

How Teenie Read the Girl's Hand

By D. W. Higgins, Author of "The Mystic Spring," etc.

Lay her 't the Earth:
And from her fair, unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring.

—Shakespeare.



THE day had been one of surpassing loveliness. The great sun had broken through a hazy mist of gold early in the morning and was now hiding behind a glorious gleam of beauty and casting on the distant mountains the colors of purple and crimson peculiar to this latitude, and which painters have so often in vain sought to portray on canvas, and poets to describe in verse. Beacon Hill was dressed in its prettiest garb with the sweet wild roses in full bloom, and the green grass besprinkled with field buttercups, and daisies, stars of Bethlehem and lilies—the whole forming a carpet more gorgeous than ever issued from the weaver's loom. The waters of the Straits were tranquil, the dancing waves laved the shore with a gentle cadence and the silence that had fallen on all things animate and inanimate was deep.

On this beautiful evening two young girls stood on the bank that overlooks the waters of the strait, gazing toward the opposite shore. They were members of the Robinson troupe of actors that then occupied the Victoria theatre. This theatre had been fashioned by the orders of Sir M. B. Begbie from one of the old Hudson Bay Co.'s warehouses, and had a seating capacity for 500 persons. The young ladies were named Susan Robinson and Lulu Sweet. They were handsome, well conducted girls and stood high in popular regard. Both were engaged to be married—Miss Robinson to Smith Jamieson, commander of a steamer that plied between Victoria and Fort Yale, and Miss Sweet to a merchant at Marysville, California. It was given out that upon the return of the steamer from the next trip the ceremony of uniting Miss Robinson to Capt. Jamieson would take place, and preparations were in progress for the wedding.

As the girls gazed toward the distant shore, drinking in the glorious picture that was spread before them, they were reminded by a gust of chill evening breeze that it was time to wend their way to the town. As they turned they saw approaching an odd-looking figure clad in rags and tatters of as different hues as Joseph's coat of many colors. As the figure approached it was recognized as that of Teenie, an old mulatto woman, who was looked upon as a harmless lunatic, and who wandered about the town and suburbs every day. She never asked for alms, but never refused them when offered. Teenie had an odd habit of picking up small sticks, bits of rags and twine and stumps of cigars, and carrying them home. What she did with these "unconsidered trifles," was never known, but day in and day out, late and early, so long as there was light she was seen at her strange occupation. Her dwelling stood on the present site of the nursery at the corner of Cook and Fort streets. It was a slightly built shack and must have been most uncomfortable in the winter weather, with the snow drifting through the loose boarding and the wind rocking the frail building. Many old residents

will have little difficulty from this description in recalling Teenie, who in their childhood was one of the sights of the town. Rumor said that Teenie was once a happy married woman, the wife of one Christopher, a colored man, who drove an express wagon through these streets for many years. The pair, who had been slaves in Florida, bought their freedom before the war. They came here in 1858, where Christopher renounced his wife and married another woman of his own color. Teenie took the separation much to heart, and became insane. Her insanity developed into a mania for living alone, wandering about the streets gathering chips, papers and other refuse, for a purpose that no one, not even herself, could explain. When young she must have been handsome, and her figure at the time of the opening of this story was still erect and commanding.

As the woman drew near the two girls shrank from her and were preparing to run, when she called to them. "Pretty chill'un!" she cried. "Don't you want yer fortunes told?" Only two bits. Tell you all about the husbands which yer goin' to get, and yer chillun and gran' chillun."

The girls paused in their flight, and giggled as girls are accustomed to do when asked to have their fortunes foreshadowed.

"Come, girls," continued the hag, "gib me yer han's and I'll tell yer sometin' that'll be wuth knowin'." On'y two bits to know all about yerself."

The girls hesitated for a moment, and then Miss Sweet laughingly placed a hand in one of the colored woman's.

"Oh! a bonny han'," continued the woman; "full of lots of good luck. Oh! a beautiful han'! Yer goin' to be married soon to a pretty gen'lman and will have lots of money and chillun. You'll go away soon and you'll be happy. What's the matter wid dis odder leddy. Why don't she come up and let Old Teenie tell her fortune for two bits. Is you frightened, honey, or is yer puttin on airs? I tell you, don't you put on no airs, wid dis chille, I won't stan' it. Gimme yer hand," she exclaimed rudely, as she snatched at Miss Robinson's hand, held it firmly in her grasp and examined it closely.

"Dar's lots o' trouble in dis yer han', honey—lots of it. Dar's blood, too—no, no blood, but quick death, dat won't gib a man time to say dat he's sorry for what he's done. Yes, indeed, an' there's heaps o' sorrow for you, my pretty. You ain't agoin' to marry de man you thinks you is. That's another man in the way. He won't marry you, edder. You're goin' to trubble soon, an' an—that's all I kin see."

The girls paid the fee and the fortune-teller departed, mumbling as she went some words that were not intelligible. The girls were differently affected by the seer's prophecies. Miss Sweet was happy and buoyant as a lark, and Miss Robinson was correspondingly depressed and unhappy.

That night at the theatre was played a comedy entitled "The Loan of a Lover," in which Miss Robinson took the leading part, and none who saw her bright and happy

demeanor imagined that her heart was oppressed by gloomy apprehensions. Behind the scenes she was often in tears, but in the eyes of the audience her pretty face was wreathed in smiles and her acting was that of a person who had not a care in the world.

In the course of a few days Miss Robinson's sweetheart was again in port with his vessel and it was decided that on his return from the next trip the nuptials should be celebrated, when the name of Sue Robinson would pass from the play-bills forever.

The steamer sailed hence one evening early in April, 1861, bound for Yale. Miss Robinson went to the wharf to see Capt. Jamieson safely away, and returning discharged her duties at the theatre with more than accustomed cheerfulness and ability. The memory of the ill-fortune foreshadowed by the negress had almost faded from her mind and in the near approach of what seemed to be a lasting happiness the prophecy failed to disturb the pleasurable emotions of her heart.

Late in the evening of the fourth day after the boat's departure the steamer Enterprise arrived from New Westminster with direful news. The boilers of the Fort Yale had blown up in Fraser river at a point fifteen miles below her destination, and amongst the lost was Capt. Jamieson, who was at the wheel when the explosion occurred. The sad news was broken to the unfortunate girl, who for a time was disconsolate, but as she was the principal breadwinner of the family there was little time for tears, and after a brief period she was again on the stage as if nothing had happened. The performance was "Ingomar," and it was given under the distinguished patronage of Governor Douglas, family and suite. Between the acts Miss Robinson, who wore across her shoulders a scarf of crepe, sang a ballad appropriate to her recent loss, and her beautiful voice most impressively impressed those present.

In the fall of the year Miss Sweet went to California to be married and Miss Robinson with the company departed for the then wild region of Washington Territory. At Walla Walla she met and married a man from whom she soon separated. A few years later she appeared in leading comedy characters at San Francisco. Her fame spread from west to east and engagements were proffered by eastern managers who wished to secure her as a star. These offers were declined for the reason that she wished to conquer all the details of her profession before appearing in the presence of a critical audience at the east. As an actress Miss Robinson had no peer on the Pacific Coast and her high character, her sweetness of disposition and amiability made her a social favorite wherever she went.

She was a heroine, too. When in 1866, the sister of the Yosemite, the steamer Washoe blew up on the Sacramento river, Miss Robinson was on board with the theatrical company to which she was attached as leading lady. About sixty passengers were killed outright and many were injured. When the steam had cleared away, Miss Robinson aided in the work of relief, contributing some of the garments she wore for bandages and soothing

with gentle words and kindly attention, the sufferers. The papers praised her for her good work on that occasion, and as several members of the troupe had been killed the company was forced to disband for the season.

In 1871, Miss Robinson, having "established a reputation," as the saying goes, decided to go to New York. She accepted an engagement at a theatre owned by the notorious Jay Gould and "Jim" Fiske, and opened at Sacramento for a farewell California engagement.

Ten years had elapsed since on the afternoon at Beacon Hill Teenie had uttered her strange prophecy. The girl of fifteen (she was born at Rock Island, Ill., in 1846) had developed into a handsome woman of twenty-five. During the interval she had had many offers of marriage, but had declined all. When pressed for reasons she replied that the man who should marry her would have only ill luck, and, besides, she was wedded to her profession.

"I am hoo-dooed," she said. "A negro woman named Teenie at Victoria, told my fortune once, and her prophecies have nearly all come true. My first lover was blown up in a steamboat on the eve of the day set for our marriage. I married my next lover. He turned out to be a scamp and I divorced him. My youngest brother was drowned by the capsizing of a sail-boat off Victoria harbor after I left there and the Washoe explosion killed several of my best friends. So, I'm hoo-dooed and I shall never marry or set my heart on any one or thing again."

The engagement at Sacramento opened under most promising auspices. The company were greeted with overflowing houses, to do honor to the gifted comedienne who was about to submit her claims to recognition as one of the leading actresses of the day to eastern audiences. She was overwhelmed with floral tributes and with addresses of regret at her contemplated departure. Each evening, when called before the curtain she made a neat little speech.

It was the last night of her engagement, and she appeared in the play of "Ixion," one of her best characters. Before going on she complained of illness; but she persevered to the end, winning warm plaudits for the excellence of her acting. When called before the curtain she had to be supported, so overcome was she with weakness, but none in that great crowd realized that they were gazing upon her for the last time—that before noon on the following day she would have passed away! That her pretty face and her willowy, graceful figure would be seen no more; that the sweet voice would be stilled forever—that her virtues would become a memory, a thing of the past, which those who knew her would recall with a sigh and a tear!

The remains were interred in Helvetia cemetery at Sacramento. The funeral cortege was the largest ever seen in that city. The whole town turned out to honor the memory of the promising young actress whose career had been so suddenly cut off in the midst of a glorious career.

Nearly twenty-five years later the writer visited Helvetia cemetery to lay a tribute on the grave of Susan Robinson. The caretaker told him that he was a boy when Miss Robinson died, and that he was accustomed to climb into the gallery to see her act. He said that she was a great actress, to his young mind the greatest ever in California. This was an exaggeration, no doubt, but that had she lived she would have rivaled the best English and American players of the day was firmly believed by Californians.

"She was a general favorite" continued the caretaker. "Everybody loved her. It wasn't admiration, it was love. But she kept them all off. My father, who was employed as carpenter at the theatre, told me.

"One morning, five or six years after she had died (I was then only a laborer on these grounds) as I entered the cemetery I realized that the earth of this grave had been disturbed and was piled up on the sides. I also noticed a man standing there. I ran up and saw that the man had been buried during the night in scooping with his hands the earth from the grave and that he was then not far from the coffin lid. I seized him and asked what he was doing?"

"I'm trying to dig up Sue Robinson," he replied. "If I can get her coffin open she'll come out and walk the earth again. She is not dead—she's only asleep."

The man proved to be an old admirer of the dead actress who had become unsettled in his intellect by her death, and the lapse of years had not cooled his ardor. He is now in the asylum.

"Do many people visit the grave?" I asked. "For some years, the anniversary of her death was observed by many who knew her in life and who came to place flowers on the grave. The visitors gradually fell off until at last only an elderly man and woman came each year. They continued to come for some years and then the woman came alone—her husband was dead, she said. Last year she did not come as usual and I fear that she, too, is dead."

Poor old Teenie died some twenty years ago. To the last she kept up her habit of picking up refuse in the streets, but it is a remarkable fact that after the tragic death of Capt. Jamieson she never told a fortune, or uttered a prediction. She scarcely ever spoke to any one, and the little children who are prone to bait and heckle the weak, defenceless, and grotesque looking, never annoyed this tall, mysterious negress, who, clad in rags and dirt, stalked daily through the streets of the little town.

Miss Sweet married well, as Teenie predicted, and lived to see her grandchildren gather about her knee to listen to her stories of adventure and the pretty ballads with which she was accustomed to delight Victoria theatre-goers. In 1860 Col. Moody, who was at the time Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, named Lulu Island after Miss Sweet, and not after an Indian chieftain, as has been erroneously stated.

Worlds in the Making—The Evolution of the Universe

R. H. BORNES has translated Svante Arrhenius' "World's in the Making—The Evolution of the Universe," and the book is thus reviewed by the London Times:

How did life originate on our globe? How did the globe itself originate, and to what end is it tending? What was the possible beginning, and what is the probable fate of our solar system and of the whole universe? These are questions so profound that it was long before even the most courageous of mankind dare glance into their depths, but so full of interest that, the first glance taken, we are compelled to return again and again, and shall doubtless continue to strain our gaze upon them till the end. That we may never find the complete or the right answer is no reason for our refraining from the attempt to find it; and that very different answers are tentatively given by different philosophers who have earnestly made such attempts rather enhances than diminishes our interest in contrasting them. The contrast is often due to a difference in the observer's standpoint, and in studying questions of such colossal magnitude we do well to occupy many different positions.

The great Swedish chemist Arrhenius has called us to an essentially new point of view. His predecessors have usually directed attention to possibilities of the beginning and end of things; he now asks us to contemplate the universe as eternal, self-renewing, not running down as clock does, but acting as a self-winding clock might, the descent of the weight being only a preliminary to an inevitable re-ascend. His predecessors have usually asked us to regard life as peculiar to this earth, or, if it exists elsewhere, then as taking forms essentially strange to us. The conception put forward by Arrhenius is that of life universally diffused, constantly being emitted from all habitable worlds in the form of tiny spores which wander through space for years, or for ages, the vast majority of them only to meet with destruction in the fierce rays of

some blazing star, but some few to find resting place on a body which, like our own earth, has reached the habitable stage in its history. In place of the comparative isolation of man, therefore, Arrhenius claims the universal relationship of all life throughout the vast universe.

"We perceive that, according to this version of the theory of panspermia, all organic beings in the whole universe should be related to one another, and should consist of cells which are built up of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. The imagined existence of living beings in other worlds in whose constitution carbon is supposed to be replaced by silicon or titanium must be relegated to the realm of improbability. Life on other inhabited planets has probably developed along lines which are closely related to those of our earth."

The conception is a fascinating as well as a startling one. It will doubtless be startling to many to learn that the transmission of life across the intense cold of space can be seriously suggested by an eminent man of science, although the idea is not by any means new. Since it was first propounded it may fairly be said that much evidence has been accumulated in its favor. Forms of life have been discovered which survive the intensest cold that can be produced in our laboratories with all available modern facilities. "Professor Macfadyen has demonstrated that micro-organisms may be kept in liquid air (at 200 degrees C.) for six months without being deprived of germinating power," and even more wonderful results have been obtained at the Royal Institution, London. Indeed, so far from cold destroying the seeds of life, Arrhenius considers it "not at all unreasonable to assert that the intense cold of space will act like a most effective preservative upon the seeds." A less obvious difficulty arises from the intense light and heat to which the seeds may be subjected by radiation from suns like our own even at a considerable distance; but

this also is disposed of on the authority of "all the botanists whom" the writer "had been able to consult." It may perhaps be remarked that the suggestions here stated with necessary brevity are supported by their author in all cases with closely-reasoned argument and an imposing array of facts drawn from many sources. Few men living have at command a wider scientific knowledge than Arrhenius.

Turning from the biological to the physical side of the argument, we find one of the most striking points made by the author in the suggestion of a self-renewing mechanism for the universe. The orthodox notion at present is that it is tending inevitably to a "heat-death" (Warmetod), when all sources of motion, heat and light will have been exhausted. This view is rejected, as implying in one direction or the other something inconceivable; it is boldly asserted that "we must look for conditions for which the entropy law of Clausius does not hold," and we are reminded of Clerk-Maxwell's "sorting demons" as a means of escape from the difficulty. The sources of motion and heat are to be found in the differences which at present exist between various portions of matter and especially in the different velocities with which the ultimate particles of matter are traveling. We conceive a gas as composed of tiny particles rushing about in all directions with velocities differing considerably in magnitude and direction. The sum total of these motions cannot be altered; only their distribution. The "heat-death" contemplated for the universe is not by any means a state of things in which all the particles might be reduced to rest; not even one in which the movement of every particle was precisely similar; but one in which the general average in any part of space would be the same. There would still be large differences between the velocities of individual molecules, but they would be inextricably involved in a similar manner in every part of the universe. Now Clerk-Maxwell suggested how, even if this state of things were reached the original differences, which had been lost

for purposes of heat and life might be recovered. He imagined an intelligent being so small as to be able to deal with the molecules separately; and he furnished him with a trap-door which he could open when he saw a swift molecule coming, so as to let it through while he could close it against a slow molecule. In this way he might separate on opposite sides of a partition the sheep from the goats—the swift molecules from the slow; which, carried to sufficient lengths, is all that is required for restoring the available energy of the universe. Clerk-Maxwell's conception has so far been little more than a curiosity of thought; but Arrhenius boldly claims that the "sorting" action postulated from the demons is actually going on automatically at the boundaries of the nebulae. The most rapidly moving molecules will escape from their attraction (according to a process suggested in another connection by Dr. Johnstone Stoney), while the less rapid will remain; and we at once see the possibility of applying this result to the purpose required.

Whether other physicists will accept Arrhenius's reasoning as adequate is another question; there are undoubtedly many portions of the book where he is far from convincing, at any rate on a first reading, and his views are not likely to find either immediate or universal acceptance. But there are books for which we can well afford to be grateful even if we are not prepared to accept them as gospel; and it may be safely said that a reader of the work before us will be grateful for an expansion of his horizon of thought. We disentangle our ideas from the trammels of old prejudice, but slowly, and many of us would make no progress at all without outside assistance. It might not have occurred to us, without suggestion, to put aside even for a few moments the ideas of a necessary beginning and end of things. Arrhenius invites us to regard them as an encumbrance from which we may hope to be freed as we have been enfranchised before. "Man used to speculate on the origin of matter, but gave that up when

experience taught him that matter is indestructible and can only be transferred. For similar reasons we never inquire into the origin of the energy of motion. And we may become accustomed to the idea that life is eternal, and hence that it is useless to inquire into its origin." There is certainly freshness and vigor in the thought.

DISESTABLISHMENT BY EVOLUTION

"Nonconformity tends to get a greater and greater grip of successive Liberal Administrations," says the Inquirer. "Mr. Asquith, the new Prime Minister, is traditionally a Nonconformist. Mr. Lloyd-George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is a Baptist. Mr. McKenna, First Lord of the Admiralty, is a Congregationalist; Mr. Runciman, President of the Board of Education, is a Wesleyan; Mr. McKinnon Wood, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, is a Congregationalist. Then Sir Henry Fowler is a prominent Wesleyan; Mr. Birrell's father was a famous Liverpool Baptist minister, whilst other Nonconformist members of the Government are Sir Samuel Evans, Mr. George Lambert, Mr. A. J. Pease, Sir W. S. Robson, and Mr. J. H. Whitley. Thus prestige and power as exclusive possessions of the Established Church are fast becoming things of the past. What legislation has failed to do, evolution has virtually done—brought about a practical disestablishment of the Anglican Church. That Nonconformity, which is a purely voluntary system, based on a love of liberty, and backed by no extraneous support, should have achieved the position it holds in the country today is a wonderful tribute to the power of its principles and its innate vitality."

The defence that claret was a non-intoxicating drink was unnecessarily put forward by a Boston hotelkeeper, who was fined for supplying the wine to a man who was on the "black list."

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