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THE DEAD HUSBAND.

Is my team plowing
That I was used to drive,
And hear the harness jingle,
When I was man alive?

Aye, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plow.

Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping:
As she lies down at eve?

"Ay, she lies down lightly,
She lies not down to weep;
Your girl is well contented,
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

Is my friend hearty,
Now I am thin and pime,
And has he found to sleep in
A better bed than mine?

Yes, lad, I lie easy,
I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man's sweetheart;
Never ask me whose.

...A... White Lie.

HERE are different colors and degrees of falsehood, just as there are different colors and degrees of other sins. There is, blackest of all, the malevolent hypocrite and slanderer, who can twist truth into falsehood, and falsehood into seeming truth. And there is the downright liar, who falsifies on purpose to deceive. There is another downright liar not quite so bad, the falsifier from a love of the marvelous, and a burning desire to appear what he is not. Some people lie because it is their disposition to deceive. Others lie because they lack the courage to tell the truth. And there are other lies—sometimes called "white lies" which are mere lies of convenience. In their utterance there is no evil intent. They are told just as a man whisks an impediment from his path with his walking stick. They are told to save trouble of explanation, or, perhaps, to avoid reprimand. At first a lie of this kind may not seem a very sinful thing; but unfortunately for the misguided mortal who entertains the petty sin, it is one that does not improve upon acquaintance. Like many other evils which might be mentioned, it is likely to grow to alarming proportions and consequence. There is one safe ground—and only one—Truth—Absolute Truth—under every circumstance and on all occasions.

Sarah Powers believed herself to be a truthful girl. She had not the disposition to wittingly deceive. Had it been plainly intimated to her that she was a liar she would have been shocked beyond measure; and yet her rule of life in this respect was not pure and unswerving, as we shall see.

"Sarah," said Mrs. Powers, coming to the room on winter morning, where her daughter sat, "did you see anything of a twenty-dollar bill on the mantel-shelf last evening?" Her voice and manner showed that she was unpleasantly exercised.

"A twenty-dollar bill," repeated Sarah, with wide-open eyes. "No."
"You didn't see anything that looked like one?"

"Like a twenty-dollar bill? Certainly not."

"I certainly left it in the sitting room, on the shelf; and I know that I set the large glass lamp down on it, so that it should not blow away. I forgot all about it until this morning. Oh, I must not lose it!"

"But, mother, twenty dollars is not a large sum."

"Ordinarily, no, my child; but just now it is considerable. Your father's accounts do not balance so favorably this season as he had anticipated. In fact, Sarah, he cannot possibly spare me any more if he is to meet his bank paper. Where can the bill have gone to? And I promised Mrs. Judkins ten dollars to-day. Do you think it could have possibly got knocked off and blown away?"

We may as well remark just here, that Sarah Powers had been lying. Falsehood was not certainly in the heart of the young and sunny-faced girl; but her tongue had spoken it. The facts were simply these:

On the previous evening Robert Veazie had called to visit Sarah (Robert was a clerk in the store of Powers & Dunbar and was Sarah's accepted lover. He had displayed qualities of head and heart which had recommended him to the favorable consideration of her parents, and though he as poor, yet he had business tact and energy. It was understood by the careful father there should be no formal en-

agement at present. Sarah remembered that she and Robert had sat together upon the sofa and looked over an illustrated magazine. While thus occupied, it occurred they would see better, if the large lamp which stood in the middle of the shelf were moved out to the end; and she arose to do it. Upon lifting the lamp she saw a piece of paper whirl out and circle down until it was drawn into the fire of the grate directly beneath.

"What was that?" asked Robert, who had seen the whirling paper.

"I don't know, I'm sure. It's burned up, whatever it was," answered Sarah. She saw the charred tinder like fragments whisked up by the draft, and then she added, "I guess it is nothing of importance. It wouldn't have been there if it had been."

And after this she had resumed her seat. Now Sarah remembered all this very well; in truth, the question of her mother had startled her; but she had not seen a twenty-dollar bill. We can imagine the amount of mental reservation employed in this decision. Her first impulse was to avoid a disagreeable exposure. If the bank-note had been destroyed, as she now saw it must have been, it had been through no fault of hers, and moreover the loss could not possibly be helped.

Upon reflection, when Sarah saw how much trouble was upon her mother, she was sorry she had not confessed the whole truth at once. But it was too late now. She had taken the first false step, and she could not retract without a disagreeable exposure.

"Who could have knocked it off?" she said, in answer to her mother's last question; "and where could it have blown to? I certainly saw nothing of a bank-note."

Mrs. Powers searched in vain, and at noon she told her husband of the loss; and they both searched, and Mr. Powers questioned his daughter—not with the thought that she had deceived, but in hopes that some forgotten incident might occur to her. But Sarah dared not confess now. She lacked the courage; and she lacked the courage because she was yet to realize how very small evils can grow to enormous consequences.

Mr. Powers returned to his store in a thoughtful mood. He knew that his wife must have left the bank-note under the lamp upon the shelf, and that it had been there the previous evening. She was not a woman liable to mistake in memory of such a matter. The only other person who had been in the sitting room that time besides his daughter was Robert Veazie. Perhaps Robert might have seen the note. On arriving at the store he called his clerk into the counting-room.

"Robert, did you see anything of a twenty-dollar bill on the mantel in my sitting room, last evening?"

"No, sir."
"You saw nothing that looked like one?"

The young man hesitated and colored. Then with a forced smile—

"Perhaps Sarah may have seen it."

"No; I have asked her and she knows nothing about it. She saw nothing of the kind."

"I—I certainly saw nothing, sir."

Mr. Powers was not at all satisfied with his answer; but he would not press the matter then. He dismissed his clerk, and sat down and reflected. And his reflections were not pleasant.

That same evening Mr. Powers called upon Mr. Selvidge, the tailor, to collect a bill for cloth. The tailor was fortunately in funds and he paid the bill. With the money he handed out was a twenty-dollar bill of the Black-

stone National Bank, new and crisp, exactly such a bill as Mr. Powers had given to his wife.

He asked Selvidge where he got it. "Robert Veazie paid it to me this forenoon."

"For what?"

"For a new coat."

Mr. Powers went home and showed the bill to his wife. She declared, in a moment, that it was the bill she had lost. Where had he found it?

The merchant asked if she could be silent and discreet for a time. And when she had assured him that she could, he told her how the bill had come into his possession.

They were both greatly shocked. They had not believed such a thing possible. If Robert Veazie could be a thief, whom could they trust?

On the following day Mr. Powers called Robert into the counting-room again. There was that in his employer's look and tone that made the youth tremble.

Mr. Powers showed him the bank-note, and asked him where he got it.

"Is that the bill I gave to Mr. Selvidge?"

"It is."

Robert did not answer readily. He stopped to think. And when he did answer his employer's searching, suspicious gaze oppressed him.

"Mr. Powers, I saw that bank-note in the drawer with another just like it. I happened to have twenty dollars of my own in small bills in my pocket, and I made the exchange, taking the crisp, new bill, and putting in its place my worn ones. Before the money was deposited I think you took the other one."

"Robert," said the merchant sternly. "I did take a bank-note exactly like this—the only one I saw with our money that day—and I gave it to my wife. She placed it beneath the large glass lamp upon the mantel shelf in our sitting room. She did this just before sitting down to tea, and forgot all about until the following morning, and then it was gone. On that evening only you and Sarah were in the sitting room. Sarah saw nothing of it. Now what am I to think?"

"Are you sure, that Sarah knows nothing?"

"She declares positively that she knows nothing at all about it! I trust you would not have me believe that my daughter could—"

"No, no, no!" broke in Robert, quickly. Then he gasped and trembled.

"What more have you to say, Robert?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Nothing?"

"You can leave me."

And the young man went out, pale, bowed and stricken. The merchant saw, and was sorry. It was a grief to him deep and heartfelt. Later in the day he went out and told Robert he might go home.

"I will send for you when I want you."

"Mr. Powers?"

"What would you say, Robert?"

"Nothing."

"Then you may go. I will send for you when I am able to see you again."

And Robert Veazie went out from the store; but he dared not go home to his widowed mother. The fear that came crushingly upon him was of Sarah. Did she love him so little that she could see him thus suffer and be silent? Was it possible that—but he dared not think. He must wait until these first overwhelming emotions were passed.

That evening Mr. Powers and his wife talked the matter over; and after long and careful deliberation it was decided that Robert Veazie should be denied the house, and, of course, he must be discharged from the store. They would not publicly expose this, his first known crime; but they could never give him their confidence again. And they must inform Sarah. That was the hardest part of all. They would have it done at once. She came in and sat down.

"My dear child," said her father, "all tenderness and compassion, we have a painful duty to perform. We must tell you of Robert's entire unworthiness."

She clasped her hands and gasped for breath. What did her father mean?

He told her the story, directly and clearly, of his discovery of Robert's guilt; and he told how broken and penitent the young man had appeared. This latter he added by way of showing that the crime was acknowledged.

Pale as death and with eyes frightfully fixed, Sarah asked if Robert had not mentioned her name.

"He only asked me," said her father, "if I had spoken with you—if you could

not throw some light upon the missing money. I answered him promptly, that you knew nothing whatever about it. His guilt was apparent from that moment. His shame and remorse—"

"Stop, stop!" cried Sarah, starting to her feet. She stood for a little time like one frantic, with her hands clutched in her hair, and her teeth shut. Then she staggered forward, and sank upon her knees at her father's feet. "Oh, father! father!" she moaned, "have mercy—have pity upon me."

"My child?"

"No, no—lift me not up. Let me tell it all with my head here in your lap. Oh, I am a miserable, wicked girl! I did it all! I did it! Robert has suffered rather than betray me."

And when she could control her speech she told him the story of the burning paper; and she tried to tell how she had been led to falsify and prevaricate.

That was not a time for chiding. Poor Sarah was like one whose heart was breaking. She had come to think now of Robert. He would despise her after this.

Mr. Powers looked at his watch, presently he whispered to his wife, and then arose and left the room; and shortly afterward left the house. In half an hour he returned.

"Sarah," he said to his daughter, who sat with her head upon her mother's shoulder, "Robert is in the parlor. Go in and see him."

There was a yearning struggle, but the better genius conquered, and Sarah went to her injured lover.

By-and-by Robert and Sarah came into the drawing room. They had been weeping freely, but they seemed very happy nevertheless. Sarah came and knelt by her parent's feet.

"Father—mother—will you pardon and forgive as Robert has done?"

"Yes—yes, my child."

"Then I will try to deserve your confidence henceforth. Oh, I do want to be happy once more, and never, never—"

Robert caught her to his bosom and held her there; and her father came and rested his hand upon her head.

"I know it is a bitter lesson, dear child; but I believe blessing will follow it. It is possible that from this time you may be happier than you have been."—Waverley Magazine.

Fixing Atmospheric Nitrogen.

Foreign investigators have been studying the methods proposed by a company located at Niagara Falls for the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen by electrical discharges. As is well known, nitrogen is one of the most valuable elements utilized in the commercial arts and industries, especially in agriculture, and yet it is one of the most difficult to obtain. From time to time schemes have been proposed for utilizing bacteria, and chemical and electrical methods for fixing the atmospheric nitrogen, but the electrical process recently perfected appears to offer the most economical and practical means. The efficiency of the process has been greatly increased, the cost now being reduced to about 1.5 cents per pound. Success is entirely dependent on the cost of electric power, and probably current can be obtained as cheaply at Niagara Falls as at any place on the face of the globe.

Siberian Cities Hard Up.

Siberian cities are in straits on account of the war and the interrupted import of commodities. Nikolaievsk, at the mouth of the Amoor River, is out of oil, gas and tallow, and pretty nearly out of coal. Other and smaller towns are in similar extremity, with the outlook for their replenishing not so promising as it might be. Night in those towns and regions lasts all winter when it sets in, and lack of oil would be a situation not to be thought of with anything like composure. War risks on shipments there in Hamburg and London are twenty guineas per cent, and the underwriters still not thinking them high enough. What little business is being done in war risks to Japanese ports shows no advance in rates, the situation being comparatively favorable—in fact, about as good as it is on an average.

Its New President.

The Academy of Sciences of Paris has elected Professor Barrois, of Lille, to fill the vacancy left in the section of mineralogy by the death of the illustrious Fouque. This recognition of the claims of one of the most distinguished geologists of the day will be welcomed far and wide.

TOOK PUNISHMENT BY LOT.

Condemned Soldiers Who Drew From a Hat to See Who Should Die.

In the armies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the custom of casting lots to decide who should be punished for the offense of all was common. At Winchester, England, in 1645, complaint was made that after the surrender there had been unfair plundering. Six soldiers were tried and found guilty, and it was decided by lot which one of the six should be hanged. At Langier in 1663, and again in 1665, two soldiers had to cast dice on a drumhead, and he who threw the last was executed. Thomas May's translation of Barclay's "Icon Animorum" gives a curious story of this sort. Speaking of English courage, he says that during the war in the Netherlands some soldiers of the Spanish army were taken prisoners by the Dutch, who decided to make reprisals for the previous cruelty of their enemies. Out of four-and-twenty men eight were to be hanged. "There were lots, therefore, thrown into a helmet," says May, "and the prisoners were commanded to draw their fortunes—whoever should draw a black lot was to be hanged presently."

"They were all," says May, "possessed with a great apprehension of their present danger, especially one Spaniard. Their pitiful wishes and tears in some of the standers-by did move pity, in others laughter. There was besides in that danger an Englishman, a common soldier, who with a careless countenance, expressing no fear of death at all came boldly to the helmet and drew his lot. Chance favored him; it was a safe lot. Being free himself from danger he came to the Spaniard, who was yet timorous and trembling to put his hand into the fatal helmet, and receiving from him ten crowns, he entreated the judges—oh, horrid audacity!—that, dismissing the Spaniard, they would suffer him again to try his fortune."

May further relates that "the judges consented to the madman's request, who valued his life at so low a rate, and he again drew a safe lot." May seems rather to regret the second escape of the foolhardy Englishman, whom he denounces as "a wretch unworthy not only of that double but even of a single preservation, who so basely had undervalued his life."

Chinese and Christian Morality.

To the Chinese we are always the barbarians and they themselves are the refined. Their civilization is far more complex than ours.

The ethical basis of the condition that modern Europeans and Americans consider civilization is based on the Christian precept ordering men to do unto others as they would be done unto them.

That system means the revolutionizing of our brute nature from the outset, because nature is selfish.

The Chinese moral code seeks no such rude reversion of the natural order. It recognizes the instincts of men and lays down rules to regulate those instincts. The rules thus rendered necessary provide for almost every contingency in life save the possibility that the good instincts in the heart may be stronger than the vicious ones.

Their extent and universality, however, are stupendous. They are monuments to the perseverance of the Chinese philosophers, and the modern Chinese think them more praiseworthy than our basic rule, which obviates the necessity of regulating conduct in all emergencies by any special regulations.

The Chinaman is probably far more careful in observing ninety-one out of every hundred of his own complex rules of life than we are about our sole basic maxim.—World.

How an Italian Obtained Microbes.

When in Rome, it is said, we should do as the Romans do, but some of them do such odd things. There is Dr. Casaguar, who lately hired a number of women, presented them with long skirts, and bade them parade the streets of the Eternal City for the space of one hour. On their return he examined the garments, on which he found innumerable bacteria, including the bacilli of influenza, typhoid fever and tetanus.—London News.

An Aid to Digestion.

A curious reason for the Pope's innovation of having guests at his table has been given to our Rome correspondent. When alone His Holiness eats too fast, it appears, and the presence and conversation of other people leads him to take longer over his food.—London News.