

regretted her haste, for the white face in front of her turned to marble in its immobile stillness.

"She did not say so," murmured Dora, "but at times I had thought—I had thought that it was wished so—and perhaps it is best. I am an old woman now, too old to play well; but I did have hopes—ah!"—she put down her cup, her hand shaking so that she could not hold it—"I did have hopes that it would not be till after that I was gone. Surely I cannot be a long time in dying, for I am already 30 old."

Miss Mearns threw back her bonnet-strings, as if the room had grown too warm for her.

"Now, don't take on about it, Dora——"

"Then it is true!" cried Dora, interrupting her, with clasped hands, and with the tears gathering and falling unhindered down her cheeks. "It is true! And that is what you had come for to tell me. Ah, yes, I see it in your face. You have a kind heart, and you were sad for me. Well, certainly I shall die soon now."

She leaned back in her chair and dried her eyes, and then, unheeding Miss Mattie's efforts to comfort her—appearing, indeed, as if she neither heard nor saw her—she mechanically began to put away the tea things, and when that was done went back to her lace-work without having uttered another word. It was not rudeness, intentional or otherwise, Miss Mattie knew. It was absorption, immersion. The sense of bereavement had eclipsed all others for a time, so that though life remained she was like one deaf and dumb and speechless.

After fruitless endeavours to secure her attention, Miss Mattie withdrew, patting her gently on the shoulder as she went out. A less kindly or more impulsive woman would have kissed her, perhaps, but to Dora just then nothing mattered—this, that, or anything—and long after Miss Mattie had left her she still sat there, a shrunken, solitary figure, watching the fading light with wide-open, tearless eyes, and with hands folded over the heap of filmy lace.

(Continued next week.)

THE HOME CIRCLE.

THE ISLE OF LONG AGO.

O, a wonderful stream is the river Time,
As it runs thro' the realm of tears,
With a faultless rhythm and a musical rhyme,
And a boundless sweep and a surge sublime,
As it blends with the Ocean of Years.

How the winters are drifting, like flakes of snow,
And the summers, like buds between;
And the year in the sheaf—so they come and they go
On the river's breast, with its ebb and flow,
As it glides in the shadow and sheen.

There's a magical isle up the river of Time,
Where the softest of airs are playing;
There's a cloudless sky and a tropical clime,
And a song as sweet as a vesper chime,
And the Junos with the roses are staying.

And the name of that Isle is the Long Ago,
And we bury our treasures there;
There are brows of beauty and bosoms of snow—
There are heaps of dust—but we loved them so!
There are trinkets and tresses of hair;

There are fragments of song, that nobody sings,
And a part of an infant's prayer;
There's a lute unswept, and a harp without strings
There are broken vows and pieces of rings,
And the garments that she used to wear.

There are hands that are waved, when the fairy shore
By the mirage is lifted in air;
And we sometimes hear, thro' the turbulent roar,
Sweet voices we heard in the days gone before,
When the wind down the river is fair.

O, remembered for aye be the blessed Isle,
All the day of our life till night,—
When the evening comes with its beautiful smile,
And our eyes are closing to slumber awhile,
May that "Greenwood" of Soul be in sight.

—Benjamin F. Taylor.

The true test of a sailing craft is its ability to keep the sea in bad weather. Many small boats are unable to endure such an ordeal. The true test of a Christian soul is

a similar one. It must be able to stand rough tossing on life's ocean. There are altogether too many fair-weather Christians, the kind, for example, who venture out to prayer meeting only when zephyrs blow and the sky is serene. But sometimes Galilee roughens, when the Master is to be sought not in quiet harbors, but out upon the surges. The soul that has the hardihood to brave the worst of natural or spiritual weather is the spirit that God honors, to which comes the consolation of final and complete peace.—*New York Observer.*

HOW A PREACHER HAD TO PAY FOR THE LENGTH OF HIS SERMON.

The ways of the cabby are past comprehension, and the driver of the hansom in London is not different from his brothers of the jinrikisha in Japan, says *Harper's Round Table.*

One of the latest and most amusing tales concerning the noble band of drivers come from a little fishing village in the north of Scotland. The chapel of this queer and sparsely populated town depended entirely for its supply on the occasional help of the clergy in neighboring towns. It so happened that upon a certain very rainy Sunday a new clergyman from the town of S—volunteered to conduct services in the little chapel and in order to get there he engaged a vehicle which the English know as a "fly," in which through the pouring rain he was driven across the country to the chapel. Upon his arrival he found no one at hand, not even a sexton to toll the bell to summon the natives, so he took it upon himself to pull the rope, leaving the cabby meanwhile outside in the wet. For a long time nobody arrived, but finally one solitary individual did appear, and sat down in a pew nearest the door.

The clergyman then donned his surplice and began the service. When this was ended he observed that inasmuch as there was but one member of the congregation he thought it would be well to dispense with the sermon.

"Oh, no, sir. Please go on with the sermon."

When half way through he expressed the fear that perhaps he was tiring his listener, and was much gratified to learn from his own lips that such was not the case.

"I should be glad to listen to you for hours, sir," he said, and so the sermon ran on to an hour in length, and finally the service was concluded.

The preacher then expressed a desire to shake hands with so flattering an auditor. And then the trick came out—a trick which the clergyman's nearsightedness had prevented him from seeing at once.

His listener was none other than the driver of the "fly," who was all the time charging him so much an hour for the use of the vehicle!

The minister did not even have the consolation of getting even by ordering a collection.

A HOME PRESERVED.

A father and mother had died and left an only daughter in a large and most home like house. With an intense longing to remain in the dwelling so dear to her, this daughter began to wonder how to readjust her life, "without selfishly keeping the dear home all to herself." Providentially a physician told her of a lady who would be greatly benefitted if some one in the suburbs could invite her away from the heat and noise of the business section for a two weeks' rest, a change which would involve no long journey by rail. An invitation was immediately extended, and in the two years since then this lady has received as guests home and foreign missionaries, Salvation Army and other Christian workers, trained nurses and young business women, besides adopting a little German orphan in whom her mother was much interested.

"It is simply making such use of their home as would gratify my parents," she recently said to me, adding, "Adjectives are misplaced in its mention, since the people who need me are those I most need."

There was no closing of doors from a morbid, selfish grief, and the home is all the dearer since making it a haven of rest to guests of the character described.—*Congregationalist.*