

THE TOILER'S RECOMPENSE.

An hour ago the wind was cold
And heaven seemed far away,
And all the gloom that my heart could
hold
Appeared to be centered there,
And I wondered if ever another day
With a cheerful sky and fair,
Would dawn for me, or would bring for me
Such joys as the joys that had fled—
If the way beyond had a thing for me
Worth the cost of toiling ahead.

An hour ago the world was cold
And heaven seemed far away,
But the clouds that were leaden are tinged
with gold,
For my heart is light again,
For one with a helpful word to say
Stepped out from the ranks of men,
With a hand for me and a smile for me,
And praise for the work I've done,
And out there many a mile, for me—
Is a goal that shall be won!
—S. E. Kiser, in Cleveland Leader.

Cornelia's Mistake.

Miss Cornelia Lunt was the only child of two good people who had not married until they reached the years which find most wedded pairs with their children well grown up about them. They had been very happy, however, and when they died left their daughter a little income, which, by close pinching, she could manage to live upon.

Cornelia was not a pretty girl—old people's children never are; but thousands of plainer girls had married and settled while she remained a spinster. Perhaps the fact that she was by no means a good-natured person had something to do with it. Certainly she quarreled with her friends and felt out with her beaux, had feuds with her relatives and was fond of saying unpleasant things to people generally, and the other half of her soul was a lucky creature in having missed her in this world.

In her youth she had also comported herself scornfully to well-disposed young men who belonged to the mechanic classes and had declared that she would only give her hand and heart to a merchant, a physician or a clergyman. Merchants were rare in Bottlehole, the only specimens of that order being two very old bachelors, still connected with a New York firm, who were always to be seen asleep on either side of their wide hall door in pleasant summer weather and who only awoke at the instance of their housekeeper long enough to take their meals. The two doctors were both married, and the clergymen always had large families. Miss Cornelia's ambitious hopes were never realized, and her father's apprentice, Tim Cornell, who had admired her and had been quite a believer in her as a "very elegant and genteel person," finally pronounced her "mighty proud and haughty" and abandoned his suit. The other young mechanics married or left the village, and Miss Cornelia at last awoke to the knowledge that she was getting on in life and that if she was not careful people would find it out.

Cornelia looked in the glass carefully every morning and very often through the day. She did not age rapidly, having always looked as old as it was possible to look. But for that dreaded family Bible, in which the record of her birth was written down, she would have felt safe in slicing off ten years of her life—a proceeding which she fancied would increase her value in the eyes of a certain Mr. Dunsday, who had recently paid her a few solemn calls. He was really an old man himself, but the older the man the younger, generally, one finds his choice of a wife to be. And, really, when all one's lady friends enjoy nothing so much as adding to one's age, why should not their efforts be thwarted by a reduction on one's own part of the one thing nobody ever wants more of?

Poor Miss Cornelia! She did not know that one who never thinks about age at all is the slowest to get old. She eyed that well-thumbed Bible, which her companion and assistant, Cousin Betsy Baker, always would have upon a stand in the parlor, with absolute horror. She did not dare object to its presence. She was a church member and thought herself pious, but she did wish Cousin Betsy in Greenland when she called a visitor's attention to the illustrations it contained. Suppose anyone should turn up the fly-leaf and read there: Born December, 18—, Cornelia, first daughter of Matthew and Abigail Lunt. The thought was horrid.

She sat over her grate fire late one night thinking over the matter. Who knew her exact age? Cousin Betsy. But Cousin Betsy would not wish to quarrel with her and was too old a woman to think her anything but young. The clergyman who baptized her. But he was superannuated and lived with his son-in-law in another state. The family doctor was dead, and the dear old gentleman who had boarded with them from her babyhood, who had always given her a gift upon her birthday and on whom she had waited as a grandchild might, went to Europe years before and was probably dead. Good old man! She had liked him very much. How well she remembered him as he sat in his big armchair! He had white hair and fat hands with dimples in them and carried a thick, gold-headed cane. Good Mr. Noire! But she should never hear anything of him again. Yes, it was safe. She would do it. She did not know how to name the deed—it seemed as bad to her as robbing a church. But ten years off one's age is a terrible

temptation—at least it was to Miss Cornelia.

It was night—half-past 12, at least—the hour when "churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead." Ghosts might pop in upon her at any moment, but such a deed could only be done at such an hour. Miss Cornelia arose. She stood before the fire with her back toward it and took the candlestick in her hand. The room was clean and orderly. The green shades were down. The chairs stood in a row against the walls. The little marble-top table held its wax candle lily under a glass shade. Photographs of the good old parents, with more cord than frame and more frame than picture, hung in the recesses on either side of the mantel. She did not dare glance toward them. Two gilt vases and a match safe adorned the mantel. Two feather fans stood behind the vases. In the middle of the room were Cousin Betsy's rocking chair, a candlestand and the big Bible, a white tidy beneath it, a big, fringed bookmark hanging over its gilt edge.

It was a simple, cosy little "interior" enough, but it became at this moment as awesome to Miss Cornelia as a churchyard might have been.

She had "creeps" up her back. Her hair felt considerably like rising on end. Then she put her hand in her pocket and drew forth a knife. The light from the candle fell upon her face. It was ghastly. She took one step forward and paused; another, and paused again.

Anyone who had observed her would certainly have believed that she was going straight to poor Cousin Betsy's room to end that lady's life by a jab of the sharp little knife-blade, but she paused at the candlestand, set down the candlestick, knelt down, opened the family Bible at the fly-leaf and slowly, cautiously, began to scrape, scrape, scrape at the two last figures of the record of her birth. Then she crossed the room, took from a fireside cupboard a pen and inkstand, wrote two other figures in the place of those she had erased, blew upon the leaf until it was dry, carefully touched up the rest of the record to match in brightness and drew back to read the amended lines, which now plainly stated to all beholders that she had entered this world 30 years before instead of 40.

"Nobody would guess that it had been meddled with," gasped Miss Cornelia, hysterically. "Nobody—oh, gracious! Now I lay me— Oh, if I could only remember my prayers! I didn't do it—oh!" for an awful voice at that moment uttered her name in her very ear:

"Cornelia."

It was repeated. It seemed to come from above. Cornelia looked up, expecting to see something dreadful. It was repeated:

"Cornelia, ain't you coming to bed?"

It was only Cousin Betsy speaking through a disused register, which had once conveyed heat from a stove in the sitting room to the chamber above. All in a cold perspiration, Cornelia managed to reply that she would come in a moment, and then closing the Bible and putting away the writing materials she crept upstairs, a world of horrible unseen things close about her. She felt very sure a spectral clutch at her chignon, a cold palm on her arm, would not have surprised her. She had committed a crime worse than that of robbing a church, she feared. She had meddled with the solemn record made by hands long since moldering in the grave, upon the pages of the Holy Book, and she had won ten imaginary years by it.

Very pale was Miss Cornelia Lunt next morning. Cousin Betsy predicted "fever-nager" and advised quinine. Mr. Dunsday, when he called, hoped Miss Cornelia was not ill. Aunt Pring, who took tea with them that afternoon, suggested that she looked "sort o' skeered, as if she'd seen suthin'" and Miss Cornelia felt as though her guilt was branded on her brow. However, she recovered her peace of mind in time and was, as a general thing, herself again, though there were times when she felt that "a judgment" might be expected at any moment.

Mr. Dunsday regularly "came a courting" now. And he was a rich widower, whose married daughter professed herself anxious that "pa" should have some one to take care of him. Miss Cornelia had quite made up her mind that lavender should be the color of her wedding dress—a copper-colored bride-expectant always

does. And the two were sitting together one evening talking confidentially about rheumatism and its best liniment when the door bell rang, and a tall, lean gentleman in a suit of black was ushered into the parlor. On courting evenings Betsy kept herself out of the way, and only Mr. Dunsday was present when the gentleman introduced himself.

"Miss Cornelia Lunt, I believe," he said.

"Yes, sir," said Miss Cornelia. The gentleman bowed, handed her a card with "C. Dodridge, Solicitor," upon it and took the seat she offered.

"I understand that your respected parents are no more, ma'am," said the solicitor. "They would remember better than you do, probably, a period of 30 years ago when one Mr. Noire boarded with them."

"Yes, sir," said Cornelia, growing red in the face. "I've heard them speak of him."

"Ah," said the gentleman, "he was a very dear friend as well as client of mine. He died about two months ago in London, England. He was very wealthy at the time of his death, and he never forgot the extreme kindness of the friends of 30 years ago, who knew him in his days of comparative poverty. Yes, they are gone, also; but the little girl who waited on him so lovingly still lives. She was 11 years old at that time. I suppose I address her?"

"No, sir," said Miss Lunt, redder than ever—as Mr. Dunsday turned an attentive ear to this dreadful statement—and feeling that one lie begot many and that having fiddled in the family Bible she must stick to it or die—"No, sir. I was not born at that date."

"I have my old friend's record," said Mr. Dodridge; "18— was the date of his arrival here. You were one month old then; 18— was the date of his departure. Plainly you were 11 years of age. You attached yourself fondly to my old friend's heart, madam."

"No, I didn't," said Miss Cornelia, tartly. "I ought to know. I never saw him. I was born just after he left. I've been told. There's the Bible on the table; look at the date."

She opened the volume at the fatal fly-leaf; the lawyer perused it slowly.

"I see, I see," he said. "Well, well; and who was this little girl?"

Agony of agonies! Here was another lie needed. Mr. Dunsday's eyes opened widely. He listened more intently. He looked at the lawyer; he looked at the lady. She must fib again and very blackly this time.

"That was a little adopted child, who died," said Miss Cornelia, faintly. "They didn't think they should have any family of their own."

"I see," said the lawyer, rising—"I see. My friend hoped she had grown to be a woman. Good day."

"And I can't see why you should come here to add to lady's age," said Miss Cornelia. "I'm sure it's very impolite."

"Madam," said Mr. Dodridge, hat in hand, "I have an excuse; Mr. Noire, good old man, had left all his fortune to that little girl. Had she lived she would be an immense heiress. A lawyer is naturally cautious. I paved the way—paved the way, that is all."

Poor Miss Cornelia! She gazed at the gentleman in utter consternation, and he continued:

"However, some charities will be the better for the fact; no wind but blows some one good, after all."

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

The young leaves and roots of ferns supply a considerable portion of the food in the mountain districts of Japan.

A Hamburg (Germany) chemist has succeeded with the aid of oxide of aluminum in creating a heat of up to 30,000 degrees.

Although the brain is perpetually active, yet the whole of it is never at work at one time. The two hemispheres, or halves, do not operate simultaneously, but alternate in action.

A turnip seed increases its own weight fifteen times in a minute. On peat ground turnips have been found to increase by growth 15,999 times the weight of their seed each day they stood upon it.

Circular or elliptical halos round the sun indicate violent storms, especially if the halos are dark in tint or of a large diameter. Lightning and magnetic disturbances may also be expected from these signs.

It is computed that the death rate of the world is 67 and the birth rate 70 a minute, and this seemingly light percentage of gain is sufficient to give a net increase in population each year of almost 1,200,000 souls.

The phenomenon of the milk-white sea, much more luminous than the starry sky, is reported by a correspondent of Nature. It was witnessed on the morning of August 21 in the Indian ocean, and continued to be seen throughout 50 miles of the vessel's course. The sea was calm, while a bucket of the water showed nothing unusual.

The Flying Fox.

The flying fox is a very curious inhabitant of the forests near Moreton Bay in East Australia. It lives in flocks and moves generally toward the dusk of the evening, and the noise produced by the heavy flapping of the so-called wings is very singular. The flocks like quiet places, where there are large Araucarian pine trees, with an underwood of scrub and creepers. The foxes hang in vast numbers from horizontal branches of the pine trees.

When there is a clear space among the trees, an enormous number of the animals may be seen, and their noise can be heard, for directly they see anything unusual they utter a short bark, something like the sound made by young rooks. Often every branch is crowded and the flying foxes are seen either flapping their wings and holding on with their hind feet, and with their head downward, or snarling and fighting for places.

Suddenly the whole take to flight flap their furry, wing-like sides and wheel around like heavy birds. Many fly with their young holding onto them.

The creature is not a true fox and there is a fold of skin which reaches from the fore to the hind legs. This is called the wing, and it enables the pteropus, as the animal is called, to float and turn in the air.—Philadelphia Press.

Electricity and Cats.

Strangely enough, I once had an impression that a cat's tendency was to travel north, and to face the north as a magnet does, and that this tendency had some intimate association with the electrical strength of its fur. In brief, I looked upon a cat as a lightning conductor on a small scale, and that according to its temperament, negative or positive, did it face north or south, or just as the points of its fur were attracted by the negative or positive poles of the earth. I was led to this by some observations I had made some years previously in the London suburb. Then I noticed that the cats of that particular district had a tendency to walk in particular directions on the walls that faced the north rather than to walk on walls that ran east or west.

As to the idea that cats are good weather gauges, I do not credit that. I believe that the reason a cat washes itself over its ears or not is bound up with the particular method by which the particular animal cleans itself. Its main object in washing, to my mind, is just to complete an electrical circuit, for by so doing it generates heat and, therefore, a pleasing sensation in its fur.—Cassell's Magazine.

The X-Ray Photograph in Court.

The earliest reported instance of the use of the X-ray process in evidence seems to have been in the district court of Arapahoe county, Colorado, in 1896. More recently in Tennessee it was held that an X-ray photograph, showing the overlapping bones of one of the legs of the plaintiff, broken by an injury for which suit was brought, taken by a physician and surgeon familiar with fractures and with the process of taking such photographs, who testified that it accurately represented the condition of the leg, is admissible in evidence. The court said: "The pictorial representation of the condition of the broken leg of the plaintiff gave to the jury a much more intelligent idea of that particular injury than it would have obtained from any verbal description of it by a surgeon, even if he had used for the purpose the simplest terms of his art."—Law Notes.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED DIVINE.

Subject: "The Cradle of Jesus"—Lesson Drawn From the Miraculous Escape of the Infant Christ From the Perils That Encompassed Him.

Text: "Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him."—Matthew II. 13.

The cradle of the infant Jesus had no rookers, for it was not to be soothed by oscillating motion, as are the cradles of other princes. It had no embroidered pillow, for the young head was not to have such luxurious comfort. Though a meteor, ordinarily the most erratic and seemingly un-governable of all skyey appearances, had been sent to designate the place where that cradle stood, and a choir had been sent from the heavenly temple to serenade its illustrious occupant with an epic, yet the cradle was the target for all earthly and diabolical hostilities. Indeed, I give you as my opinion that it was the narrowest and most wonderful escape of the ages that the child was not slain before He had taken His first step or spoken His first word. Herod could not afford to have Him born. The Caesars could not afford to have Him born. The gigantic oppressors and abominations of the world could not afford to have Him born. Was there ever planned a more systematized or appalling bombardment in all the world than the bombardment of that cradle?

The Herod who led the attack was treacherous, vengeful and sensually impetuous. As a sort of posthumous Herod, he was the grandfather of his wife. Then he slew Mariamme, his wife. Then he butchered her two sons, Alexander and Aristobolus. Then he slew Antipater, his oldest son. Then he ordered the murder of forty people who had killed the eagle of his authority. He ordered the nobles who had attended upon his dying bed to be slain, so that there might be universal mourning after his disease. From that same deathbed he ordered the slaughter of all the children of Bethlehem. In the few years of age, feeling sure that if he massacred the entire infantile population that would include the destruction of the child whose birthplace astronomy had pointed out with its finger of light. What were the slaughtered babes to him, and as many frenzied and bereft mothers? If he had been well enough to levitate his bed, he would have enjoyed seeing the mothers wildly struggling to keep their babes and holding them so tightly that they could not be separated until the sword took both lives at one stroke, and others, not far off, to the child, hurried from roofs of houses into the street, until that village of horse-shoe shape on the hillside became one great butcher shop. To have such a man, with associates just as cruel and an army at his command, attempting the life of the infant Jesus, does not seem any chance for His escape? Then that flight southward for so many miles, across deserts and amid bandits and wild beasts (my friend, the late missionary and scientist Dr. Lansing, who took the same journey, said it was enough to kill both the Word and the Christ), and poor residence in Cairo. You know how difficult it is to take an ordinary child successfully through the disorders that are sure to assail it even in comfortable homes and with all delicate industries, and then think of the exposure of that famous babe in the villages and among all sanitary laws were put at defiance, His first hours on earth spent in a room without any doors, and oftentimes swept by chilled night winds, then afterward riding many days under hot tropical sun, and part of many nights, lest the avenger should take the fugitive before He could be hidden in another land.

The sanhedrin also were affronted at the report of this mysterious arrival of a child that might upset all conventionalities and threaten the throne of the nation. "Shut the door and bolt it and double bar it against Him!" cried all politicians and edifice the throne—another crowned infant. What chance for the babe's life? Will not some short grave hold the wondrous infant? "Put Him to death!" was the order all up and down Palestine and all up and down the Mediterranean coast, and even to the cry was: "Here comes an iconoclast of the established order! Here comes an aspirant for the crown of Augustus! If found on the streets of Bethlehem, dash Him to death on the pavement! If found on a hill, hurl Him down the rocks! If found in the house, burn it! If found in the cave, pass up from infancy to youth, and from youth to manhood, and from carpenter shop to Messiahship, and from Messiahship to enthronement, until the night name on earth is Jesus, and there is no mightier name in heaven."

What I want to call your attention to is your narrow escape and mine and the world's narrow escape. Suppose that attempt on the young child's life had been successful! Suppose that delegation of wise men, who were to report to Herod immediately after they discovered the whereabouts of the child, had obeyed orders and reported! Suppose the beast carrying the Madonna and the Child in the flight had stumbled and flung to death its riders! Suppose Archelaus had got his hands on the babe that his father had hid in the Bethlehem cavernary, had the children dashed from the Bethlehem house tops or separated by sword of the enraged constabulary Jesus had perished!

Still further remarking upon the narrow escape which you and I had and all the world had in that babe's escape, let me say that the Herod plot had been successful the one instance of absolutely perfect character would never have been unfolded. The world had enjoyed the lives of many splendid men before Christ came. It had admired His Plato among philosophers, His Hierax among heroes, His Herodotus among historians, His Phidias among sculptors, His Homer among poets, His Aeschylus among dramatists, His Demosthenes among orators, His Esculapian among physicians, yet among the contemporaries of those men there were two opinions, as now there are two opinions, concerning every remarkable man. There were plenty in those days who said of them, "He cannot speak," or "He cannot sing," or "He cannot philosophize," or "His military achievement was a mere accident," or "His chisel, his pen, his medical prescription, never deserved the applause given." But concerning this full grown Christ, whose life was launched three decades before that first Christmas, the moans of camels and the bleat of sheep and the low of cattle mingle with the babe's first cry, while clouds that night were resonant with music, and star pointing down whispered to star, "Look, there He is!"

That Christ, after the detectives of Herod and Pilate and sanhedrin had watched Him by day, was reported in year after year, was reported in year after year, was found out that when

He talked to the vagrant woman in the temple it was to tell her to "go and sin no more," and that if He spoke with the penitent thief it was to promise him paradise within a twenty-four hour's wait; that He moved about He dropped ease of pain upon the invalid's pillow, or light upon the eye that lacked optic nerve, or put bread into the hands of the hungry, or took from the oriental hearse the dead young man and vitiated him and said to the widowed mother, "Hush, he is, alive and well," and she cried, "My boy, my boy!" and he responded, "Mother, mother!" And she, tossing too roughly some of His friends, by a word easier than a nurse's word to a petulant child He made it keep still. The very judge who for other reason allowed Him to put to death declared, "I find no fault in Him." Was there ever a life so thoroughly ransacked and hypercritical that turned out to be so perfect a life? Now, you can imagine what would have been the calamity to earth and heaven, what a bereavement to all history, what swindling not only of the human race, but of cherubim and seraphim and archangel, if because of infernal incursion upon the bed of that Bethlehem babe this life of divinity and glory had been snuffed out and never been lived? The Christ who would never have been uttered; the sermon on the mount, all adrip with benedictions, never preached; the golden rule, in picture frame of everlasting love, would never have been hung up for the universe to gaze upon and admire.

Still further remarking upon the narrow escape which you and I and the world had in the diversion of the persecutors from the place of nativity, let me say that had Herod laid upon the swaddling clothes been successful the world would never have known the value of a righteous peace. Much has been the calamity to earth and heaven, what a bereavement to all history, what swindling not only of the human race, but of cherubim and seraphim and archangel, if because of infernal incursion upon the bed of that Bethlehem babe this life of divinity and glory had been snuffed out and never been lived? The Christ who would never have been uttered; the sermon on the mount, all adrip with benedictions, never preached; the golden rule, in picture frame of everlasting love, would never have been hung up for the universe to gaze upon and admire.

That was the style of peace on earth when Christ came, but the spirit of arbitration, which is to garland the tomb of this century and coronet the brow of the coming century, is consequent upon the midnight and the dawn of Bethlehem. Two bars that music, the first of divine scripture and the second of earthly pacification. "Glory to God and peace to men." In His manhood Christ pronounced the same doctrine, "Blessed are the merciful." Before the Bethlehem star flashed its significance the theory was: "Blessed is wholesale cut-throatery. Blessed are those who can kill the most antagonists. Blessed are those who can most skillfully wield the battieax. Blessed are those who can stab the deepest, furthest, or roll a chariot wheel over the most rounded or put his charger's hoof on the most dead." The entirely new theory of our Christ was blessing for cursing, prayer for those who desperately use you, fondaries to turn spite into pruning hooks, redoubt of furrows to make swaths into molds shaped like plowshares. If gigantic acerbities and worldwide tigers had, without any gospel opposition, gone on until now and been augmented by 1898 years of ferocity, by this time what would need this word, "Blessed are the merciful?" You need not remind me of the awful wars since the opening of the year one of our Christian era; for if the earth has been again and again incinerated into an Aeldama through improved weaponry of death and more rapidity of fire, Prussian brocade or which meant to make the nations with unprecedented havoc eclipsed by contrivances that can sweep vaster numbers to death by one volley and telegraphy adding to gunnery new facilities for slaughter by instantly ordering armies to where they can find the most wholesale murder—say, all this would have been wrought, how much worse would it have been if the Christy revelation had not been let down from heaven on five runged ladder of musical scale and there had been no preaching of good will all up and down the world, no peace treaties, no treaties! The Bethlehem manger has given the most potent suggestion of peace the world has ever received. The cavalry horses cannot eat out of that manger.

I take another step forward in showing the narrow escape you and I had and the world had in the secession of Christ's birthplace from the Herod's detectives, and the clubs with which they would have dashed the babe's life out, when I say that without the life that began that night in Bethlehem the world would have had no illumined deathbeds. Before the time of Christ good people closed their earthly lives in peace, while depending upon the Christy come, and there were antediluvian saints and Assyrian saints and Egyptian saints and Grecian saints and Jerusalem saints long before the clouds above Bethlehem became a balcony filled with the best singers of a world where the angels sing and the cherubs sing. The Bethlehem manger has given the most potent suggestion of peace the world has ever received. The cavalry horses cannot eat out of that manger.

With heavenly weapons he has fought
The battles of the Lord,
Finished his course and kept the faith
And gained the great reward.