

WHERE SHE COMES.

With heavy elders overhung, Half hid in clamber masses, An old fence roves on, among The tangled meadow grasses. It makes a shade for lady fern Which nestles close beside it; While clematis, at every turn, And roses almost hide it.

In shade of overhanging sprays And down a sunny hollow, By hazel copse, and woodland ways, The winding fence I follow; By rose, and thorn, and fragrant dew, In search of something sweeter— The orchard gap, where she comes through, And I go down to meet her!

The sunlight slants across the fence, Where lichens gray it cover, And stirs a hundred dreamy scents From fern, and mist and clover; But though the air is sweet today, I know of something sweeter; That she can only come this way, And I am sure to meet her! And so, while chipmunks run a match To tell the wrens who's coming, And all across the briar patch, There sounds a drowsy humming— I seek for something sweeter; A gap, among the apple trees, Where I am going to meet her! —Charles B. Goina, in September Scribner's.

A MOTHER OF SORROW.

Sweet Springs is a town that would have for genre painters or realistic novel writers "attractions."

They would make money out of our long blue coats, quaintly cut gowns, and so-called dialect, which mainly consists in a persistent dropping of the final "g" of our pronounced provincialisms.

We who live in such towns as Sweet Springs know very well the value of our "aesthetic attractions."

Now and then one of us writes them up in a story and sends it off to some of the Northern magazines that seem to have a place for picturesque literature. But it doesn't seem to go. It goes, but it also comes back. I think the fault lies in the fact that a writer must have what some people call a "perspective." It is possible that the picture I shall attempt to paint may lack perspective, but I mean to put down in black and white the record of a little life, and even the thought of writing it out seems to thrill me.

I am no scholar, but I read the best magazines, and I have learned that any phase of life that has its own local color, its own environment, its own perspective, is not without value to the rest of the world.

I live in a rigid prohibition county. Of course, on Saturday nights the railway platform is piled up with brown jugs full of whiskey sent in from other towns, and we all know that prohibition does not exactly prohibit. But still, public opinion is dead against it—I mean against drinking—and the arm of the law is at work in defence of moderation and temperance.

You have all seen such towns. A railroad track and an unpainted, ragged railway station building, set like an ugly picture of still-life in a margin of mud, cow tracks and old iron scraps. There is a shelving hill washed by frequent rains into innumerable gullies, and crowning this is a row of brick and frame stores. The drug store is on the corner, and the dry goods shops and hardware stores come next, and sandwiched in between these and the post office is the fruit store of Dago Pete, with its freckled bananas, the lawyer's office and the dingy newspaper office, while near by is the forlorn little excuse for a millinery shop.

They had sent for me to come to the court house, and as I tracked across the sticky, clayey yard I said to myself it would be just my luck to be sent off on a long jaunt into the country. It was even so.

"John," said Judge Bulwer to me, "get ready and go out to the cross-roads leading to Molasses Hill and stop at Bill Hicklin's. You're to fire him out of the county for whiskey selling. Do the best you can; only don't come home till he's gone."

Judge Bulwer's wife is a temperance leader, and the judge himself has no mercy on whiskey sellers and whiskey drinkers, so I knew I had to obey, and I set out with the intention of succeeding in the undertaking.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when I crossed the flat top of Molasses Hill. It had ceased raining, and a smoky haze lay all along the lowlands, and a faint blue blush trembled in the scrub oaks. The cotton fields had a dragged look, and here and there a few unpicked bolls reminded me of so many truzzled out white roses going to pass under the elements.

Just at the edge of the clearing stood a log house. There was a room on each side of an open porchway between, and a mud chimney at each end. A cotton field straggled all around the house, and one room of it had evidently been fitted up for a kind of shop for the sale of sardines and crackers, and salt meat and so forth. A ragged little flag of blue smoke flouted from one of the chimneys. I hitched my pony at the rail fence, crossed the yard and went on to the porch and rapped at the door. Everything was dead quiet. The sound of my whip pounding was fit to wake the dead. It sounded like justice pounding, like punishment overtaking crime; and somehow even I felt sorry for the old soak I was to turn out of his home.

My pounding brought no answer, so I pushed open the cabin door and looked in. It was like any other country cabin—big chinks in the logs letting in the daylight and the starlight. A big fireplace, and a shelf on which set an imitation silver vase, a mug with "Remember Me" on it, and a picture of Jeff Davis framed in pine burs. A bed stood in the corner, there was a table, a dresser with some tin plates on it, and before the fire a hair trunk put on to rockers, and in it lay the weazenset, saddest, forlornest little blind baby I ever thought a merciful God could let live and suffer. It had a pretty face, with a delicate mouth bending like a bow—like a crescent moon cut out of a rose leaf—and its little yellow curls lay like the dendrils of a love vine around its brows. Its eyes were wide open and set way back in its

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We cannot here particularize but will instead ask those in need of cloaks, jackets, cloths, etc., to visit our mantle room and inspect the new goods there displayed.

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head, and there was a peculiar haze over them, so peculiar that the minute I looked into them I knew the little thing must be blind.

Down on the floor by the cradle there knelt a little girl child. She was bare-footed and ragged. It would have gone to a woman's heart to have seen her. Her dress was fastened by one button at the neck, her soft brown hair was gathered back from her face, her big gray eyes were sad and tired, and under them were heavy black rings.

She looked at me without surprise and bade me come in. "Father's not here," said she, softly, "but you can wait and make yourself at home."

I made some noise tramping over the floor in my heavy boots, and the baby set up a faint little cry.

The girl on the hearth stood up and leaned over the cradle. Her dress was open all down the back and I could count the ridges in her little backbone as she bent over, also the blue welts here and there where she had a beating.

"There, there," she said to the little one, and picked it up in her arms, pressing her face to its pallid little cheek, and holding the infant, woman-fashion, on one arm, while she walked about and fixed with the disengaged hand a hunk of fat meat for the baby to suck. The little one gulped at the meat like a starved hound puppy, and as this quieted it the small nurse sat down. She seemed to forget that I was there, and a brooding, intent look, grew and darkened in her little face as she hovered over the infant.

"Well, little mother," said I, laughing, "you've got your hands pretty full, haven't you?" The child raised her face and looked at me.

A modest consciousness stirred her feminine nature, and she gave a tug at her short ragged gown that never could hide her thin dirt-streaked legs.

"What sort of a mother have you got, to leave you alone in the cabin minding a sickly child like that?" "I ain't got none. My mar's daid. They ain't nobody but father and the children and the baby and me."

"Who lives here with you?" "Just us. Father sells things on the other side of the cabin, and there's lots of men, niggers and mill hands round here at nights. They make so much noise. They walks Dan'l, and they dance breakdowns, and they shouts. Sometimes I go in and beg them not to wake my baby. One night they made me dance and get 'fign like they do at camp meeting. I hated to go in there. I knowed my baby needed me. He cries when I go from him. And when I'm cookin' or washin' I have to run and touch him every little while, and then he's all right."

"Where is your mother, did you say?" "Please, she's daid. She was awful sick, and then she said she was daid, and they put her in a black box and took her off in the cart. They wouldn't let me go. I saw her and she was smiling, but she was all stiff like ice and cold. I knowed she was daid, and I wanted something to 'member her by, and when nobody was looking I took something. It was in the box with her. Do you want to see it?" I nodded, and the child went to the mattress and drew from under the poor pine pillow a wrinkled, soiled card. It was an undertaker's card and read:

ALLEN WEST, UNDERTAKER. Funerals filed at short notice. Bodies Embalmed.

"I've kept it ever since. It reminds me of my mar," said the child, simply putting it to her lips. She could not read its sad legend.

"What was the matter with her, little one?" "I dunno. She was awful sick. One night it was raining and she was groaning and had to quit cooking, and my father he got on the mule and went down the creek after the doctor. But the doctor said he had not been paid for the last time and he was dammed if he was coming any more after such a fool woman. When my father got back he was dreadful mad; he beat most all of us—there's five boys, you know. My mar laid on the floor and then she screamed; oh, you don't know how she

screamed. My father went after Aunt Letty and told her to come on. She wouldn't do it and he beat her. They fit on the porch and he scratched her face, and she bit his finger off, but anyhow he made her go in and nurse my mar. My mar screamed so the cold chills went up and down my back. And then Aunt Letty sent me to the creek for some water. I could hear my mar screaming down there and it scared me. Aunt Letty took the water and put a silver dollar in it and set it before the fire. It made good dollar tea and they made my mar drink it all. But it didn't cure her. She died. Before she died she called me and said there was a little baby and it was for me. This is the baby, please. I take care of it. Ain't it a nice little baby? He loves me."

"Who does the work?" "Oh, just me, Sammy, he gets the pine knots, and Bill, he draws the water, and Tom and me washes the lathers, and I fries the meat, and they'll all help me work. I keep lather right clean. You must 'scuse the looks of things, please, sir. My baby ain't well to-day."

There was a whooping on the porch, a clatter of feet, and Bill Hicklin, with some other men tumbled into the shanty shop. I quietly watched them through the chinks in the log walls, drinking their foul whiskey, staining the night with cursing; an old story, however, to the little mother hushing her baby in the other room.

It was my mission to turn this man out of the county, bag and baggage, and there was a scene when I told him so, and ordered him to get ready to leave. Nothing could have exceeded the patience of the little mother. All night long she was busy packing their poor fragments of furniture; all night long she comforted the drunken brute of a father, or nursed the blind baby, or hushed the frightened brood of little brothers.

At daylight the cart was ready, the oxen hitched in, and I stood by while the little mother and her brood took their places on top of the load.

Bill Hicklin cursed and cried in a drunken drive. "Never mind, father," said the little mother, leaning over, and the blue welts of her last beating showed sadly on her bent and patient shoulders, "never mind, father, we will go somewhere and we will get along. Mar said I could get along; so don't cry, father."

And the ox cart drove on with this little mother of sorrows huddling her blind baby on her breast.—Catherine Cole, in the New Orleans Picayune.

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quite realize that by the great law of progress something is always being brought out to make life pleasanter. The latest thing introduced is the "Health" underwear for ladies, made from the very finest Australian wool, and which every good doctor in Canada agrees is a perfect safeguard against cold, whilst being at the same time well-fitting, warm, and luxurious. When you go down town stop into any first-class dry goods store and ask to see these goods. If you do not see the word "Health" plainly stamped on the article, don't buy it, as it will not be the genuine article.—Advt.

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