

Choice Miscellany.

"IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN."

It might have been! Oh, saddest words of all, We dream and dream of scenes beyond recall.

Oh, could we live our lives all o'er again! Could we forget the present, with the pain Of thoughts that are unspoken! "All in vain," "It might have been."

It might have been, "Oh," words of wild regret; Sorrow for vanished hours, and yet—ah, yet, Would we, if e'en we could, forget—forget "What might have been."

Ah, well! perchance for all some sweet hope lies Buried deeply, maybe, from human eyes, And none but God may ever hear our sighs "O'er 'might have been."

God knoweth best; and though our tears fall fast, Though none beside may know, he knoweth all, All that is sad and lost beyond recall— The "might have been."

BIG JIM.

"He's a bully!" "He's a coward!" "He's got to hang!" "That's his third man!"

The one narrow street of the frontier town was filled with a surging crowd of excited men. There were Indian fighters, scouts, gamblers, tramps, miners, speculators—everything and everybody.

Every town has its bully—every frontier town. Big Jim was the bully of Hill City. He could drink more, curse louder, shoot quicker and start a row sooner than any other man.

When he shot Limber Joe it was a stand-off. It was rough, against rough. Whoever went under the town would be the gainer. The death of his second victim brought him a certain respect, for he had given the man fair show.

There was a limit to the number of men one might shoot in Hill City. It was three times and out. Big Jim had killed his third.

Two hundred men—all excited—some half crazed—all indignant—some terribly aroused, surged down the street to the Red Star Saloon bent on vengeance. Big Jim and the man he had killed were alone in the place.

"Bring him out!" "He's got to hang!" "Bring out the bully and coward!"

There was a rush, but it was checked. Men had pistols and knives in their hands, but the sight of Big Jim with a "naval" in each hand cooled their ardor.

A life for a life is no revenge. They hid when they called him a bully. Bullies strike and run or bluster and dare not strike. They lied when they called him a coward. Cowards do not remain to face death.

Big Jim advanced a little. The crowd fell back. He stood in the door and surveyed the mob as coolly as another man might have looked up at the placid crest of Carter's Peak.

The mob grew quiet. There were 200 right hands clutching deadly weapons, but not a hand moved. Two hundred to one is appalling odds, but the one was master. Seeming to face every man there—seeming to cover every breast with the black muzzles of his revolvers—the man backed away up the road into the darkness, out of their sight and hearing. He said not a word. There wasn't a whisper from the crowd until he had disappeared, then men drew long breaths of relief. A terrible menace had passed away.

Out into the darkness—down the rough road—over the rude bridge, and there Big Jim put up his revolvers—turned his face square to the West, and stepped out without a look back at the camp.

It was ten miles to Harney's bend. Men driven from the one camp took refuge in the other. The half way landmark was a bit of a valley skirted by a creek. Wayfarers who were journeying by team many times halted here. On this night there was a lone wagon. Under the canvas cover slept a mother and four children. Resting against the wheel was the husband and father, his eyes peering into the darkness—his ears drinking in every sound.

Big Jim had not reached the valley yet when the still night air was rent with war whoops—the crack of rifles—the screams of a woman and her children. Indians had discovered the lone and almost defenseless family. There were five scalps to adorn their lodges. The bully and the coward had not been discovered. He could find a safe hiding place. Did he?

A half dozen screaming, yelling fiends were dancing about the wagon—shooting—striking—dodging—closing in on the one white man who somehow escaped their blows and bullets, when there was a cheer and a rush, and the Navys began to crack. Sixty seconds later dead silence had fallen upon the valley.

One—two—three dead Indians. The immigrant leaned against the wagon, faint with a wound in his head. The wife looked out with an awful terror at her heart. Bullets had chipped and splintered wheel and body.

"Who are you?" asked the immigrant as a figure approached him from the darkness.

"Big Jim."

"You have saved us from a massacre."

"Yes, it was well that I happened along! Rouse up the fire, for there is no further danger."

When the blaze caught the fresh fagots and lighted up the little valley the immigrant counted the dead Indians again—one—two—three. He turned with extended hand, but Big Jim had departed. Next day, when men from Hill's and Harney's found his dead body beside the rocks a mile away, with five wounds which had let his life-blood out, they whispered to each other:

"We thought we knewed him, but we didn't."

TWO POETS.

"And you saw her often?" asked a listener of the English lady who was speaking of Mrs Browning. "Yes, very often. I was in Italy that winter. She had come down to Rome for a little change, and I went to see her almost every day. Ah, that was something to remember!" "Was she beautiful?" asked the listener. "Tell me about her."

"No, she was not what people call beautiful; but she was more and better. I can see her now, as she lay there on her sofa. I never saw her sitting up. She was always in white. She wore white dresses, trimmed with white lace, with white, fleecy shawls wrapped round her, and her dark brown hair used to be let down, and fall all about her like a veil. Her face used to seem to me something already not of the earth—it was so pale, so pure, and with great dark eyes that gleamed like stars. Then her voice was so sweet you never wanted her to stop speaking, but it was also so low you could only hear it by listening carefully."

"Was Mr Browning there?" "Oh yes, and he used to watch her as one watches who has the most precious object in the whole world to keep guard over. He looked out for her comfort as tenderly as a woman."

"I think there never was another marriage like that; a marriage that made two poet's souls one forever. Don't you notice how Browning always speaks of finding again the 'soul of his soul'? It was easy enough to see that that was just what she was. And the boy was there, too, a little fellow, with long golden hair careful he was not to disturb his mother. Sometimes he used to stand for a long time beside her, with her 'spirit-small hand,' as her husband called it, just playing with his curls. I wonder if he could have known that she was going away from him so soon."

"Sometimes I have thought he felt some premonition of it, he was so quiet and unlike other children; but perhaps it was only because his father had taught him, above all things, not to 'disturb mamma.'"

"The end came soon after that?" "Yes, very soon. Only think, that was a quarter of a century ago, and the son is a bluff, hearty-looking Englishman now, painting pictures and carving statues, and the husband's hair has grown white as snow, and no other woman has ever taken the place she left vacant. Well, I'm glad I saw her when she was only almost but not yet quite an angel."

HOW HE GAINED HIS POINT.

Jane wanted to go to the circus and John wanted to go to the theatre.

"We can go to the theatre any time," she said, "but the circus is here for only a week and we have not always the chance of going to it."

"Well, as you like," said John, "but allow me to say this—I will not be responsible for the consequences."

"What consequences?" asked Jane in surprise.

"These consequences," answered John gravely: "Suppose one of the lions should break out of his cage while we are there, it's all over with you—"

"All over with me!"

"Certainly. The lions ain't blind, are they?"

"N—no—but what has that got to do with me?"

"Just this: If you look to me to be sweet enough to eat, how will you look to a roaring, roaring lion? He will think you a delicious morsel and you are gone."

"But, John, there will be other girls there besides me."

"I know it, but you will be the sweetest one there."

"Very well, John dear; I think we'd better go to the theatre."—Boston Courier.

GIRLS IN COLLEGE TOWNS

A young man, whose breast was covered with glittering secret society badges, walked into a Whitewall street jewelry store yesterday morning, and asked that some plain gold rings be shown him. After a good deal of hesitancy he selected one, paid for it, put it in his pocket, and withdrew. The young man was a college student. He was about to contract an engagement with a young lady who resides in the town which contains his college. The circumstance caused the writer to call to mind a somewhat curious fact. Every small college town contains a number of young ladies, more or less great, whose inevitable fate is to die old maids. In early youth they begin their social career with them. The chief incidents are engagements to the students, one by one. Usually, the engagements end in nothing but "blasted hopes."

These students return to their homes, and leave their sanguine sweethearts to discover that they must try again. The writer has in mind a lovely little town among the "knobs" of Kentucky, in which, during his college days, there was a battalion of the fair sex, each from 25 to 30 years of age, and each husbandless. They have been deceived by each successive generation of students for a period of

years ranging from ten to fifteen. They were still hopeful. That mother who desires that the opportunities for marriage shall be for her daughters equal to those of other young ladies, should never consent to live in a small college town.—Atlanta Constitution.

WISDOM.

Nothing is so credulous as vanity, or so ignorant of what becomes itself. Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble.

The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude. There is by God's grace, an immeasurable distance between late and too late.

The more we help others to bear their burdens the lighter our own will be. Study yourself, and most of all note well wherein kind Nature meant you to excel.

Genius follows its own path and reaches its destination, scarcely needing a compass. No cord or cable can draw so forcibly or bind so fast as love can do with a single thread.

He that would live at ease should always put the best construction on business and conversation.

Reason cannot show itself more reasonable than to cease reasoning on things that are above reasoning.

Whatever you would have your children become, strive to exhibit in your own lives and conversation.

To all intents and purposes, he who will not open his eyes is, for the present, as blind as he that cannot.

Simplicity, of all things, is the hardest to be copied, and ease is only to be acquired with the greatest labor.

Conscience is a coward, and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent it seldom has justice enough to accuse.

True politeness is the last touch of a noble character. "It is the gold on the spire, the sunlight on the corn-field."

Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods? Draw near them then in being merciful; Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge.

Dignity is much better than much familiarity. In the coolness which it imposes it's always, like water freezing, somewhat elevated.

If you wish people to be kindly toward you, you had best begin by being kindly towards them. The man who scatters thorns had better not go barefoot.

Calumny crosses oceans, scales mountains and traverses deserts with greater ease than the Cythian Abaris, and, like him, rides upon a poisoned arrow.

We must look downward as well as upward in human life. Though many may have passed you in the race, there are many you have left behind.

Life is a series of surprises, and would not be worth taking or keeping if it were not. God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the past and the future.

Agitation prevents rebellion, keeps the peace and secures progress. Every step he gains is gained forever. Muskets are weapons of animals. Agitation is the atmosphere of the brain.

The old, old fashion; the fashion that came in with our first garments, will last unchanged, until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death.

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JAMES B. MARTIN } Admr J. JOHN L. MARTIN }

Wolville, Oct. 16, 1885. tf

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Time Table

1886—Summer Arrangement—1886.

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Table with columns: GOING EAST, Accm. Daily, accm. T.F.S. Daily, Exp. Daily. Includes Annapolis Leve, Bridgewater, 28 Middleton, 42 Aylesford, 47 Berwick, 30 Waterville, 59 Kentville, 64 Port Williams, 66 Wolfville, 69 Grand Pre, 72 Avonport, 77 Hantsport, 84 Windsor, 116 Windsor June, 130 Halifax arrive.

Table with columns: GOING WEST, Exp. Daily, Accm. M.W.F. Daily, Accm. Daily. Includes Halifax leave, 14 Windsor Jun., 46 Windsor, 53 Hantsport, 58 Avonport, 61 Grand Pre, 64 Wolfville, 66 Port Williams, 71 Kentville, 80 Waterville, 83 Berwick, 88 Aylesford, 102 Middleton, 116 Bridgetown, 130 Annapolis Arive.

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