

# DEFEATING DEATH.

A STORY OF FAR WESTERN LIFE.

"Good-bye, John; take good care of yourself and come back as soon as you can."

"Good-bye, Nellie, dear, and don't forget me while I am away."

Their hands warmly pressed each other as their lips would have done had not others been near. Then they separated. Nellie Browning watched the tall, strong form of John King until it was lost in the high grass of the prairie and with a sigh returned to duty.

Never before had the little isolated way station on the Canadian Pacific seemed so dull, the clink of the telegraph instrument so monotonous. There was literally nothing for her to do after the customary "putting to rights." No train would pass for hours, messages seldom troubled her, she had exhausted her little stock of reading. What could she do to make the hours pass less wearily?

She rested her head upon the key-board and gave herself to pleasant waking dreams, to mentally following her lover and murmuring aloud of the pictures thought photographed upon her heart.

"It will take John all day to inspect the line to the little wooden island in the middle of the prairie, and he will have to sleep there alone in the log cabin. I wonder if he will think of me all the time, as I will of him? How I wish I could be with him!"

But do what she would her thoughts wandered to her lover, the lack of comfort he would experience, and the happy day when she would have the right to be ever by his side.

As if the hours had become leaden-footed they crept along. At noon she listlessly ate the lunch she had brought from her farm home; then wished night would hurry along that she might be with her lover, at least in dreams.

Darkness did come after long and weary waiting; her hours of duty had ended and she was preparing to leave when the station was called and she was told in clicking whispers that on account of an extra that was wildcating she would have to remain until midnight.

With the reverse of a pleasant expression upon her face and an almost defiant tossing back of her auburn curls she sat down again. The workmen about the station went home and left her alone; the frogs croaked mournfully from a neighboring slough and the wires made weird music as the brisk night wind played upon them. But the experience was not new to her; there was nothing to fear and her father would come for her when the night was done.

Eight, nine, ten passed and the silence was becoming painful. Something must be done. She failed to remember being so much oppressed by the lack of society and wondered how Robinson Crusoe could have existed before his man Friday. Then she thought of a female friend who was operator at the next westward station, and, nearly dying for some one to talk to, summoned "Sterling."

"There was no reply. Try as she would directly she could get none, but utilizing a circuit she was answered and asked:

"What is the matter with the main line?"

"Matter enough," was answered, and her trained ear instantly told her the touch was not of a delicately fingered girl, but a heavy-handed man. "The prairie is all on fire between here and Buffalo Heart Grove; that is beginning to burn and when the flames sweep round on your side you'll have to look sharp if they don't catch you napping, my pretty daisy."

At another time she would have closed the key with an angry snap at the impudent familiarity. Now there was room in her brain for only one maddening thought.

John King was sleeping in the cabin in the grove, would be surrounded by fire, be stifled by smoke, be burned to death!

"Prairie round Buffalo Heart Grove a sea of flame, line down, bridges over culverts probably burned. Stop all trains at X," she managed to flash back over the wire.

Then she dashed out where all should have been darkness but was not. For miles earth and sky were illuminated, the roaring of the flames could be distinctly heard, their furious leaping distinctly traced, their speed swifter than the greyhound and their force resistless as a cyclone. Nothing to her now was duty, nothing that it wanted two hours of midnight, nothing that many lives might hang upon her remaining at her post. One life she knew was in danger, and that was to her more than all others in the world.

With flying feet, with a desperate resolve forming in her brain, she hastened homeward, but did not enter the house—dared not for fear of the thwarting of her purpose. As she passed the window she saw her old father nodding in his chair, and a satisfied smile parted her lips. For all the hidden wealth of mountain and canon she would not have him waken.

Well she knew the swiftest and most untiring horse in the stable. That it was one she had never ridden, a young, fiery, valuable blue blooded stallion, she never gave a thought. Speed and courage were the things now to be desired, and all other considerations, even her own safety, were dwarfed into nothingness by them.

With soothing voice and gentle hands the girl led the horse out, bridled, saddled and mounted. Astonished by her daring, he quietly submitted. The charm of womanhood had easily accomplished what had ever been a difficult task for men. Then, started by the unusual burden and flapping of skirts about his flank, he reared, plunged, pawed the air, kicked vigorously and made a desperate effort to unseat the rider. It was unsuccessful. The hands that held the

rider with her long hair streaming in the wind, the horse as if breathing smoke—saw without recognition, and superstitiously imagined that the ghost of some red child of the wilderness, whose bones had been disturbed in building the iron track of the pale face, was out for a midnight revel.

For a considerable distance the road was over the undulating prairie, and both horse and rider enjoyed the race; then they were forced upon the ties, and heavily shod hoofs clattered along the bridges; then they left it and safety and plunged upon a narrow thread of beaten earth, with fire swiftly rushing toward it from either side.

The horse, brave and blooded as he was, hesitated, as well he might; but the hand of the rider was firm and the whip merciless. A brief hour had transformed the gentle girl into a woman maddened by love and superior to danger. The one idea that had taken possession of brain and pulsing heart remained permanent. John King was in danger of being consumed. She must him save or—

And very soon the horse became mad as well. With long and seemingly tireless strides he stretched himself. His dark skin was flecked with foam, his sides were heaving as a bellows, like escaping steam his breath was blown, his eyes were red with exertion and his frame trembling with excitement.

On, on they pressed, on thus far in little danger, for the fire was yet at a distance. But with every moment it became nearer, nearer, closed upon them, and blazing sparks fell thick as rain.

On, on, and the flames leaped upward and at times closed over their heads; they were rushing as through a tunnel of hissing, roaring fire; it was crowding in upon them, was beneath their feet, was playing in fantastic shapes around and above.

Mad as the girl was with desire to reach her lover the horrors of the situation were forced upon her brain. She bowed her head to the fire storm, shielded her face and often extinguished her blazing dress; spoke encouragingly to the horse, patted his quivering neck, used the deep-cutting lash, cutting a hundred times more cruelly, for his sides were cracking with the heat and blood was oozing from the blistered wounds.

On, still on, but more slowly at every stride, with steps less firm and secure, breath more scant, courage less high and pace less swift. Never yet steeled that could long bear such a fearful strain; never flesh that could resist a prairie fire with hundreds of acres of dry, tall grass and reeds for fuel and fanned by a gale.

On! The girl shielded her eyes with her trembling hands, and above the smoke saw the waving of trees. As yet the furious fire had not reached, at least not penetrated, them. There was life, safety, and, more than all, love. Could she reach them? A scanty half mile had yet to be travelled. Instinct, often as clear to discovery as mind, told the horse of the situation as clearly as her eyes. She called upon him, and he answered; she bowed to the saddle, she shut her eyes and then!

The flames swirled around, they were wrapped as in a winding sheet of them, the red forked tongues touched them with blistering kisses, the wind roared through the gigantic furnace, the earth was hot beneath, the air burning above; deer, wolf, every creeping thing were outfooted in the race, were beaten down by a swift death, and how could they possibly escape.

On! Between them and the sheltering trees but a few rods remained; but a few feet. Could they be overcome? Voice and lash urged the noble horse on. He struggled to obey, but his best efforts were becoming feeble, his heart was beating slow, the iron-muscle limbs were fast becoming useless. A single burst of speed, as at the beginning would have been enough—the racing of a few seconds all that was required.

Frantically the girl shouted, in despair she lashed the reeking sides. The horse gathered for a supreme effort, reeled, staggered, fell even as the wind roared and the fire hissed more savagely.

But the impulse had been sufficient to carry him beyond the blazing death and the bushes closed behind and the trees rose above and protected them from the scorching shower.

"God be thanked," exclaimed the suffering girl as she knelt beside the gallant horse. "God be thanked, and she flung her arms around his neck and shed bitter tears as she saw how scared and burned he was, regardless of her own sufferings.

With difficulty she urged him to his feet and led him forward. But he knew as well as see of their safety, of the necessity of moving, and lamb-like followed deep into the wood where the cabin stood.

"John, dear John," rang out the voice of the girl.

"Nellie! Great God, is that you?" was

answered and questioned, and a moment later she was locked within his protecting arms.

In a few words she told all, and begged him to do all possible for the horse.

"Now and ever," he answered. "One moment." He climbed to the top of a tall tree, looked around, descended, and said cheerfully: "The wind has changed; the fire is rushing away from the timber; we are safe here. But why in the name of heaven did you attempt such a dangerous chance, Nellie?"

"Because, dear, I loved you so," and she drooped fainting upon his anxiously throbbing breast.

## Mont Blanc.

Mont Blanc may, perhaps, on account of its great height,—15,781 feet,—and its immense glaciers, of which the "Sea of Ice" is the largest, and which covers one hundred and four square miles, be called the most famous mountain in the world. This mountain celebrated its centenary this year: that is to say, the people of Chamounix, at the mountain's foot, have celebrated the hundredth anniversary of its ascent by Benedict de Saussure, an illustrious man of science, who was the first to climb Mont Blanc. Chamounix has erected a monument to De Saussure, which has just been dedicated, and it will also raise one to Jacques Balmat, who was De Saussure's guide on the occasion of his first ascent in April, 1787.

De Saussure was a botanist, and his botanical studies at the base of the mountain had given him a strong desire to climb to the summit. It was no idle curiosity which prompted him, but a desire to obtain a knowledge of the geological laws which had governed the formation of the chain of the Alps, which fixed the age of its granites and limestones, and would explain the composition and apparent disorder of its ledges.

Two Englishmen, Pooceke and Wyndham by name, had attempted the ascent before. They came with a retinue of baggage-bearers, and even with soldiers, and were dressed, for some unknown reason, in Arab costume. They ascended no further than the timidest travellers now climb, and were then compelled to turn back.

Having finally provided himself with hardy mountaineers for guides, De Saussure set out for the summit. He was gone four days. Almost at the outset a terrible avalanche swept away one of his guides.

Presently the rarity of the air began to tell on the whole party. After throwing three or four shovelfuls of snow that lay in their path, the men would sink down exhausted. The wilderness of glaring snow blinded them; the thinness of the air made their ears buzz, and they became the victims of fears and hallucinations.

Their food was soon frozen. Fearing every step might be their last, the men faltered, but De Saussure urged them on and on.

Finally, the last precipice was climbed. Could the men believe their eyes? They were at the summit. De Saussure has left an account of his impressions, in which he says:

"It seemed to me like a dream when I saw below me the majestic summit, the redoubtable peaks of the other Alps, whose very bases had been difficult and dangerous of approach to me.

"I noted their position, their relations, their structure; a single glance resolved the doubts that I had been trying years to clear up!"

De Saussure died in 1799, so that he has been a long time awaiting his monument. Jacques Balmat, who accompanied him, became a famous Mont Blanc guide. Once, with only his staff, abandoned by his companions, Balmat spent three days at the top of the mountain. Since De Saussure, nearly eight hundred travellers have climbed to the summit where he was the pioneer.

## Made a Minute of it.

"Can you tell me darling," he asked, as they sat together in the weak spot of the sofa, "the exact physiological and mathematic duration of a kiss?"

"About a second and a half, I believe," she answered demurely.

"Thanks," I will make a minute of it."

## Never Found One.

Sweet Girl (disrobing)—"Did you look under the bed?"

Old Maid—"What for?"

"To see if there is a man there."

"No, dear, I've given up all hope."

## A Plausible Suggestion.

Sharp-visaged Female (to grocer's boy)—"I've waited here so long, young man, that I forgot what I came for."

Grocer's Boy (meekly suggestive)—"P'raps it's winegar, mum."

# HEALTH.

## Hunger.

This is a sensation which correctly indicates the real wants of the system, at least, if the stomach is in a normal condition. It was manifestly intended that this should fairly represent—as the thermometer does the temperature—to what extent the body has been wasted, its tissues actually destroyed, by exercise, physical and mental toil, being indicated by this "foodometer," for the repair of such waste. Hard work, violent efforts, mental labors included, increase the appetite, simply because such unusual labors waste the tissues unusually.

On the other hand, if the usual amount of labor is diminished, there is naturally a diminished appetite, mercifully indicating a demand for less food. (It is for this reason that those who have been very active in business life, generally live but a short time after leading an indolent life, particularly those who do little save to eat and sleep. They overpower the organs of digestion, practically starve themselves. The digestive organs, in their debilitated state, being unable to appropriate enough to meet the wants of the system.)

On the principle of the formation of bad habits, by the use of intoxicants, tobacco, etc., the appetite may become so vitiated, so revolutionized, that what is regarded as hunger will not fairly represent the true wants of the system, never to be taken as a guide in the matter of food-taking. Thus, when one habitually uses too much food, more than the system demands, gradually learning to eat more by one-third than usual, a habit is formed, an abnormal appetite created, the result of which is an artificial hunger, or what is called hunger, in no sense reliable. A similar result is produced when rich and unnatural food is taken, food which satisfies a false appetite, this sensation of supposed hunger being no more reliable than the tobacco-user's desire for the "filthy weed." Unnatural longings are induced by these causes, often mistaken for hunger, the gratification of which necessarily leads to dyspepsia and various digestive disturbances.

## The Pancreas.

The pancreas is a long and narrow organ, extending horizontally back of the upper part of the stomach. It is what in animals is called "the sweet bread." Its office is to secrete one of the digestive fluids, called the pancreatic juice, which flows into the duodenum—that part of the intestines nearest the stomach. The pancreatic juice passes usually through the same duct that carries the bile, though sometimes it occupies a duct of its own.

In some respects it resembles saliva, and thus converts starch into sugar; unlike saliva, and like the gastric juice, it also digests albuminous food (flesh); and, still further, like the bile, it aids in digesting fat, forming an emulsion, and resolving it into glycerine and the fatty acids.

It will be seen that the pancreas is a very important organ, and yet less is known about its diseases than about those of any other organ of the body. Its proper symptoms are largely hidden by symptoms in other organs disturbed by it.

For instance, it may of itself give no sensation of pain, though greatly diseased; and yet the inflammation or irritation of the pancreas, extending to the neighboring "solar plexus," a great number of nerves near the kidneys, may give rise to agonizing neuralgias.

The pancreas may be congested, and suffer a consequent hemorrhage, because of obstruction in the portal circulation—the circulation through the liver. It may become shrivelled (atrophied) from wasting disease; from diabetes; from pressure of other enlarged organs, or tumors, on it; from fatty degeneration; from old age.

Its ducts may be obstructed, and result in destruction. Calculi may form in it. Cancer may attack it.

It will be sufficiently evident from this catalogue of maladies of the pancreas, many of which may easily be mistaken by the patient for a liver trouble, or a disorder of some other organ, that all such disturbances of the system should have the faithful care of an experienced physician.

Persons who "doctor themselves" may guess rightly what ails them, but they are quite as likely to guess the wrong disease, and they may even be in error as to the organ that is out of order.

## Positions that Affect Sleep.

According to Dr. Granville the position affects sleep. A constrained position generally prevents repose, while a comfortable one woos sleep. He says lying flat on the back with the limbs relaxed would seem to secure the greatest amount of rest for the muscular system.

This is the position assumed in the most exhausting diseases, and it is generally uniformly turns on the side; but there are several advantages in the supine position, which impair or embarrass sleep. There is a certain morbid condition of the head and the blood seems to gravitate to the head and to produce troublesome dreams.

In persons who habitually in their daily work stoop, there is probably some degree of consequent on straightening the spine. Those who have contracted chests, especially persons who have had pleurisy and adhesions of the lungs, do not sleep well on the back.

Nearly all who are inclined to snore do so in that position, because the soft palate and uvula bang on the tongue, and that organ falls back so as to partly close the top of the windpipe. It is better, therefore, to lie on the side, and in the absence of special causes, rendering it desirable to lay on the weak side so as to leave the healthy lung free to expand, it is well to use the right side because when the body is thus placed the food gravitates more easily out of the stomach into the intestines, and the weight of the stomach does not compress the upper portion of the intestines.

A glance at any of the visceral anatomy will show how this must be. Many persons are deaf in one ear and prefer to lie on that side should be chosen. Again, sleeping with the arms thrown over the head is to be deprecated, but this position is often assumed during sleep, because circulation is then free in the extremities, and the head and neck and muscles of the chest are drawn up and freed by the shoulders, and thus the expansion of the thorax is easy.

The chief objection to these positions is that they create a tendency to cramp and cold in the arms, and sometimes seem to cause headaches during sleep and dreams. These small matters often make or mar comfort in sleeping.

## Water as a Medicine.

Ordinary drinking water, if taken in large quantities, acts as a solvent and diuretic, and also increases the perspiration if the temperature of the air be high. Taken in the quantity of one or two quarts at a time, the diluent effect of water is often sufficient to eliminate an excess of alcohol from the blood, as after taking too much wine. Another effect of large draughts of water is to make the pulse slower, and to diminish slightly the normal temperature of the body.

Increase of weight has been claimed as a result of systematic water drinking on retiring for the night. The latest researches do not bear out this conclusion. Water thus taken will prevent any actual loss of weight, but it is not shown that it will do anything more. With the addition of a moderate stimulant, however, it has often a decidedly fattening effect.

## To Remove Warts.

The Medical Press says that warts may be removed by the use of magnesia taken internally: "It is fairly established that the common wart, which is so unsightly and often so proliferous on the hands and face, can be easily removed by small doses of sulphate of magnesia taken internally. M. Colrat, of Lyons, has drawn attention to this extraordinary fact. Several children treated with three-grain doses of Epsom salts morning and evening, were promptly cured. M. Aubert cites the case of a woman whose face was disfigured by these excrescences, and who was cured in a month by a drachm and a half of magnesia taken daily. Another medical man reports a case of very large warts which disappeared in a fortnight from the daily administration of ten grains of the salt."

## Cure For a Bone-Felon.

Take the juice of the leaves of rue, one tablespoonful; good, strong soft soap, one tablespoonful; and the juice of one red onion; these three articles should be thoroughly mixed, then add a piece of alum and a piece of copperas, each the size of a small marble, finely pulverized; when the whole has been well mixed it is ready for application, by pouring it into a soft, thin leather bag or oil cloth to fit the diseased member, but not very tight, let it remain on till suppuration takes place. The time it takes this composition to produce suppuration depends on the length of time the felon has been in progress; but it will generally remove the pus from the bone in the course of two hours, when the suffering will cease.

## Disinfection of the Sick-Room.

In the sick-room no disinfectant can take the place of free ventilation and cleanliness. It is an axiom in sanitary science that it is impracticable to disinfect an occupied apartment, for the reason that disease germs are not destroyed by the presence in the atmosphere of any known disinfectant in respirable quantity. Bad odours may be neutralized, but this does not constitute disinfection in the sense in which the term is here used. These bad odours are for the most part an indication of want of cleanliness or of proper ventilation; and it is better to turn contaminated air out of the window or up the chimney than to attempt to purify it by the use of volatile chemical agents, such as carbolic acid, chlorine, &c., which are all more or less offensive to the sick, and are useless so far as disinfection—properly so called—is concerned.

## Antidotes for Certain Poisons.

A standing antidote for poison by poison oak, ivy, etc., is to take a handful of quicklime, dissolve in water, let it stand half an hour, then reject the noisened parts with it.

# MISCELLANEOUS.

A Boston man has had an encounter with a doctor. The doctor used up four spoons of his thirty-nine needles in sewing up the wounds.

In China the rule of the road is to keep to the left, but the coolie bearers of the mountain, in which the women or other passengers in the sedan chairs are seated.

The Chambers of Commerce of Paris, Vienna, Sienna, and Ravenna, have sent to the Italian Merchants' Exchange in San Francisco for samples of seed of wheat and millet, with the idea of trying to grow them into Italy.

Texas prospectors recently saw a pack of eight big gray wolves and a pack of 300 cattle. The wolves separated and calf from the rest and attacked the herd. The herd came to the rescue, and drove the wolves away.

"Hold this baby while I have a figure," said an East Boston woman to a man who had just come ashore from a ship, always ready to be entertained by the infant, and the woman took the baby and walked away.

A man has been discovered in Painesville, Ohio, who has been for many years a member of the Mormon Church. It is reported that he has made a number of converts in Maine and Massachusetts, and has been successful in his work, having taken many converts.

Miss Laura Winkler of Iowa is one of the most successful temperance workers in the State. The fact that she is total abstemious no bar to her vigorous work in her favorite field, the workshop, which makes strong and personal appeal to give up liquor drinking.

Two items of show news come from the Atlantic. One is that in London of trained doves are delighting the folks by doing tricks such as are performed by dogs; the other is that a lot of cats are doing much the same at the Winter Circus.

Corea recently broke down her barriers so far as to send an envoy to the Government was so poor that he could not support him, and soon the end of his resources, he had to put in the Japanese Government to a put in desperate straits.

An immense picture of the crucifixion recently found painted in oil with a deal of artistic skill on the wall of the island of Davaur, in Campbell's Scotland. The discovery made a sensation until a Mr. Archibald McKelvey, who was present, and who had known that it had been painted there.

The boys on an English reformer, the Mersey mutinied recently, and were in possession of the ship. They smashed the furniture and did a deal of damage, after which seven worst ringleaders lowered a boat to the shore. Some of them were killed.

Miss Clara Noon, who teaches at Sabina, Ohio, caught a pupil in bed, and to punish him for lying, she bathed his mouth with soap and water. Her parents objected to this form of punishment and preferred charges. The trial was a bitter trial, upheld the young man.

A man who attended fifty bull fights in Spain was asked the other day why he did not go to so many. "In the hope that one of the bull fighters killed," he answered. "The sport is so brutal and so dangerous that I wanted to see the men who are killed in their brutality receive a just retribution for their work."

Senorita Matilde Montoya, a Mexican girl to become a doctor, was a young man of the City of Mexico who got up a bull fight in honor of his father and devoted the proceeds to the purchase of books and instruments for the bull fight two of the toreros were killed seriously.

A Hungarian historian, through the archives at Budapest covered over 500 wills dated 1874, which had been put away, and that they had been left to the State, to which they related to the fact that the testator had died intestate. A dreary lawsuit is expected to follow.

The native merchants of Chihuahua are invertebrate swindlers. A merchant recently contracted to buy a quantity of wool, and the wool had been passed through the cloth and sand. When the fraud was discovered, the wool had been wet to make it heavier and also to make it heavier.

A plausible man has visited the State of Maine this fall, and after the value of birds as insect destroyers, the wisdom of those who presented a well worded document, a pledge, not to kill a bird for the farmers to sign. If the paper came back to him in the shape of a promissory note, the agriculturists were thus swindled.

A flock of strange birds was seen over Troy, Mo., one evening about three o'clock. One was a white bird, from the flock was captured in the yard, where it was about the size of a goose, but with a long, snake-like neck, and with three inches long beak, and with a long, snake-like tongue. It is still alive.

An the schooner "Lela," a fisherman, was seen on the coast. It is still alive.

