

FORTESCUE'S SORE THROAT.

It was a delightful morning in early spring; a gentle wind caressed the tender leaves which had burst forth in the night; a bird twittered now and again with that peculiar clearness of sound that only the first birds of the season seem to possess, and the sun had sent his heralds of the dawn far in advance—long lines of yellow, purple and crimson, with tender pink and blue still higher in the sky.

Mr. Fortescue had risen early on purpose to feast his eyes and mind on the beauty of the landscape, and stood lost in thought at his dressing-room window. A plain business man, a thorough-going man, his neighbors called Ned Fortescue; but he had an artist's eye and a keen poetic instinct.

But suddenly his face clouded—he had heard a sound that he understood only too well. A harmless noise you would have thought it—merely a slight jar of iron against wood as Mrs. Fortescue turned the bed-key.

"She's taking down our bed, as I'm alive!" soliloquized Mr. Fortescue. "That means house-cleaning, and no peace for a week at least. What can be done? Is there no way out of it? I'm sure every carpet in the house was lifted last fall." The husband stood looking out of the window, but no longer heeding the sunrise—he was revolving a plan. "I'll risk it!" he said at last, and proceeded to hunt up some strips of flannel. Just as he was swathing his throat in a long strip of red flannel Mrs. Fortescue came to the door.

"I've taken the bed down, Ned, and shall set to work at once. Hear the birds! it's high time we were through house-cleaning. But, my dear Ned, what is the matter? Don't tell me you've a sore throat!"

Mr. Fortescue nodded, pointed to his throat, and shook his head, as if solemnly to indicate that speech was an impossibility.

"Dear me! how very unfortunate. I can't possibly clean house with you ill!"

Mr. Fortescue turned suddenly to the window lest his delight should betray him.

"We must send for Dr. Horton," continued his wife, "and you must not leave these rooms. I don't wish to alarm you, my dear, but you know diphtheria is so catching, and the children—"

For a moment our hero wavered; he had not any idea of being quarantined. Besides, the doctor would see through his deception. If only his wife had held her tongue for a few minutes he would have confessed his wickedness, and thrown himself upon her mercy; but she, foolish woman, did not know when to keep still. "I'll tell you, Ned, what I'll do," she went on, "if it's not clear diphtheria, I'll just run off with the children up to Aunt Maria's, and then, if you are not better, I'll leave them there and come back. To be sure, I want to nurse you."

Here was a respite! No house-cleaning, and a house all to himself at that loveliest time of the year. Annie was such a slave to her house and her children that he couldn't be blamed if she seemed tiresome once in a while! So Mr. Fortescue (speaking as hoarsely as he could, and so over-acting that Annie began to fear pneumonia, and was thoroughly frightened) agreed to take his breakfast apart from his family and see the doctor as soon as possible.

"You'll be able to swallow a soft-boiled egg, dear, and a cup of coffee, won't you?" said Mrs. Fortescue; and Ned, who could have eaten three or four mutton chops with a relish, had to look ill and nod acquiescence.

Dr. Horton was sent for, and came round very promptly, and, as Mrs. Fortescue was washing the breakfast china, she sent him up to see her husband, intending to follow soon.

"I'm in a pickle, and I must talk fast," said the patient, in a remarkably clear, smooth voice, "for my wife will be up in a moment. To tell the truth, Horton, I've shammed sick to get rid of the house-cleaning, and you must help me out. Your bill would have come in a month later if I had not, for Annie is always sick after a spring cleaning. Now, tell her I've got a diphtheritic throat—nothing serious, but that it would be safer for her to take the children to Aunt Maria's."

"I know your wife too well to imagine she'd leave you," said the doctor, "for all her devotion to the young ones."

"But she'd take them there, and then I'll telegraph that I'm better, and perhaps they'll stay a few days. This lovely weather won't last a week, and then she'll be glad the cleaning is put off."

Mrs. Fortescue's voice was heard giving some directions to the servant; there was only time for an assenting nod from the doctor, and she was in the room, anxious to learn his opinion of the patient.

"A diphtheritic throat, ma'am; there is no cause for alarm—none whatever, yet what is a light attack for the father might prove fatal to a child."

"I'll take them away at once—at once! Ned, you don't think I'll neglect you? I'll be back to-morrow, and you must telegraph to-night. Doctor, you must telegraph, and let me know the truth."

The two men felt guilty, as they saw

that Mrs. Fortescue was really troubled. It was only the vivid recollection of the last spring cleaning, and the belief that a few days at Aunt Maria's "would really do Annie good," that enabled Mr. Fortescue to carry out his part. As for the doctor, he assured her that Ned was perfectly well except for a few spots on his throat; that the quiet, and a few days rest from business, would quite set him up; and urged her to stay with the children for a day or two if he could conscientiously telegraph "All's well."

Two or three hours later Mrs. Fortescue and the two children drove off to the depot, waving a good-by to "Poor Papa," who stood at his window, the red flannel still about his throat. Dr. Horton had telegraphed to two or three of Ned's chums, and was to make his next call about dinner time, when they hoped the gentlemen in question would have arrived. Meanwhile the cook and waitress were quite relieved as to master's throat by the hearty lunch he had ordered and enjoyed.

It chanced that all three of the chums were able to accept the invitation. Jack Downing could never resist the country in such weather, and felt he could combine business with pleasure; for Fortescue had told him of the scenery about his place, and he was sure of making some sketches. Tom Bascomb was a medical student, one who often spent his Sundays at the Henery (as the Fortescues called their place), and Mr. Driscombe, a hard-working man of business, was fairly shoved off by his wife, who knew how much the poor man needed a breath of real country air.

"I'm on the sick list," exclaimed their host. "Nothing worth mentioning except that it gave me a chance of a holiday, and as my wife is off with the children I thought I would enjoy keeping bachelor's hall for a few days." And they did enjoy it! Jack sketched, talked and smoked; Tom refused to think of medicine or disease, kept them all laughing, and amused himself at the piano, while "dear old Driscombe," as Ned called his friend, who was a few, and seemed ten, years older than Ned, rested body, soul and spirit, enjoying the good cooking, the clear air, the scenery, the young man's jollity and his wife's letters, which arrived twice a day.

"Throat doing splendidly," was the telegram that relieved Annie Fortescue on the evening of her arrival. Aunt Maria was delighted to see the children, and made so much of Annie herself that the little woman decided not to go the next morning if the news was good.

"Your husband almost well—no need of nursing," was the telegram received at 10 o'clock, and then all insisted that since she had come she might as well stay.

"Just telegraph to Ned that you'll stay a week now you have left home," coaxed her aunt. "You are such a slave to your house, husband and children that I began to despair of a visit. I said to Thomas only the other day: 'Annie'll be sure to be house-cleaning if this warm spell holds good.'"

"Why, queerly enough, I had begun," said Annie. "My bed was down; Ned always knows I mean business when I unscrew that great bed of ours. How the dear old fellow hates house-cleaning. No, I can't promise a week, but I'll stay on from day to day. Ned can't do without me."

If she could have but seen Ned at that moment! He was trying his hand at a water-color under Jack's tuition, while Tom told story after story that made Ned laugh so heartily he could not keep his hand steady. Then followed a song, Ned singing the solo, and all joining in the chorus—singing is so good for a sore throat!

The weather grew warmer each day. Annie's housewifely instincts could not resist such opportunity. Ned was, by his own account, quite well; the children could stay at Aunt Maria's. What a splendid chance to do the cleaning!

"I never knew such a succession of spring days. The weather is heavenly. It is inspiring. Why, before the rest of you thought of getting out of your beds Ned and I took a stroll, and see these sketches!" and Jack showed his studies.

"Do you know, a woman only thinks of—" Ned began; but he was interrupted; he never finished the sentence, for a figure stood in the doorway; and, as all four gentlemen turned, Annie looked from one to the other, in very evident amazement, and not without evident delight. Any woman who enjoys housekeeping more than homemaking can enter into her feelings. Never had the pretty sitting-room looked so homelike; but Annie saw only the disorder. A box of water-colors here, the portfolio of sketches there; a branch of catkins was pinned above a picture, and in two saucers Mr. Driscombe had started some delicate ferns. "Messies," one and all, housewifely Annie called them; yet as she looked she could not be blind to the fact that "Ned" was brighter and happier than he had seemed for a year past. Even his astonishment at her sudden appearance did not bring back the clouded, repressed expression so familiar to his wife; for Ned knew that; though the woman he had chosen as his wife was a trifle too much devoted to mere externals, she was a true lady, and would not be rude to any guest, no matter how unwelcome.

In far less time it has taken to write this Annie recovered herself, shook hands with the two gentlemen she knew and was introduced to Jack Downing,

of whom she had often heard. Nothing was said of the throat, but after a private interview with Mary, the waitress, Annie, who was no fool and quick enough to learn a lesson, made a resolution. She pressed her husband's friends to stay a few days longer, watered the ferns, hunted up a few more catkins, and when she had Ned to herself said, very demurely, "You needn't play sick another spring, dear. I'll wait till you've enjoyed the first lovely weather before I house-clean. Ned, I do like a tidy house, but I believe I love you even better!"

"Annie, I'm ashamed of myself, but I can't say I'm sorry since you're so good about it. So you do see something good in a lovely spring day besides an inspiration for a thorough cleaning?"

"I see what these spring days have done for you, Ned; I believe you've been cleaning out the cobwebs from your brain. You must keep Jack Downing here a week or two. After all, the house need not be pulled to pieces every spring, and I'll try to put up with a few messes in the sitting room, since they make you so happy."

And Annie let the bed-key rest until the following September.

MYSTERIOUS INFLUENCES.

Dreams and Premonitions Which Do Not Come to Pass Are Forgotten.

"I'm going to tell you something that's true," said a Brooklyn man the other day to a New York Sun reporter. "You can believe it or not, but it's true. I have a cousin who went to Europe for her health last year. While in France she died. Comparing time between France and America, it must have been within an hour of her death that her mother, who was knitting in the sitting-room at home laid her knitting-work in her lap and looked up with a sort of stunned expression. 'Why! Alice is dead!' she said. Next day we got a dispatch by cable saying she was dead."

"There was," said another member of the party, "a curious illustration of mind-reading, or spiritual telegraphy, or whatever you like to call it, during the war. You remember that the battle of Gettysburg was settled on the 3d of July, though Lee lay on his arms expecting another attack on the 4th, and began his retreat that night. The surrender of Vicksburg occurred on the 4th. Gettysburg and Vicksburg are 800 miles apart, or perhaps more, and no telegraph message had been received at Gettysburg announcing the surrender of Vicksburg—at least, if there had been, it could hardly have reached headquarters before sundown on the 4th. The 12th corps had been drawn up in line on the afternoon of the 4th with a view to changing position, and was standing at 'in place, rest,' when one of the soldiers exclaimed: 'Vicksburg's taken!' The word passed down the line, and a cheer broke from the troops. That news and the certainty that Lee had sustained a severe defeat put new life into them. But when an attempt was made to trace the news to official sources it couldn't be done. That soldier 'felt it in his bones,' and had spoken right out. Next day dispatches arrived that proved that the soldier had spoken the truth."

"Yes, those things are unaccountable," said a third speaker. "The intuitions, or whatever they are, needn't be so very important, either. I remember that my father was sitting in his library one afternoon, when he took out his watch looked at it, and said: 'E—will be here in ten minutes. E—was his brother-in-law, who lived in a neighboring town, and though he called frequently he was not expected that day. After he had spoken, my father seemed rather surprised at himself, and laughed a little awkwardly. My mother asked how he knew that E—would be there, and he said he didn't know, he had spoken on the impulse of the moment. Sure enough, in ten minutes the bell rang. E—was at the door. He had only come to dinner, and his visit was not important; but he had somehow, projected his personality ahead of him."

Said a fourth: "There really is such a thing as seeing beyond the limit of human vision. I'll tell you a little circumstance that I can swear to, and then let's talk about something else. When I was 16 years old I had no more idea of going to London than I had of going to Nova Zembla. I knew practically nothing about the city. One night I dreamed that I was there in a park facing some public buildings, and over the trees and roofs at the right were the towers of Westminster abbey and parliament buildings. That night an important letter was on its way summoning me to London. I went there, arriving just as the man who had written the letter was leaving his house for a walk. I saw my trunk safely stowed, and then went along with him. We strolled out to St. James' park to hear a band play. At one point in the park I looked behind me, and there was the picture I had seen in my dreams—trees, towers, public buildings, and all. Before I went there I hadn't the slightest idea how the city was built. For aught I knew St. Paul's Westminster abbey, Temple Bar, and the British museum stood in a row on one street."

How did I manage in a dream to see those buildings east of St. James' park just in the position and size, shape, and color that they really have?"

UNITED.

A Reminiscence of the War.

Grand Army Gazette.

Enlisted in the year 1862, in a small western town, under the lamented Gilbert Hathaway, who later in the war, while we served in the famous "Provisional Brigade," sealed his devotion to the Union and the old flag with his life's blood. While the subsequent years brought us new and meritorious commanders, and the years themselves were so pregnant with events, with battles lost and won, with capture and prison life upon Belle Isle, his memory was ever held sacred by the men, who served under him, for they knew and loved him as a brave Christian soldier.

It was in the yard surrounding the county court house, where the mustering officer had his quarters, and where men were eagerly enlisting to serve their country. Crowds of people were thronging that day to listen to the speaking from the steps of the building.

I had concluded the oath my advanced years entitled me to take, and as I stepped back my place was filled by a slight, boyish form with smooth face that did not seem nearly so good a passport to the oath without question. I was struck by the clear-cut features, and the honest, vigorous expression of the boy's eyes; eyes that were of a calm, determined blue. He was expostulated with by the officers, and told that he was too young to stand back, &c. The boy insisted that notwithstanding his youth there was no one to dispute his right to serve his country in her hour of need.

After some questioning and ascertaining that the boy was an orphan, with no one to interpose objections, he was duly sworn in as "Richard Moss," and assigned to Co. "H."

I walked beside him to the rendezvous, and laying my hand upon his shoulder said to him, "Richard, we are destined to be comrades-in-arms, and I trust you fully understand the step you have taken." He expressed gratitude that we were to be comrades, said he only understood that his country needed his services, and that he was willing to accord them, and that there never could be a moment's regret for the course he had taken.

Although the disparity in our ages would imply that we were illy-mated, we thus became mess-mates, and an affection sprang up between us that only ended with the going out of that young, devoted life upon the field of carnage.

We were ordered "front," and in the Buel-Bragg campaign we were duly initiated into the details of a soldier's life, and into the terrible sequence of an internecine war.

Around the bivouac, and upon lonely watches I learned the history of my boy's early life. He was born in Tennessee, and at 12 years old his parents had died and were buried near Nashville, leaving only himself and an older brother, who still lived, at the beginning of the war in east Tennessee. At the death of his parents he had been confided to the care of a maiden aunt who lived in New Hampshire, and with her he had lived and been educated up to her death, which occurred simultaneously with the breaking out of the war.

Our campaign lay in the once beautiful Tennessee Valley, so familiar with his early life, before the devastating hand of war, that subsequently laid waste this fair land, before the dreadful civil strife with its hot breath swept over it like the blighting simoon, leaving this beautiful valley a dreary wilderness with great blackened chimneys standing out here and there against the war bronzed sky, like grim sentinels guarding the ashes of once happy homes.

The army had camped for the night, and as we stood in the fast receding sunlight, and looked out over the valley, athwart which the shadows were deepening, he pointed away to where two large chimneys were visible against the twilight sky, and while the shadows that had crept up over the valley seemed to have entered his soul, he said, "That was once our home," and the look of unutterable anguish that came over the sweet, blue eyes, I cannot forget. I said, "Come away, Richard, you see the hour of regret you once so confidently thought should never come, is now here." "No, no," he said, "I do not mean that, you wrong me, but, oh, it is so desolate, so desolate." I said no more, but as we still sat there in the deeper and darker shadows of night, I remembered that "a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things," and as I watched the stars, one by one, assume their sphere allotted them in space, I found myself questioning the wisdom, mercy and omnipotence of the God who had spoken them into being, and speculating as to whether in caring for all these worlds he had not forgotten ours, and I found it in my heart, too, to curse the passion and prejudices of bad and ambitious men, who through sectional hate and damnable heresies had brought about the disintegration of our happy country, and sorrow and desolation to thousands of happy homes.

The campaign, after some months of weary marching and some fighting, culminated at last in the battle of "Stone River," or Murfreesboro, a battle both

lost and won upon that memorable last day of the year, a battle that left us victors, so far as the objective point attained could make it, but at a sacrifice that would scarcely entitle us to the name of victory. With the going out of the old year, amidst the smoke and fire of battle, came sorrow and bitter desolation to many hearthstones, to many households, whose loved ones had laid down their lives in defense of the old flag.

Company H numbered more dead than living that night. Less than a score of us gathered around our little fire with sad hearts and subdued voices, for out upon the field in our front lay our comrades who had answered to their last roll-call upon earth, and while the pitiless rain fell tirelessly upon the upturned face of the tenantless clay, their souls had gone to await the final roll-call before the great white throne in Heaven.

Our regiment was assigned here to the Independent Provisional Brigade, and early in the spring of that year we left the army still quartered at Murfreesboro, and started upon a raid through the interior of Alabama and Georgia to the rear of the rebel army.

We were captured near Rome, Ga., upon the 3d of May, by Brigadier General Forrest's cavalry, and were soon upon our way to Richmond and Belle Isle. We were taken by way of East Tennessee, and as we approached Strawberry Plains, Richard told me he had reason to believe he might hear something of his brother, as he lived in that vicinity before the breaking out of the war.

It was a beautiful morning, and we stood in the door of the box car as the train stopped at a small station called Mossyside. Richard clutched my arm convulsively, and I can never forget the look of joy, mingled with sorrow, as he cried in a broken voice, "My brother! Oh! my brother!"

In the vast crowd gathered there to see the Yankee prisoners there was a rebel major of commanding presence, that I knew intuitively must be Richard's brother. Calling a small boy and pointing the major out I asked to have him come to the car.

As he came toward the car, unconscious of whom he was to meet, I could not but admire his handsome and dashing appearance. He came close up without recognizing Richard, who, pale as death, seemed unable to speak, but reaching forth his hand seemed the signal of recognition, and the major stopped short as though a bullet had entered his heart.

"No," he said, "you are no longer a brother of mine. I do not know you." Poor Richard could not speak for tears and choking sobs.

"Major," I said, "you will break the boys heart by your cruelty. It would be the part of humanity, at least, to take his hand."

"What Yankee hireling are you who presume to dictate to me? I tell you, No! I would not pollute myself by the touch of a hand, though it be a brother's that brings devastation and death to a land where our dead father and mother lie buried."

What more he said was lost amid the noise of the moving train.

I sought our corner of the car and tried to soothe the poor boy by telling him it would all be right, our war would soon be over, and then all differences could be righted. But my task was no easy one, and it was late at night before he fell asleep in my arms.

Our prison life, fortunately, was of short duration. We were exchanged that same summer, and gladly bid adieu to Belle Isle and its horrors.

We were sent to the front that same fall, and in the winter of 1864 found the remnant of our regiment collected in Nashville, where Gen. Thomas was organizing an army to oppose Hood's advancing forces.

The battle of Nashville and the grand and glorious victory "Pap" Thomas achieved over Hood is a matter of history. The brigade to which we had been assigned fought upon the left the first day, and night found us in terribly decimated ranks. I had been disabled in the afternoon and taken from the field, but my wounds proved to be of no serious nature, and I rejoined the regiment just at dark; and learned with grief that Richard, who had fought like a hero all day, was missing.

The following day witnessed the utter rout and defeat of the rebel army, and our next duty was to care for our suffering wounded and the dead.

It was up over the hill, on the site of the old cemetery, where the dead of both armies lay in the thicket, that we found poor Richard, his bridle-arm shot off at the shoulder. He lay beside a horse with a rebel soldier beneath, or partly under it, and not until we raised him up did we notice that their hands were clasped and stiffened in death, and not until then did I recognize in the pallid features of the dead rebel the brother of Richard.

Nearly twenty years have passed since then, and the then grizzled hair has grown whiter than snow, but that hour comes back to me to-night with a reality that unman's me. There are bright pictures upon my walls, of landscape, history and flowers, but there is a picture ever present with me upon the walls of memory. The dead boy—my boy, for I loved him as my own—and his rebel brother, with the dead horse and broken ammunition wagon as a background, upon the field of death and carnage.

We buried them in one grave where they fell; and upon the little slab we put at the grave is inscribed, "George and Richard Moss, united in death, 1864."