

Sunday Reading.

A Shop-Girl Heroine.

A Story from Real Life.

I do not believe that, in her most exaggerated visions, she ever imagined herself any kind of a heroine; she simply did her duty in that station to which it had pleased God to call her, and lived out the sublimest tragedy of creation—life.

So much has been said and written about the lax morals of shop girls, so much has been made of the temptations arising from their small wages—and Heaven knows these latter are small enough, and the former great enough to be out of all comparative proportion!—that it seems only just and fitting to add this simple story to the evidence upon the other side; to tell how one girl kept pure on small wages, and did things that most of us would have declared impossible. At what cost to her stomach and her wardrobe—well, God only knows the entire extent of that side of the story.

Left fatherless when a child, and with a mother who is still living in an insane asylum in California, she grew up somehow, and finally drifted as a saleswoman, years ago, into one of the largest department stores. She started, a green hand, on \$3.00 or \$3.50 a week, and for a year, perhaps, or more, lived on that at the Training School for \$2.50 a week, and dressed herself, and paid her other expenses out of what was left, helped out occasionally by giving a music lesson or so to other girls nearly as poor as herself.

Demented as her mother was, she yet had one pleasure in life—books, and every six weeks the girl saved one dollar and sent it to the asylum matron that this pleasure might be supplied. Whether her own shoes were worn to paper thickness; whether she went without warm underwear; whether she was hungry or not, that dollar went westward on its appointed day. And she worked faithfully, and her salary was raised, a dollar or so at a time, until she had reached some six dollars, or a little more, a week. The years passed on, and with the better salary she looked ahead for sickness, and put by a little at a time. She wore shabby clothes, often, and allowed herself but few pleasures; one she accomplished as the price of her denial and that was a second-hand piano, that was meat and drink to her, and clothes, and everything else worth having, on many an occasion when life was full of worry and vexations.

Through all the years she cherished one dream and one desire, and she never let it fade—to go back to California and see her mother. And so, with persistent denial of herself, and the putting by of pennies and dimes, in thirteen years the fund had grown to about sixty or sixty-five dollars. Think of it, sister women, who do have to live on four or six dollars a week, and who count the cost of a sacrificed opera ticket as something that weighs in the scales of denial—thirteen years to save the price of a visit to one's mother! Thirteen years of stomach emptiness and wardrobe scantiness, thirteen years of unremitting work and cheerful service to boot! Well, her dream became reality; a friend with a little influence secured her a roundtrip ticket for about half or less of her savings, and she spent a whole happy six weeks on the Golden Coast, seeing her mother every day, and storing up mental pleasures that had been lived a century would never have grown less in the recollection.

Then she came back to duty and the same old life again. After awhile she became ill, and for weeks was not able to work; half of her salary was given her by employer and forgotten long ago by him. It is doubtful if he ever made a better investment. Like all rich and successful men, he is called upon to give to many charities, but it is problematical if the thousands he has bestowed upon churches, schools and other organizations have appealed to Heaven any more impressively than the income of this one girl's gratitude, fresh from a reticent, patient heart.

When she had returned to work, nothing was too hard for her to do, her personal effort too arduous for her to make to secure and please a customer; and when ill once, before the holidays, she stood at her post through sheer endurance rather than give up, when her employer needed her experienced help more than at any other season of the year.

The rest of her life is the same simple, commonplace story of denial, work, and failing strength, and at last a hospital operation, albeit it came late and was but a part of the tragedy, for Love had entered and it she had lived she might have been happy enough to reap a full harvest for the good seed she had sown. But she had

never faltered in her course of sacrifice and brave self-reliance; the pride that had kept her silent in her need in life refused to harbor the thought of charity after death, and so it was found that she had kept up a small life insurance that would pay her obligations to the world and leave besides that, one dollar every six weeks for years to come, for the mother, who 'does not know and cannot understand' that, even from the other side of the grave, her girl is providing for her comfort.

It is not much of a life story; there are no great climaxes, no swelling tones of passion, precious little of the high key of laughter and, withal, not many tears, for these only went into the heartache, that Heaven only knew, and seldom reached the surface; but it is the very true story of what one working girl did with her opportunities and her life, and if it should fail to give courage to some other one it certainly, in the reverent awe and hush that Death brings, illuminates our own lives and shames us all for what we deem the sacrifices we have made.—The Mirror.

Behind The Veil.

There is no more curious study than the different ways in which the differing minds of men approach the dark veil hanging before each of them—the mystery which we call death. The great classical scholar, Porson, was chiefly terrified by the certainty that he could not carry with him the learning which had cost him so dear.

'Forty years I have given to the study of Greek,' he is reported to have said. 'And what if they do not speak Greek there beyond?'

A German writer says: 'To go through the portal of death is like a horse passing into a low barn door. All superfluous packages on his back are scraped off and left behind.'

'To die, to sleep,' says Hamlet. 'To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub!'

Among the philosophic Asiatics so great is the repugnance to this dread, unsolvable problem that it is never mentioned by name. No one says that his neighbor is dead, but that he 'has gone away'—has 'sajuted the world.'

Men of cheerful temperament have thrown the reflection of their pleasant thoughts even beyond the verge of the great darkness. Charles Lamb, to whom home and friends were dearer than to most men, asks wistfully: 'Sun and sky, and breeze . . . and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields . . . and friends, and conversations, and innocent vanities and jests . . . do these go out with life? Can a ghost laugh . . . when you are pleasant with him?'

Hardly a man lives who is not afraid of death, yet every man once in each day falls without fear into a state of temporary death, the mystery of which no physician can adequately explain.

The same Power which guards the centres of life during sleep will guard them through that longer night.

And let us believe with David, who, after saying that he might be delivered from the evils that threatened his life, ends his supplications with an allusion to the last sleep that must come to him in common with all men, exclaiming with joyful certainty: 'As for me . . . I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.'

The Great Unknown.

A few months ago an old Kentucky mountaineer joined the people for miles around in going to a town where an electric car was to make its first trip. He was deeply impressed, and after much persuasion, was got aboard the car. The conductor laughingly told him it was off for Europe, and started. The old man tried to get off, but was restrained; then, thinking all he had heard was true, he pulled off his cap, and in the most serious voice, said: 'Good-by, these United States.'

The story recalls an anecdote related by the missionary explorer, David Livingstone. He led some natives of the interior of Africa on a toilsome march to the sea. When they came in sight of the ocean, the men fell on their faces to the ground. 'We were marching along with our father,' they afterward reported to their people, 'believing what the ancients has told us, that the world had no end. Then all at once the world said to us, "I am finished; there is no more of me."'

In unsophisticated yet lofty words like these, the mountaineer and the African alike expressed their conscious impotence before the unknown forces of God and man. We to whom the sea is but a feature in the landscape, the electric car but a convenience of the hour, smile at such fears. We happen to know about these things. There are other things, however, that come to frighten us. If we understood them better, we should find them no more worthy of alarm than the trolley car or the land's end. And the names of these things

these things are sorrow and death and pain.

WHEN LINCOLN WAS UNDER FIRE. How He Stood in an Exposed Position and Had to Obey Orders.

William Van Zandt Cox, the gifted secretary of the National Museum at Washington, contributes a bit of hitherto unwritten history about Abraham Lincoln, to the July issue of 'Success.' It happened that Lincoln was under fire of the Confederate sharpshooters on the twelfth day of July, 1864, while standing on the parapet of Fort Stevens during the only battle fought in the District of Columbia. A superb sketch of the scene is furnished by the celebrated sculptor, James Kelly.

'On one side of the battlefield, on an eminence, stood John C. Breckinridge, the candidate receiving the votes of the seceding states for president, expecting to enter the capital with the army of Northern Virginia.

'On the parapet of Fort Stevens, by the side of General Wright, amid the whizzing bullets, stood the successful candidate in that great political struggle,—Abraham Lincoln,—watching with that grave and pensive countenance, the progress of the battle.

'Four years ago, in company with the old commander of the Sixth Corps and his daughter, Mrs. Rosa Wright Smith, General D. S. Stanley, Captain Thomas Wilson, Dr. C. G. Stone, and James E. Kelly the well-known sculptor of American history, I stood upon that same parapet. After contemplating the surroundings, General Wright said: 'There near the pike were the woods that were so full of Early's men; along this slope is where our skirmishers deployed; there a house was burned, there another, and still another; over these trenches went the brave soldiers of the Sixth Corps. Where is the tree? I cannot find the tree from which a sharpshooter picked off my men. The old toll-gate has gone also.'

'He paced up and down the top of the crumbling earthworks for a while, as if to satisfy himself of some fact, and then said: 'Here, on the top of this parapet, between this old embrasure and that is the place where President Lincoln stood, witnessing the fight; there, by his side, a surgeon was wounded by a minie ball.

'I entreated the President not to expose his life to the bullets of the enemy; but he seemed oblivious to his surroundings; finally, when I found that my entreaties failed to make any impression upon him, I said: 'Mr. President, I know you are commander of the armies of the United States, but I am in command here, and, as you are not safe where you are standing, and I am responsible for your personal safety, I order you to come down. Mr. Lincoln looked at me, smiled, and then, more in consideration for my earnestness than from inclination, stepped down and took a position behind the parapet. Even then, he would persist in standing up and exposing his tall form.'

Wonderful Russian Eggs.

Easter Souvenirs of the Czarina and the Dowager Empress Shown at Paris.

Easter is celebrated in Russia with great ceremony, and the custom of giving elaborate Easter eggs has been carried to extravagance by the wealthy and aristocratic people in St. Petersburg; but no other Russian women have such collections of Easter eggs as the young Czarina and the Dowager Empress.

It has, for many generations, been a court custom for the reigning Czar to give his wife at Easter time an egg containing some handsome gift, usually a souvenir of some particular event, and the present Czar and his father, Alexander III., have always observed the old custom. The two empresses have, with considerable misgivings it is said, allowed their Easter egg collections to go to Paris and be placed on exhibition in the Russian section of the Exposition, and the French dramatic temperament is deeply stirred and moved by this testimony to the intimate and cordial relations between the two nations. From the Easter eggs are being hatched fraternal sentiments and touching enthusiasm with regular incubator expedition and despatch. Many of the eggs are exceedingly interesting as objects of art.

The first received by the present Czarina was given to her in the year of her coronation. It is a large golden egg, enamelled in rose color, and contains a tiny and perfect model of the state carriage in which the young bride rode to Moscow cathedral on her wedding day. The coach is of gold, cushioned in red enamel and hung with tiny silver curtains which can be drawn on gold wires. The Imperial crown in beautiful diamonds ornaments panels.

The last Easter egg added to the Czarina's collection was presented this year and in closes a splendid jewelled heart set in many colored gems and surrounded

ed by twenty five miniatures, portraits of the members of the Russian Royal family.

Among the collection of the Dowager Empress is one egg that commemorates a family storm and a royal problem. Nicholas II., the present Czar, when a boy, had, as all the world knew, a most irrational and vehement love affair. Society was shocked, the heir apparent's fond parents were distressed, and altogether there was a very interesting exhibition of the tempest that Cupid can, upon occasion stir up in a royal family. Nicholas was hurriedly sent around the world to complete his education and, as usual, time and absence reduced the royal heart to its normal condition, but the Empress grieved greatly over the separation of her son, and on Easter of that year the Czar gave her an egg, inside of which was a model of the ship in which her rebellious lad was sailing away from heart entanglement. A goldsmith of famous skill had spent ten months making the ship which was of solid gold, mounted on a beryl stone, and was complete and accurate in every detail, down to the smallest cable.

Circus Wagon Pictures.

An Up-to-date Finish That is Necessary to Success.

Nobody who isn't in the circus business can appreciate the value in an advertising way of spectacular pictorial effects. Any circus which attempted to make the main round of cities nowadays with the parade outfits of a few years ago would last about two weeks at the outside, before going broke. People would judge it by its parade and seeing that the animal wagons and band chariots weren't up to the mark would infer that the entire show was inferior, in which inference they would probably be perfectly correct. So keen is competition now and to such a point of practical discernment has the public been educated that the big shows spend an amount of money on ornamentation alone that would make the ordinary business man gasp and denounce them as prodigally wasteful. There is one "chariot" now on the road that actually cost close to \$10,000 when it was new and it involves a large outlay every year to keep it brightened up with gold leaf and repairs of weather wear.

On the inside these vehicles are strictly and rigidly economical. Not a foot of space is wasted. Most of the wagons are full of paraphernalia marvellously packed by experts in that line. Nothing can be learned from the exterior of the vehicle regarding its interior. The magnificent blue and gold chariot, worthy of the royal court of Bengal tigers, carries the layout of the ticket seller, while the wagon which limns forth on its gay sides the likeness of the ferocious rhinoceros is probably the habitat of the wardrobe woman and her outfit. Other magnificent equipages of the wheeled procession carry apparatus, clothing, trappings and fodder for the animals.

Most of the animals themselves are left behind when the show goes out on parade, except those that march, such as the elephants and camels, and a few of the big felines, taken along to roar enticingly. There have been cases where haste and confusion on the part of the showmen in preparing the parade have resulted in the unmistakable roar of the king of beasts being heard from a wagon on whose panels coiled the mighty but comparatively voiceless bear constrictor to the vast amazement of the gathered public.

Painting circus wagon panels is a distinct branch of art. Probably the academics would not so regard it, but nevertheless there is a certain breadth of treatment and dash required that are quite beyond the abilities of the ordinary practitioner of art. Nor are the pictured sides of the circus vans to be lightly regarded by any right thinking observer. Once they were in the chrome class, or somewhat lower, but now they represent some very good if rather hasty work. The most successful painter of this line of work in the country is an artist of high abilities and reputation in a large Western city. His reputation has been made as a portrait painter, and it would doubtless be a distinct detriment to his career were it known that he paints circus wagons, but paint them he does and what is more he delights in the work. This artist has always had a fancy that his real forte lay in landscape work with a sprinkling of animals. That the public and the critics have always insisted on differing with him has been a grief to him. However, as he could earn a considerable income by his portraits he felt able to spend his spare time in painting animal and woodland scenes which nobody would buy. Then he got into the circus painting business and not only was his ambition satisfied but his income was largely augmented.

How it came about that this artist was induced to go into this line of work probably nobody but he and the showman who got him into it knows. Every winter now,

when that show goes into winter quarters, the artist is summoned to the place, and for some weeks works away for dear life, designing and painting new wagon scenes. Among the show people he does not go under his own name, and he does not reveal at his home the business that takes him away every winter. In this line of work he has made all climates his own, and will as readily paint an Arctic icecap for the Siberian fox as an African oasis for the giraffe, or a Rocky Mountain fastness for the grizzly bear. At first he worked slowly, but the show people succeeded in impressing him with the necessity of haste, and now he makes many of his designs during the summer, and after talking them over with the manager of the show proceeds to paint them in.

For the envy of those orthodox painters who confine themselves within the constricted lines of regulation art it may be said that he averages about \$40 a day while working for the circus. To do this he has to paint a wagon a day. Of course it is impossible for him to do all the work of painting at this rate, so he merely blocks out the pictures, explaining to his assistants as he works just how he wants the colors and the gold leaf laid on.

Gold leaf is an essential of circus art. It catches the sun and attracts the public eye. The amount of money laid out in this article alone by a big circus is astonishing. When the painting of the wagons is all done the artist goes over the whole lot in a final survey. Any crudities that there may be he touches up or smooths down until all is fit, and the wagons, glittering and gorgeous, are loaded on the train to meet the critical eyes of the metropolitan public when the show starts its tour.

Raced The Train Against Fire.

A Burning Car Pulled Into Des Moines in Time to Be Saved.

William S. Night last night told a very strange story of a chair car in a Chicago Great Western Railroad train that was afire and full of passengers with the train at full speed. "It was one of the strangest things I ever experienced," said he, "and all the trainmen, including the superintendent of the road, were in a quandary to know the cause of the car's catching on fire. We were about seven miles from Des Moines when smoke was discovered curling out from under the middle of the first chair car. The fire was between the two floors or the car, and seemed to have spread toward both ends. It had not started near the wheels, for it was in the centre of the car, and that would do away with any theory of a hot box.

'Well, what to do was a little problem for the conductor of the train to solve. The fire could not be stopped without a hose and water power to throw the water back toward both ends of the car, and at that place in the fields there were no such conveniences. The fire had not yet eaten its way through the floor, so the passengers needed to have no fear. The engineer and conductor with a few passengers stood beside the car, undecided what to do. If the train remained there, the coach must have necessarily have burned up and would have 'laid out' the whole road.

'The conductor suddenly conceived a plan and immediately shouted: 'All aboard! Shove her through to Des Moines at full speed. Tommy,' he yelled to the engineer and Tommy, the large chubby engineer, covered with grease and oil, waddled down to his engine as fast as his short legs would carry him. The conductor pulled the throttle wide open, and Tommy pulled the throttle wide open, and such a wild ride as we did have! It was a race to see which was the faster, the fire or the locomotive. The locomotive won, and when we reached the yards at Des Moines the fire had almost eaten its way through the floor of the coach. It was quickly extinguished at the edge of the yards by means of a hose attached to a water main, and we drew into the depot on time.'

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Paint Propagates Prosperity.

How diversified the tests to determine the presence of genuine prosperity! The use of the paint-pot is a recent measure of good times applied with satisfactory results in a Western state, where it is said more paint will improve and adorn property this year than in the previous five years. Even corn-cobs and chicken coops will share in the history of a building may not only please the public eye, but proclaim the soundness of the owner's purse.

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