little gasp—and the child breathed no more. Only the ticking of the clock was heard, and poor old Mammy's broken sobs.

That night at the same hour in the far, far North, the land of snow and ice, in a small hut, a group of Esquimaux were gathered around the bedside of a dying woman. Twelve months previous death had knocked at the same door and claimed for its victim the father.

In their native tongue, by the flickering whale-oil light, in a deep resonant voice, a Missionary read passages from the little Book. When he had finished the chapter, he carefully laid the book upon the table. Then he looked into the kind eyes of those isolated people for whom he had given up so much. His face, pained with sympathy, touched them one and all.

Then he led them in the beautiful hymn "Nearer my God to Thee." Their very souls reflected in their lustrous eyes as they sang so soft and low; and while they sang a feverish hand moved, and a smile came over the dear face parched with fever.

In the corner slept a tiny boy with a chubby face, oily skin and a mass of jet-black hair. The women gazed with loving eyes upon the little form that knew not of the shadow cast across his sunny path.

The fourth verse beginning: "Then with my waking thoughts" broke upon the air; and a pair of bead-like eyes opened. The baby voice called the name of mother; but never an answer came. It was too late.

Outside the hut all was silent for the wind could never moan through the pine trees; the hooting of the owl could never be heard, only perhaps at times the wind blowing across the plains of snow and ice, broke Nature's silence in that country of the far North.

Far, far across the seas in a land of beauty, rose the mountains, their snow-white peaks gazing into the heavens above. The moon threw its silvery light upon the opalescent summit of the mountain range. Down the slopes the wind whistled through the pine trees. Still farther in the valley below, slumbered the village.

In the shadow of a great crevasse nestled a chalet. The moaning of the wind through the cracks and crevices awakened its occupant. He opened the door and listened. Was it a human cry he heard? Perhaps some one was in danger. Again he paused—way, way in the distance the hooting of an owl made the night more weird.

The door was closed, but in a minute or two it again opened. Into the night a man stepped forth, a rope in one hand and an alpinestock in the other. On his back a knapsack rested. With great skill he quickly climbed a precipitous height. Again a wait—yes, he heard someone call his name. With greater eagerness he made his way upward. Ah!

how often had he climbed. For years, since he was a boy, when he used to go with his father over the mountains. Many, many times had he led searching parties over the dangerous heights. Another step he took—his heavy nailed boots seemed to slip—one more, and the ledge in the rock upon which he had entrusted his weight, broke away. Down, down into the shadowy depths below, the "Outer man" was hurled, while the "Inner" soared higher and higher.

Not a cry was heard; the voice ceased to call. All Nature was wrapt in a death-like silence, save the moaning of the wind in the pine trees.

That night in a great City, within the walls of a Palace, in the royal chamber, a King, beloved, honored and respected by the whole world, surrounded by his loved ones, sank into Eternity. Beside the bed knelt the Queen. Nobly she bore the sorrow thrust upon her; a sorrow cast upon a Nation of Nations. As nobly as he lived, did he die a King. The end of a life lived for his people, for humanity, had come.

Outside of the Palace gates an eager watching crowd waited. A statement had already been issued that no more bulletins would be posted that night; but in spite of the fact they waited. Ladies and gentlemen in evening dress drove up. A stream of motors and carriages blocked the way. The same question was on everyone's lips, the same inquiring look on every face: "How is our King?" Obtaining little or no information from the bystanders, some slowly passed on; while others waited—they knew not why.

A gentle fall of rain made the scene more pathetic.

Suddenly in solemn tones the words came to the faithful waiting subjects: "The King is Dead." Those four solemn words spoken by one of the members of the Royal Household, stunned the waiting crowd. Then every man's hat was lifted, from the shabby, faded holey one to the black silk high-hat. For a minute all men were equal; all shared their one great sorrow; then they passed into the night on their different ways, for the living called them.

At last the great City slumbered, only to awaken to the realization of its loss at the dawn of day.

At the same hour four spirits were wafted on high.

Thousands of miles below, the world like a tiny ball became fainter and fainter.

"How pure the air! Hark! what is that? Sweet music! How beautiful the voices! Listen! I hear the voice of one who loved me on earth, in that far away world of the past.

"See! a King, a man, a woman and child enter. All are gowned in robes of white. Look! They stand before the Heavenly King of Kings. He places a golden crown of Everlasting Happiness upon each head.

"Am I too late?" enquired the wandering spirit sadly.

And a voice answered, "Come."

There, in the heavens, were placed five more stars to shine down on the world and light the way to the Everlasting Kingdom.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier:—The East recognizes the coming dominance of the West.

Rev. Dr. Aked:—The oftener one does a good thing the easier it becomes.

Jane Addams:—The hand that cooks the dinner exercises a power for good or evil.

Ellen Terry:—All the beauty doctors in the world cannot keep the evidences of a woman's disposition out of her face.

Dr. James W. Robertson:—Education is much more than stuffing a boy with undigested bits of knowledge.



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