

LITTLE SUNLOCKS DODGE

Little Sunlocks Dodge died when she was 8 years old. This story about her is one which, I think, will please the children. When I first heard it I said to myself, it sounds like a fable. But then I heard it from the lips of one who is now in heaven, and she believed it. And I remember that once, a long, long time after she was no more, it fell to me to visit the little town where Little Sunlocks Dodge had lived and where she died, and one afternoon I stood by a little grave that was covered with flowers so deep that if I had stepped into them they would have come up to my shoe tops.

Who were the father and mother of Little Sunlocks Dodge? Now, almost every child would say "that is a funny question." And yet that was a question that people in the village used to ask one another, although they never asked the kind old man and his little wife, who was always busy and always neat and as natty as any white-winged yacht you ever saw. No one ever asked Little Sunlocks who her father and mother were. She would have said, if she had been asked, that the old people with whom she lived were, for she did not know differently.

The kind old man was known as James Dodge. He was a cooper and his shop was in the basement of his house, and there you could find him from early in the morning till sunset, among the barrels and staves and shavings. He had once been captain of a steamboat on the Ohio River. An affliction came upon him—his eyesight was impaired, and he quit the river and opened this cooper shop in the town where Little Sunlocks died. The house stood on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River.

He was a very good man. He was faithful in all the requirements. He always went to church alone. His pew was near the altar, and it was understood that when the church was crowded Mr. Dodge's pew was to be used in seating strangers. Aside from his attendance on Sundays and the Wednesday evening prayer meetings, Mr. Dodge was not a conspicuous member. He prayed in such a low tone that sometimes people who were present would have to watch him to see what he said amen. He went and came in the quietest way. His wife was never heard to question her husband's sincerity. When she was asked about her religious opinions she gave a satisfactory answer and the subject was dropped. I think she was a good little woman from all I ever heard. You know, perhaps, that some people who do not go to church are good. But that is a matter that has nothing to do with this story.

Little Sunlocks Dodge never went to church. She was always with her mother, or the one whom she knew as mother. She never went to school, for this mother taught her. And one reason why I think this mother was a very good little woman is that Little Sunlocks used to repeat the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer and the beatitudes, and she always knelt beside this mother at night and said the little prayer which all good children know. "Now I lay me down to sleep."

And then she kissed this mother and the one whom she thought was her father. And when she was in her bed this father and mother watched her until she was "safe asleep," and then they read a chapter, sometimes one, sometimes the other, and then they



SHE ALWAYS KNELT BESIDE THE MOTHER AT NIGHT

knelt down, and Mr. Dodge would pray. And then Mr. Dodge would take an old tin lantern, light the piece of candle in it, and go out and look all around the house and through his shop and then come back and go to bed. He did this every night until the night that Little Sunlocks died.

You say he could not have had much faith in his prayers if he was afraid like that.

Well, that is so. But there are a great many Mr. Dodges who pray, and then light their lanterns and go out to see if their prayers have been answered.

Another thing about Little Sunlocks Dodge which you may think very strange was that she had no playmates. She did not want any as far as I ever learned. This good little woman whom she thought was her mother was her only companion.

I suppose you would like to know if Little Sunlocks Dodge was pretty. A very good old man—I think it was the poet Rogers—once said: "To us who are old the young are always beautiful." But Little Sunlocks, as I am told by one whom I consider a judge, was pretty. Her hair was what you would call red. But it was a beautiful shade of that color, and very rare. It clustered about her head and neck like a bunch of flowers that comes a little untied. It was fastened with a comb much too old, for her, but it was a costly one, set with pearls. Her eyes were as brown as beet-eyes, and when you looked into them they seemed as if they were the windows of some beautiful world. Her figure was little, and while she was not stout, her step was like a pretty dance. No need to tell you any more. I suppose as pretty as a picture, and so there was only one picture, and so in which she lived, and only three people in it. She may have been selfish in this, but it was not her fault.

It was, indeed, a strange nest—these two old people growing older and feebler every day and this child who blossomed like a flower and became more radiant as she grew.

One day the people who lived across the way noticed Little Sunlocks from her ramp about the door of the old cooper shop. And the next day and the next and so on she was missed. She was never seen again by the people who looked for her every morning. I do not know how it came about that what follows was known. But it was told to me by that one whose stories and words were to me as true as those which your mothers tell you.

One evening Little Sunlocks called her mother and father—these dear old

people who watched her so carefully—to her. She had been in a dreamy condition all day. She would open her brown eyes to the good old people, and look at them, and then close them, and a smile would play about her face, in the afternoon the sunshine fell upon her rippling hair as if it wanted to linger. When she called the good old people to her in the evening she told them that she had been away to a country where she described as full of rivers and islands and mountains, and where the birds sang and where everybody was young and beautiful. She had seen a wonderfully handsome man, who had taken her in his arms and asked her to make a wish. She wished that her mother and father might come some time to live where she was at that moment. Then the strangely handsome man curled her hair about his fingers, kissed her, and told her if she would come and live with him she would make her wish.

She had promised, and she asked the good old people to forgive her for going away, but it was that they might grow young and come to her, where they would never be old any more. She would meet them and they would all go to the strangely handsome man's house and live always.

The children of the town came the next day and went in on tiptoe and looked at Little Sunlocks. They had heard of her so often, but few had ever



THERE WAS THE OLD MAN'S UNFINISHED WORK

seen her. I told you that she had no playmates. These same children left some flowers and went away.

Soon after this people in passing the old house noticed that the blinds were drawn and the door of the old cooper shop was closed. They used to hear an old man in the shop at work, always singing as he worked all the day. Day after day passed, and it was the same. Then the people went to the shop door and pried it open and went in. There was the old man's unfinished work; his tools on the bench, his old apron and cap, and the old shoes he used to wear when he was at work.

They went up stairs, and there was everything in the house, neat and in its place, just as the dear little woman had left it. It was the tinniest, neatest little home, with a hundred little things which were the work of her hands. But she whose steps had so often been heard, and whose voice was so familiar to the little room, quiet in their way, was gone. The house remained untouched for a year. No one moved a pin or in any way molested a thing in any of the rooms. Some inquiries were made about the missing couple, but no information was ever received.

One day two people came to the town and walked over to the house, and went in and remained a long time, and then came out and walked over to the church. They sat down by the grave of Little Sunlocks. Then they went away, and that evening they took passage on a steamer and left the place. Then people of the town watched them as the boat disappeared and never saw them again. No one had spoken to them.

But they were not the old people who had used to live in the house. The man was tall and handsome, with a kindly face, and the woman was young and beautiful, and her face was like that of Little Sunlocks. They were as devoted to one another as good husbands and wives ought to be. They walked hand in hand and were as gentle as peace.

It was told to me afterward that these two people were the same who had been old, the people who had loved and watched Little Sunlocks and whom she loved. The spirit of the child was so good, she was so gentle and obedient that it entered into the two old lives and made them young again, and they remembered their vows, one to the other, and had another existence. And wherever they went the skies were unclouded and the people whom they met became better. They went from one place to another and blessings followed and peace nestled about firesides, and the old and afflicted became young and well again, and children were more playful and some good men were more loving, and always in the name of Little Sunlocks Dodge. —Beverly Bruix.

On Turning up Trousers

I am asked to explain why some men think it fashionable to turn up the bottoms of their trousers, and how such a fashion originated. Men may turn up their trousers in wet weather without reproach, because the doing so is neat and tidy; but to turn up trousers in dry weather was first thought of by a lot of London bank clerks, who sit on the razorback tops of the Oxford street omnibuses, and are apt to rub the bottoms of their trousers against the hardware of the seats. To keep them turned up through the day probably struck them as economical. But I have never seen men in fashion in London turn up their trousers under any circumstances. In wet weather they take care, but for one of them to appear in Botten Row in the season with his trousers turned up would be justly considered as a serious breach of decorum.

I am aware that a noble earl at a wedding recently in this city appeared at the altar with his trousers turned up. But I am loath to conclude he intended that as a cynical practical joke on the Anglican and weak imitators he had met at the New York Club, who think it is English to wear trousers turned up as much at the bottom. —New York press.

Faith Without Works

"Are you going to employ the rain-makers in this neighborhood?" asked the pastor from the East. "No," said the western Kansas farmer. "Everybody round here is too blamed stingy to subscribe anything. I guess we'll have to call a meeting and pray for rain."

BORROWED MIRTH.



BEHIND THE SCENES.

"Do you think my skirt at all conspicuous, Ada?" "Yes; by its absence, dear."

Pipkin—What are you going to do with your son when he gets out of college? Potts—I think some of sending him to school. —P.C.C.

"Were you good to your little sister on the Fourth, Tommy?" "Oh, indeed I was. Why, I set off all her fire crackers for her." —Harper's Bazar.

She—I rode down in the same horse car with you yesterday. He—Strange I didn't see you. She—Not at all.—You were sitting down.—Truth.

Mother—Why do you stay at home all the time? Have you no friends to visit? Laura—Yes, one, but I cannot endure her. —Fliegende Blaetter.

It is supposed that the fashion among women of reading the final pages of a novel first is due to their predilection for the last word. —Boston Transcript.

Resident Maine Town (proudly)—No, sir, the words whisky and beer are unknown in this town. Drummer (in anxious whisper)—What do you ask for? —Puck.

The spinster—Do you believe marriage is a failure? The bachelor—Having had no experience, I cannot tell. You might ask Lillian Russell.—New York Press.

He—I hope you do not doubt the warmth of my affection for you? She—If you have any affection at all, it must be warm this sort of weather. —Indianapolis Journal.

"We have caught our defaulting book-keeper," said one merchant to another. "Then he is now a spotted adder." replied the latter. —Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

Hungry Higgins—Say, it ain't hot on the road, here, net nuthin'. Weary Watkins—You said 'er. Don't you wisit we was in some nice, cool jail? —Indianapolis Journal.

"So you feel you cannot marry him." "Yes, I am fully decided." "Why, don't you like him?" "O, I like him well enough, but I can't get him to propose." —Brooklyn Post.

Judge—What were you arrested for? Prisoner—I rescued an amateur cornet player from drowning, your honor. Judge—Thirty days for contempt. —New York World.

He—Funny, isn't it, how we men get baldheaded and old women don't? She—I can't think it's strange. You know we never get to be old enough for that. —South Boston News.

Mrs. Carson—I hear it was a runaway match. Mrs. Vokes—Yes. The bride and her father caught up to him with a preacher when he was trying to escape. —New York Herald.

"Going to keep the Fourth this year, Hicks? Fire the cannon and all that?" "Well—I don't know about firing the cannon, but I may discharge the hired man." —Harper's Bazar.

Doctor—Let's see, did I prescribe for you the last time you were here? Patient—Let me see—oh, yes! I remember now, for I was deadly sick all the next day. —Boston Transcript.

"I saw several cyclone cellars while I was out west," remarked the visitor. "Dear me," exclaimed young Mrs. Tucker, "who on earth would want to buy a cyclone." —Washington Star.

You may do your figuring with uncle when you put up your watch for a loan, but when you come to get the timepiece back you'll find that it's a case of anie. —Athens Constitution.

He—I wonder if there is another girl in the whole wide world so sweet as my little sweetheart? She—What's that? How dare you think of another girl? I don't speak to you for a week. —Indianapolis Journal.

Hazel—By George! I can't understand it. My credit must be gone. Business men don't seem to think I'd be able to pay. Mrs. Hazel—Perhaps they'd think so if they saw your wife dress better. —Chicago Record.

Willis—When my wife makes me a present it is sure to be something that will last. Wallace—My wife is just like her. Five years ago my wife made me a present of 100 cigars, and I have ninety-nine of them yet. —Life.

"Oh! you are leaving us early, Mr. Brown?" "Yes, Mr. Park, and I am very sorry that I must leave, but not expecting to have such a pleasant time this evening I had made another engagement." —Harper's Bazar.

Counsel for defendant—True, your honor, my client did call the plaintiff a donkey, but at the present high market rate of those valuable animals is this not rather a compliment than otherwise? —Fliegende Blaetter.

Mabel—Do you notice how attentive Tom Torpepin is to that elderly Miss Grotz? I wonder if he really means business. Maud—There is certainly little about her that would lead one to suppose that he means anything else. —Brooklyn Life.

He—And did you tell your father that although I am penniless, with your love I would be the richest man in the world? She—Yes, but it did no good. He said I'd be a fool to enter into a life partnership in which I had to furnish all the capital. —Arkansas Traveler.

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