

A LITTLE LOVE SONG.

A year ago today, my love,
My heart was full of care;
The gathered grief of long, long years
Seemed more than I could bear.
The past was all so fraught with pain,
The present dim with woe,
The future looked so dark to me,
One little year ago.

I thought to tread my lonely path—
In silence, all alone;
No friend to cheer with kindly word,
No hand to clasp my own;
No dream or hope of light or love
To bless my shadowed way.
Ah, well! 'Tis said, "the darkest hour
Is just before the day."

So, when my deepest night had come,
And life was well nigh gone,
Heaven's own kind care sent you, my dear,
To herald in the dawn.
The tender touch of love's own hand
Ran every cloud away,
And heaven swung dazzling down to me,
A year ago today.

And now those gentle eyes of blue
Look lovingly in mine;
And strong, brave hands, with kindly clasp,
My trembling ones enclose;
And now I walk with happy heart,
I walk life's joyous way,
And bless the boon which came to me
A year ago today.
—Mattie Dyer Britts in New York Ledger.

DOLLY.

Dolly and he were friends. How or why the friendship was first struck up is unknown. But this much is certain, that the first advances must have come from Dolly herself, for a friendship of any kind, much less a friendship with a chubby, dimpled little maiden, was not much in Jim's line.

There was nothing attractive about Jim—quite the reverse. A great hulking fellow, with a sullen face and evil eyes, who, young as he was, had dipped more freely into life's book than is well for any man to dip. And Jim had not come out of the ordeal unsoiled. It was a rough place, that little western mining camp in which he worked—a rough place, full of rough men, with whom, moreover, he was no favorite.

"I calculate," said Judge Remis, who was taking his ease outside after a hard day's work and blowing in a gentle, meditative sort of way the curling smoke from his pipe, "I calculate that a more thorough paced young scoundrel than that Jim don't walk the earth—darned if he do."

This sentiment, as fully embodying the views of the camp, was received with nods of assent. "And yet," said the judge, taking the pipe from his mouth, the better to enforce the remark, "Dolly there seems sort o' struck with him."

"That's so," said big Ben thoughtfully.

The camp uttered a growl or two of protest. What did Dolly see in him? was what the camp wanted to know—a question more easily asked than answered.

Pretty baby Dolly with her dimpled face and brown eyes—darling baby Dolly! the God given bit of childhood which was blossoming in the midst of that band-of-wild, hard-living, hard-drinking fellows, not one of whom, at his wildest and worst, would have done aught to harm her.

"Jest look at 'em," said the judge, raising himself up on his elbow from the soft grass.

The men followed his gaze, and about twenty yards away, appearing over the prairie ridge, they saw the two—Dolly seated on Jim's beautiful horse, Red Mustang, one of Jim's strong arms thrown protectingly around her, the other carrying her basket of berries, full to an extent that showed that Dolly's chubby little hands had never gathered them alone.

Dolly herself was regarding the luscious fruit admiringly. "Daddy'll yike 'em, Dim, won't he?" they heard her remark.

"Well!" said Jim savagely, "seein' as it is Daddy, I've no doubt he will. Daddy's ready for most all he can get."

There was a sufficient amount of truth in the statement to cause a smothered laugh of amusement among the listeners, in which Daddy, otherwise the judge, good humoredly joined.

Dolly did not laugh; instead, her brown eyes grew troubled. Jim's remark had savored of disloyalty to Daddy, and loyalty to Daddy was part of Dolly's simple creed. Suddenly she brightened. "So am I," she announced.

"Are yer, now?" asked Jim.

"Iss," said Dolly. "Aren't you?"

Jim made no reply. Catching sight of the spectators, he lifted Dolly and the berries roughly to the ground, and went on his way in his customary moody silence.

Dolly, apparently quite used to such treatment from her strange friend, picked up her basket and trotted contentedly to her father's side.

"Who've you been with, Dolly?" said big Ben, catching her up in his arms and tossing her to the sky.

"Dim," said Dolly from Ben's shoulder. The men laughed.

"Well, I am surprised," said big Ben loftily—"a little gell like you taking up with such as him. I wonder at you, Dolly."

For answer Dolly buried her hands in Big Ben's curls, laughing gleefully. Whereupon a glorious game of romps ensued.

However, it so happened that Jim was to give a practical answer to Dolly's question as to whether he was ready for all he could get by committing a theft—a daring theft, and by no means his first, although for the first time discovered.

"Caught red handed," said Big Ben, his hand tightening ominously on his heavy stock whip.

The camp was soon ablaze with the news, and from every side there flocked angry, fierce eyed men. They made short work of such sinners in those days. A few yards of rope and the nearest tree used to settle the business effectually. A man might gamble or swear or use his pistol as freely as he pleased, but in such a community theft was necessarily the unpardonable crime.

"To the right about!" said Big Ben, sternly.

Jim scowled at him. He did not ask for mercy, knowing that it would be useless. He would have been the last to offer it in such a case himself.

Suddenly attracted by the tumult appeared Dolly, looking out at the world from her great sun bonnet.

"Run away!" said the judge sharply; "this 'ere ain't no place for little gells."

Dolly was an obedient little soul, and in an ordinary case would have obeyed. But baby as she was, something of the significance of the scene came home to her: Jim standing alone amid that ring of cruel faces.

She gazed pitifully at him.

"Go away, Dolly," said Big Ben; "you've nothing to do with him. He's a thief."

Dolly's eyes sought Jim's for a denial. As he met them with his own reckless, defiant ones, a something else flashed into them, and then and there he uttered a downright lie: "Don't you believe 'em, Dolly; I ain't nothing of the sort." And, half involuntarily, he threw a wistful glance at Big Ben.

Spite of his roughness Big Ben must have had a soft spot somewhere, for, bending down to Dolly, he said gently: "There, you see, Dolly, I must have been mistook. This 'ere fellow, instead of being a thief, is a virtuous youth, an innocent angel, in fact. Now run away."

So Dolly departed satisfied.

After she left silence and hesitation fell upon the men. The little scene had touched them. After a whispered consultation the judge, stepping forward, cut the cord round Jim's wrist, saying curtly, "Here, you young scoundrel, we'll let you off this time. But clear out of this; we don't want no thieves here."

Without a word Jim turned on his heel. Some men would have left the place at once. Jim was made of different stuff. Expelled from the camp he built himself a cabin on the outskirts, not trying to live the disgrace down, but enduring it with the dogged obstinacy which was part of his nature. The miners, even Big Ben, ignored him completely; for Ben, for all that instant of softness, had certain rugged fibers of pride about him which led him to treat a thief with merciless justice.

The effects of this "severely letting alone" system were not very apparent, which was no doubt the reason of its being carried on so long. If Jim had only shown a proper spirit of penitence he would have been forgiven. But, except that he was a trifle surlier, he went on his way pretty much as before, even Dolly being treated in public with savage silence. But as she was not alienated there is reason to suppose that he mended his manners when they were alone together. For together they still were at times; and although muttered protests went up from the camp on such occasions not a man but had manliness enough to refrain from making Dolly part of Jim's punishment. So she and "Dim" and Red Mustang had many a fine scamper together over the prairie.

But there came a time when Jim and Red Mustang between them were to do a fine work—a time when a sudden danger loomed out, and Jim rose to it like the brave man that he was—when with clenched teeth he subdued the demon within him, and proved that on occasion he was ready, not for all he could get, but to give up all that he had. For a savage, "whoop" rang out one night on the unsuspecting camp. Men knew what it was, and sprang to their feet with a snarl of rage. Rifle in hand they rushed out.

"Injin!" said the judge, coolly loading his rifle, and in the moonlight gleamed the dusky painted figures. There was little love lost between Injin and white man. The "man-and-a-brother" theory had not been propounded on either side. It was war to the knife on both. "Steady! boys, steady!" said the judge, to whom such scenes were by no means new.

"Ready there! Now—at 'em!"

And "at 'em" it was. Down swung the muskets, out flashed the shot, and with a look that was not good to see upon their faces the boys began their work—sharp work—butchery. The savages swarmed into the camp only to be cut down. It was soon over. But the Indians had fought bravely, and, old, tried hand as he was, an uneasy light had leaped to the judge's eye. "It was a close shave," he muttered, wiping the great drops of sweat from his brow as he watched the fleeing band—"a close shave. A little more, and"—The pause was suggestive.

The day was already breaking when the judge turned in home. "Hope the little lass hasn't been scared," he thought; and, involuntarily, a queer, tender gleam passed over the weather-beaten face as he thought of his "little lass."

"Dolly!" he said, opening the cabin door. There was no answer. "Dolly!" and then again a little quicker, "Dolly!" Again that night the men were aroused by a cry—an awful cry, wrung from a strong man in pain; and when they hurried forward it was to find the judge with the fashion of his face all changed, pointing to the empty cabin, on whose floor shone the gleam of a tomahawk. That and the confusion of the place told its tale all too plainly—Dolly had been carried off by the Indians!

And not a man among them but shuddered, for Indian revenge is a very horrible thing at its best, and the pitiful helplessness of a little child would have no weight with a Blackfoot warrior on the warpath, especially if the child's people had defeated his own.

In the dazed silence Jim stepped forward—Jim, with his shoulders well squared and a resolute look on his face. He eyed the group rather scornfully. "Going to stop here all day?" he asked. "Bein' as this is just the right time to give your horses a rest! I'm off!" And so he was, and Red Mustang together, racing over the plain. But not before he had seized the judge's hand in a fierce grip, saying, with a totally unexpected watch in his voice, "Judge, if I can I'll bring her back." Not much, but it meant a great deal.

Thoroughly roused, the rest followed his example—not one hung back. All that fleet horses and brave hearts could do would be done for the little one.

I used to think Red Mustang the finest horse in the world, and never wondered at Jim's pride in her. A beautiful creature she was, indeed, and what was more to the purpose, swift and strong. She had been peculiarly vicious, and Jim had broken her in himself. I was present at that breaking in, and, boy as I was, I remember to this day my feeling of admiration as Jim quietly mounted upon her back.

"He's a blessed young scamp," said a man near me in involuntary delight, "but, by Jove, he can ride!"

So he could. Red Mustang exerted all her powers—which were by no means slight—in the way of bucking, rearing, shying, kicking and plunging, to no purpose. With his feet well in the stirrups and a firm grip on her sides, Jim stuck on, sparing neither whip nor spur, and making the lash curl round her in a way that I thought then, and still think, was brutal. But when, all trembling, she bowed her beautiful head, and with the dark fire of her eye owned him master, he flung away the whip and never used it again. That was just Jim.

But after the first memorable tussle, when it had been so emphatically decided whose will was to be obeyed, master and horse came to a very good understanding. Red Mustang's affection, indeed, had something pathetic in it, and the fact that she showed the reverse to every one else certainly did not lessen Jim's for her.

Over the prairie the little cavalcade started, Red Mustang, with that easy swinging stride of hers, taking the lead and keeping it. But Jim pulled her up sharply as there came a triumphant shout from behind, "Here's the trail!"

Riding up, Jim looked at it with his keen eyes. "That's no trail!" he said contemptuously.

Now, the rest of the men having stated that it was the trail, and being at least as well able to judge as Jim, did not receive his remark in the pleasantest spirit.

"It are the trail," said Daryl Dash, in a quietly conclusive way, as if that settled it.

"But it aren't!" said Jim squarely.

Now, Daryl Dash was one of the most trusted hands in the camp, and being backed by Big Ben, the rest naturally took his side.

"This ain't no time for foolin'!" they said very sternly. "Here's the trail, plain as can be; and we're goin' to follow it up!"

"I'm not foolin'!" retorted Jim, with a kind of desperate earnestness. "That trail's too plain for injins to have left, unless they done it a' purpose. I can find the trail right enough if you let me. Trust me, boys."

My poor Jim! As a man sows so shall he reap. What had he done, in all his

reckless, dispute here, to be trusted now? He was not trusted; nay, more, he was left half dead with anger and despair, to find his trail alone.

"Take it, or leave it," the men had said as they galloped off upon their trail.

Away in the east the sun was touching the sky with red gold light. Great crimson bars, flecked with orange, gleamed out broadly, and then melted into the softer harmony around, and before one knew it, the whole shining mass united and out flashed the sun. But before it did that Jim had made up his mind to do a very risky thing—to rescue Dolly single handed. Who else was there to do it? The others had ridden away in a direction which was every moment taking them farther away from the right track.

"My God!" he said wildly. Was it a prayer from those rough lips—a prayer which the Good Shepherd heard and answered? For Jim played a hero's part that day. He found the trail. For the sun, glinting downward, caught the light of a small pink object on the brush-wood and rested there lovingly. Nothing much—just the torn string from a little child's sunbonnet. But at the sight Jim broke into a suppressed whistle of triumph, and raced Red Mustang forward as she had never been raced before. I never like to think about that ride. Enough, the Red Mustang responded loyally to the situation. From "noon to dewy eve" she carried Jim steadily. But when, trembling, foam flecked and parched with thirst, he stopped her as the Indian camp loomed in sight, he knew that his work was out.

"Quiet! old lass! quiet!" he said, cautiously dismounting and patting her with a look on his face that few but Dolly or Red Mustang had ever seen there.

The gallant beast seemed to understand, and suppressing a whinny, rubbed her nose wistfully against the caressing hand.

Half gliding, half creeping forward, Jim took in the situation at a glance. The Indians had evidently only just stopped and were hastily improvising a sort of camp. But, unsuspecting as they were of being followed so soon, Jim knew that this first careless bustle of arrival would not last long, but that sentries would be set to guard against any approach. Suddenly his blood thrilled, for there before him, not a dozen yards away, lay Dolly reposing on an old blanket in the healthy sleep of childhood.

It was a foolish thing to do, perhaps, considering the state Red Mustang was in, but then Jim was desperate. How he crawled forward, seized Dolly and got back to Red Mustang unperceived he could never have told himself. But get back with her he did, and in a flash the three were off.

"Dim!" said Dolly, clinging in blissful content to the rough red shirted arms.

"Ay," Jim answered, glancing down at her as he tightened Red Mustang's girth; "you go to sleep, Dolly."

So Dolly's little brown head nestled down, and Jim and Red Mustang made what speed they could, which was not a very great speed, although there came sounds from behind which made the mare tear forward and turned Jim white. The Indians were in pursuit.

Mile by mile, hour after hour, that fearful race went on. The rugged line of hills which marked the camp were in sight now, but could Red Mustang hold out? She was already trembling ominously, and Jim knew that the time was come. If she were to reach the camp at all, it must be without his weight on her back.

"Dolly!" he said with a shake which made Dolly open her sleepy eyes, "I want you to do somethin' for me," he went on persuasively; "I want to get down here, I've—I've—a partic'lar reason for wanting to get down here"—and the arm holding Dolly's as gently as a woman's kept her head turned well forward. "Red Mustang! I'll take you to the camp all right, if you'll be a brave little gell, and go alone."

"Oh!" and Dolly's frightened clutch was very firm.

"Will you, Dolly?" said Jim feverishly. "Dolly! Dolly! Little lass! Will you? For me?"

"Iss, Dim," said Dolly with quivering lips.

Dismounting, Jim fastened her swiftly and firmly to the saddle and gave Red Mustang the word. "Good-by, Dolly," and Jim's moustache brushed the rosy lips.

"Dood-by, Dim," said Dolly.

Red Mustang whinnied uneasily. But her master had told her to go, and she went.

"She'll do it," said Jim with a great sigh of relief.

The Indians were very close now. In a curious, concentrated kind of way, Jim gazed at the plain, which the moonlight was kindling into peaceful beauty. Then with an ugly light in his eye, he drew out his bowie knife and turned to face what was before him.

whose green a coat of mail... one of those little... the... And Jim had given more than that—he had given his life for the next day Big Ben and the rest found him on the plain—scalped.—Chambers Journal.

Sitting Bull's War Club

The killing of Sitting Bull, the famous Indian chief, recalls the fact that Mr. Max E. Dickerson is the present possessor of this great chief's private war club. Mr. Dickerson scored the club from Elroy Post, a scenic artist in the employ of the Union Pacific Railroad company, who received it as a present from Sitting Bull himself. Mr. Post was doing some work for the railroad company at the time in and around Sitting Bull's headquarters, and the chief took a great liking to him, but would have nothing to do with the rest of the men, although there were six in the party. He took Mr. Post all through his camp, introduced him to different Indians, and made things as pleasant for him as possible.

In return for his kindness Mr. Post painted for Sitting Bull two large pictures of his two favorite ponies, Dry Camp and Never Fret, which so pleased the old chief that he said he would like to present him with something in return for the compliment. Noticing a large war club hanging up in the chief's tent, Mr. Post said he would like to have it. Sitting Bull mentioned the fact that the club was an old relic, had been in service over forty years, passed through numerous battles, and because of its curiosity he would give it to him. Upon Mr. Post's return to Aberdeen, S. D., he shipped the relic to Mr. Dickerson, who now has it on exhibition in one of the prominent business places of this city.—Shelby Cor. Cincinnati Enquirer.

Where Dirty Hands Are Allowed.

The most noticeable thing about the American people, in the eyes of an Australian recently arrived, is the fact that they wear their finger nails closely cut and very clean. In Sidney or Melbourne even the most aristocratic gentleman never thinks of cleaning his finger nails, and seldom cuts them. Even the lower classes in the United States take good care of their nails, which is something an Australian can scarcely comprehend. Americans are busy people, and one can hardly imagine when they find time to bother with cutting or cleaning their finger nails.

Another noticeable thing is your illumination of shop windows at night. After 8 o'clock in a Melbourne street the streets are as dark as a cavern, and one can walk for a block or more without seeing a light. Here in San Francisco there are lights in every window. Even after the shop is closed the proprietor leaves electric lights burning to display and advertise the goods in his window. A Melbourne merchant would regard this as a needless expense.—Interview with an Australian.

Old Shoes of Royalty.

In Dresden there is said to be on view a number of boots, shoes and slippers once worn by emperors, kings, queens and princes, which should be of much interest to relic hunters and shoe collectors. A citizen of New York is said to have in his possession a shoe and a sandal which were worn by Queen Elizabeth more than 300 years ago. The shoe is in a wonderful state of preservation. Americans who show such a weakness for royalty may be interested to learn that from the latest accounts one of our princesses has in her wardrobe a couple of pair of shoes to match every dress, and a lot of colored Russia leather, morocco and black shoes.—Chambers Journal.

Filling a Want.

A Chicago man is building an express car with reference to train robbers. It will be provided with forty-two port holes through which the messengers can shoot, iron bottom to prevent burning him out, and torpedoes and hand grenades which can be thrown all about by a system of springs and levers.—Detroit Free Press.

The Other Place.

"Some persons, including myself," said the parson, "believe that in the next world we but continue the work of this."

"And you expect to preach in heaven, doctor?"

"Yes."

"I think I'll go to—elsewhere."—Epoch.

Theodore Weld, once a famous anti-slavery lecturer, is living comfortably with his son at Hyde Park, Mass. He is 88 years old and is said to closely resemble the poet Bryant in looks.

A Definition.

"Pa, what is an auction?"

"An auction, my son, is a place where a man pays an exhibition sum for something he don't want and can't use."—Epoch.