

dead man in the road, had spread like wild fire in that peaceful neighborhood, and before the sun had completed the first hour of his daily journey, a crowd had gathered at Gage's school house to see for themselves the proof of the truth of the flying reports. The Coroner came early, a jury was readily empanelled, and an investigation of the cause of death was had. A learned doctor from the town was called to make the examination. His pockets were searched, but they were empty, he had neither pocket-book nor money. Some remembered to have seen him wear a fine gold watch and chain, but they, too, were gone. Upon removing his clothing about the region of the heart, a gash about an inch in width was found, from which oozed a little blood, showing where some deadly instrument had entered. "Murdered" said the doctor, and "Murdered" was whispered from lip to lip throughout the crowd of spectators, and "Murdered and robbed by some party to this jury unknown," was the verdict of the Coroner's jury; and thus it still remains, "Murdered," but only the great inquest at the last day shall reveal the name of the murderer. After the inquest was ended, Colby and Newton gave orders for bringing the body to the village and preparing it for the grave. Then they returned to the hotel to get a change of clothing, and by this time, much needed refreshments.

The two friends and brothers, Colby and Newton, seemed naturally, as Fraternally, called upon to take a kind of supervisory care of the affairs of their deceased brother Clark, and make all necessary arrangements for his decent and proper burial. After partaking of a substantial breakfast, and while awaiting the coming of the body, the two friends were startled by an as yet unthought of difficulty. This difficulty was suggested to them by sight of little Belle, as she was sporting amid the flowers of the park on the lakeward side of the hotel. In the sorrowful excitement of the past few hours, her very existence seemed to have been by them forgotten. But now, as if by common impulse, both asked the question, "what is to become of her?"

Neither was prepared to answer, and both remained for a few moments silent.

"I wonder," said Newton, "if any one has told her of her father's death."

"I think not," said Colby, "but let's inquire and find out." And entering the hotel, they sent a servant to ask Miss Sherill to grant them a short interview. In a moment their messenger returned and invited them into the parlor where Miss Sherill awaited their coming. After the usual compliments of courtesy were passed by the lady and the two young men, upon their entrance into the parlor, Colby at once entered upon the subject uppermost in his mind, by inquiring of Miss Sherrill if little Belle had been informed of the death of her father.

"No," said Miss Sherrill, and the tears started as she replied, "I could not tell her, 'twould kill me to see her suffer as she must, neither can I find any one in the house who will consent to perform the painful duty, and so it has not been done, and I cannot do it."

While she was still speaking, Belle came at the door, and with a happy smile upon her face, bade them all good morning.

Colby had frequently spoken to her before this time, and was on very good terms with her, and now feeling it to be his duty, as no one else would do it, he determined to be himself the bearer of the terrible news of her bereavement to the little girl. Extending both hands towards