

### Talking to the Dead.

O, ye Dead! the tears I've shed for you have robbed me of my youth. From your voices I can never more hear words of love and truth. Your friendly hands are withered, and your loving eyes are dimmed. And your bodies molder in the dust of which ye first were made.

Do ye sometimes watch the seasons as of old they come and go? Do ye know when we have sunshine? Do ye know when we have snow? Do ye see us? Can ye hear us? Do ye know our hopes and fears? Can ye recollect the time when ye yourselves shed bitter tears? Do ye sometimes wish to speak to us and help us in the strife? Do ye see how much we suffer in the thorny path of life? If we could know the secrets that ye know beyond the tomb, would such knowledge make us cowardly? Would it cheer us in our gloom?

O, ye Dead! O, ye Dead! in your peaceful beat estate. Ye can see what God has written in the Books of Life and Fate! But since the day ye went away from earth, for well or ill, ye have kept your secret from us, because it is God's will!

—The Baroness von Oppen in *The Week*.

### SYLVIA'S HOME.

"It's all nonsense!" said Sylvia Dana, as the letter dropped from her hands, and an indignant flush overspread the pure perfect oval of her lovely face. "As if I would leave you mamma, to be adopted into the most luxurious home that wealth could give. No—a thousand times no!"

The little woman in the straight black draperies and the widow's cap looked pleased and yet sad.

"But, Sylvia, my dear, are you sure you are making a wise decision in thus refusing your uncle's offer? He is willing to adopt you and provide for you as his own—nor should you attach an undue importance to the few words about me which he has written. He never approved his brother's marriage with me; he never liked me; but you are quite another person, Sylvia. Ought you to throw away a chance like this, and for a mere whim?"

"Mamma, it is not a whim. I would rather stay here in this poor little rose-covered cottage and make dresses forever than leave you. Don't, please, try to shake my resolution any more; indeed, it will be of no use. I shall write to Uncle Dana this very night."

And she did—a brief indignant letter, blotted with her tears, resolutely declining the liberal offer of the merchant prince, and scarcely even thanking him for it.

"As if I would leave mamma!" she kept repeating to herself.

And then Sylvia Dana sat down before the mirror and began unbraiding the magnificent masses of bronze-gold hair that fell like a glimmering cloud down to her waist.

It was a bright and far from unpleasant reflection that the mirror returned to her as she sat there, thoughtful and abstracted. An oval face, pink and white in its hues, like the satin lining of a sea-shell, deep grey eyes, limpid and almond-shaped, with a fringe of thick lashes curving upward at the ends, small straight features, and a fresh crimson mouth—that was what she saw. And viewing this duplicate of herself, Sylvia Dana could hardly be aware that she was very lovely.

"I suppose if I lived in a great city like London, and visited at crowds of houses, and went out every night to parties and soirees, where people congregate together, I might turn my beauty to some account, and make what the world calls a great match," she pondered to herself, with a slight scornful curl to her upper lip. "But fate has ordained it otherwise. I am to stay here and make dresses; but then mamma will be with me. Darling mamma! No, I do not for a single instant regret the decision that I have made. I wonder what sort of an answer I shall receive to my letter to Uncle Paul Dana?"

She received no answer at all. Uncle Paul Dana was not the sort of man to repeat an offer that had once been so scornfully rejected. He had loved his dead brother, he had been willing liberally to provide for that brother's daughter. Beyond this he would not advance a single inch.

So he read over Sylvia's letter with a curious smile on his iron old face, and put it away into one of the pigeon-holes of his desk.

"She must be an uncompromising little virago," he said to himself. "Well, well, as she has made her bed she must lie in it."

It was late in August when Sylvia, returning from Mrs. Squire Robinson's, where she had been to fit some grenade dresses, stopped to rest in her favorite nook, where a rustic bridge spanned the trout stream, and a gnarled old willow hung almost horizontally over the crystal-brown waters.

As she sat down on the trunk of the tree, throwing off her bonnet with a sigh of relief, there was a rustling among the tall rushes close to her; she started up with a scream, and saw a tall stranger busied in angling.

"I hope I have not frightened you?" he said, courteously lifting his hat. Sylvia smiled at her own folly.

"I did not see you when I sat down to rest."

"And I am sorry you have seen me now," he said pleasantly, "if I am to drive you away from your shady refuge. I can fish a little lower down the stream just as well as here."

He was gathering up his tackle preparatory to retreat when Sylvia stopped him.

"No," she said peremptorily. "I am going home."

She kept her word, but as she was passing the one sole "village inn," Mrs. Martin, the landlord's wife, ran out to accost her.

"Miss Sylvia," she said, "have you a spare room at the cottage you and your

mamma would let to a decent body come down for a week's fishin'? There's plenty of table-room here, but our accommodation is small for sleepin', and—"

"Yes, certainly," said Sylvia. "Mamma would let her room to a respectable person, if Mr. Martin will come up with him to-morrow."

For the widow and her daughter could scarcely afford to let any opportunity pass for turning an honest penny.

"Oh, I'll go bail he's respectable," said Mrs. Martin, evidently relieved by Miss Dana's answer, "for he's willing to pay in advance."

Sylvia smiled a little at the good landlady's standard of respectability, and went on in the fragrant midsummer twilight, moving as lightly as the fire-flies that glimmered at her side.

Mr. Martin brought up the guest next morning, according to agreement made by his buxom wife, and introduced him as "Mr. Mainwaring."

Sylvia started and blushed when she recognized her chance acquaintance at the trout-stream, of the night before, but she inclined her head courteously, nevertheless, while Mr. Mainwaring thought to himself that he had never in all his life seen so pretty a creature as Miss Dana.

"I must sketch her head," he inwardly pondered, "though I don't believe there is a tint in all my color-case capable of reproducing the golden burnish on her hair. A perfect blonde, and yet her eyes are dark and deep as liquid rays! How on earth came such a royal little blossom to be wasting its sweetness on the desert air of this out-of-the-way little village?"

So Mr. Mainwaring took possession of the little chamber, with its curtained dormer-window, its spare-bed smelling of dried rose-leaves and lavender, and dimly-covered furniture and cleanly-scoured board floor; for Mrs. Dana and Sylvia had never dreamed of the extravagance of a carpet in their best "bedroom," and almost before the widow and her daughter knew it, he had become an indispensable element of the little family circle.

He helped Mrs. Dana train her apricot espalier against the south garden wall, and held skeins of sewing-silk for Sylvia to wind, and brought back rare bouquets of ferns and wild-flowers from his fishing excursions, and taught Sylvia how to copy them in crayons, and insensibly became almost one of the family.

"I'm sure I don't know what we shall do when Mr. Mainwaring is gone," Mrs. Dana said, for the week's fishing had gradually lengthened itself out into a month, while Sylvia flushed and grew pale, and went upstairs to get a ball of wadding cord, and did not come down again for a long, long time.

But all pleasant things draw to an end, and so did Mr. Mainwaring's sojourn among the peaceful shadows of the sylvan hills.

The evening before his departure he requested a special interview with Mrs. Dana.

"Madame," he said, with the chivalrous courtesy which seemed of right to belong to him, "I have a very great favor to ask of you."

"A favor?" said the simple little widow. "I suppose it's the receipt for that cough medicine?"

"No, madame, it is not. I want to ask you for permission to marry Sylvia?"

"To marry Sylvia?" Mrs. Dana began to tremble all over. "But my goodness, Mr. Mainwaring, you're only a dry goods clerk; you can't afford to marry."

"I said I was in the dry goods business, madame, but not exactly a clerk. I think I can support Miss Dana comfortably, and you also, madame, if you will consent to grace our home with your presence."

"To be sure. I've a hundred a year of my own," put in the widow, "and that would help along with the house-keeping."

"Undoubtedly!" Mr. Mainwaring made answer with a quiet peculiar smile.

"And when—" began Mrs. Dana, but Mainwaring interrupted her: "Without loss of time. I should like to take my bride with me when I return to my home."

Mrs. Dana turned, with a puzzled face, to Sylvia, who just then entered.

"This is very sudden, Sylvia."

"Very sudden, mamma!"

"But I like Mr. Mainwaring."

"So do I, mamma," laughed Sylvia, rosy as a sunset cloud.

"And we might have a cozy little wedding with just a few friends."

"Yes, mamma," Sylvia answered dutifully; but the next morning, just as Mrs. Dana was taking her seat behind the coffee urn, Mr. Mainwaring and Sylvia came in.

"Dear me, children!" questioned the widow; "where have you been?"

"To be married, mamma," sobbed Sylvia, hiding her face on her mother's shoulder. "For Charles must return to-night, and I did not like to trouble you with the responsibility of so sudden a decision."

"Married, child!" Mrs. Dana looked from son to daughter in blank surprise.

"Well, perhaps it's just as well, for the parlors are small, and we couldn't get anything nice for the wedding-breakfast."

"Mamma always makes the best of everything," laughed Sylvia.

So it was settled that Mrs. Dana should join her children just as soon as the house could be let, and her modest belongings packed up.

"I wonder if we shall ever meet your uncle, my love," she said, as she helped Sylvia to fold up her few simple dresses.

"London is a great city, mamma, you must remember," Sylvia answered. "It was just a month afterwards that

Mrs. Dana was rolling in a cozy carriage from the railway-station towards No. — street, Mayfair.

"I wonder what sort of a house they live in," pondered the gentle little widow, holding tight on to her birdcage. "Sylvia never has written me anything about that. Most likely they have got half a house, or a suite somewhere. Young people just beginning the world must plan moderately at first; but I do hope he has been able to give her a set of cushioned chairs and a substantial carpet. I'm glad I brought the old damask curtains; they'll make a nice lounge-cover, or something of the sort. There's nothing like economy. My goodness! what are we stopping at this big house for?"

The coachman touched his hat.

"Please, ma'am, we're here."

Mrs. Dana descended, in great surprise, and found herself the next moment in a broad marble-paved vestibule, lighted by a great central chandelier. A servant threw open a pair of folding-doors, revealing a superb suite of apartments, carpeted in royal purple velvet, and furnished in purple satin and rosewood, while from the lavender-tinted walls, panelled in thread-like lines of gold, hung paintings all aglow with Russian forests, and Italian lakes, and soft Swiss vales.

"It's a palace!" thought Mrs. Dana, when suddenly a loving arm stole round her neck, and a familiar voice murmured:

"Dearest mamma, welcome to my new home!"

It was Sylvia in a dress of crimson moire-antique, with thread lace encircling her throat, and rubies flashing from her pretty ears.

"And here is my husband, mamma—Mainwaring Dana—and here is his uncle and mine."

"Gracious me!" ejaculated Mrs. Dana. "Why, it's my husband's brother, who—"

"Who has made a great fool of himself, and who heartily repents it, madame," said a tall stately old gentleman, coming forward with a bow like a second Chevalier Bayard. "It is time we should pardon one another, now that my nephew, Brookes Dana's son, is married to your daughter and my niece."

Mrs. Dana did not withdraw the hand her stern brother-in-law had taken, but she looked sorely bewildered nevertheless.

"But I thought his name was Mainwaring."

"So it was," laughingly explained the young gentleman in question—"Mainwaring Dana. You see, I knew of the family feud, and I wished to see the state of things for myself. Pleading to my uncle a business tour, I visited your village. Sylvia's grey eyes there conquered me, as they have since conquered my uncle. This is Sylvia's home, dear mother; my uncle resides next door. Are you satisfied with the marriage she has made?"

Mrs. Dana sat down, scarcely knowing whether she was asleep or awake.

"And how long have you known this, Sylvia?" she asked.

"I only became aware of it on the morning of my wedding-day, mamma. Even then I thought I was marrying a poor young man; and you can imagine my surprise at being brought to this fairy palace of luxury, and installed as its mistress. Mainwaring would not let me write to you—he wanted to give you a surprise."

"And he has succeeded," said Mrs. Dana. "Don't anybody speak to me just yet, until I get over this whirling in my brain."

Thus the bitter family feeling died out, soothed by the sweet intercessor, love, and the stern brother-in-law and the meek little widow became fast friends.

"After all," said Mr. Paul Dana, "there's no calculating on these things. When I declined to adopt Sylvia I hadn't an idea that she was to be adopted for life by my nephew Mainwaring. Life is an odd puzzle—a very odd one."

"Yes, uncle," whispered Sylvia, stealing close up to his side; "but I think it is a very pleasant one."

### They Were His.

It occurred in one of the suburban villages, where a worthy citizen staid out rather late one night, and came home in a state which he knew was dangerous for him if his wife discovered it. The night was one of the freezy-thaw sort, and the moment of his return happened to be one of the thawing intervals. It occurred to the man that, if he took his boots off outside the house, and went in very softly and carefully, his wife might not wake and discover his condition. So he followed this plan, and managed to get into bed without raising any alarm.

Next morning he opened his eyes rather late and saw his wife in the room standing by the window. He could have told by her aspect that it was a frosty morning without looking out of the window.

"Come here," she said.

He came there.

"Are those your boots frozen into the gutter out there?" she asked.

He looked long and wonderingly, until his aching head began to reel.

"I guess they must be my boots, that's a fact," said he.

"And how did they come there?"

Of course he couldn't account for it, but the reader can. He had sat down on the curbstone instead of on the doorstep, and had forgotten to bring the boots in with him when he came.—*Boston Record*.

### ON BOARD A YACHT.

The Sailors Have an Easy Time, But Do Not Like the Life.

Housekeeping on board a yacht we find to be quite an interesting study. Champagne is one of the cardinal principles. Many of us do not drink it, fearing headache, but it is always "there," and we believe no yacht is considered properly ballasted without champagne. Various yacht owners have various superstitions, however, and it is said that the owner of the Mayflower never sails unless the white sloop is fully stocked with melons. Small wonder, however, that the owners of racing yachts need some creature comfort on board, for on race days every bit of coal is put on shore to "lighten the ship" and collations are the order of the day. In some yachts even the cabin furniture is taken out during a race and every bit of superfluous weight is removed—boats, davits, the heaviest anchor, etc. No idlers are allowed on board either. If a guest is invited on a racing yacht in one of these close and exciting contests it is with the understanding that he is to help the crew, in order to make up for his weight. In other words, the crew is a Corinthian one, everybody is at least expected to "haul in on the main sheet."

Yacht sailors have a pretty easy, comfortable time of it, as may be imagined, and yet many of them do not like the life. They long for the perils and excitements of the deep sea sailing, when they have once become used to it, and beg to be allowed to return to the ocean. Indeed the destination of a yacht is largely "harboreal," and what with contrary winds and equally perverse calms, with the constantly recurring necessity of shipping "more water," and a new supply of ice, the ocean wave gets a good deal neglected. The stowing of the ice is accomplished in a highly co-operative manner—six people and one good rope and tackle all assisting at the ceremony. The last man has the hardest time of it, for he really has to carry the ice, and on his shoulder at that. Clad in an oilskin garment, the patient Ludwig stands in the hold, receives the big lumps of ice, amid directions from below and above, and staggering a little under the heavy load, drops it into the big refrigerator. It all looks so simple, and is done so systematically, that it is quite impressive. We mentally resolve to erect forthwith ropes and tackles in our own house, and to organize the cook and the waiters, and our "big boy" into an amateur crew, to be drilled into the use of this tackle which accomplishes such wonders on board ship, and then it strikes us that the ice man on land, in a landlubberly way, and with the help of a pair of stairs, accomplished the ice feat unassisted, save by fangs! But the rope and tackle are mighty on board ship, and one of their most curious feats is when a sailor stands on a gaff and hoists himself and the sail simultaneously, assisted by his mates, who haul him below till he has reached a sufficient height, when he slides down the mast—with his boots on!

How much pleasanter it would be if a ship could sail always on one tack! No sooner are we comfortably established with deck-chair and cushions, a protecting "washmak" against the sun, and the sad story of the cruise of the Jeannette, as a protection against ennui, than the eternal order comes, "Hard-a-lee!" the sailors echo it and fly to change all the sails, jibs, and gibslets, and we must shift, too, or sit in the hot sunlight! But the book we hold in our lap, with its tale of heroic endurance and brave endeavor, suggests the wickedness of grumbling at little matters. Adna! it suggests as well the folly and uselessness of overcarefully watching and guarding a boy. Poor De Long, the child whose fond mother would not permit him to join in any rough or boyish sports lest he should come to harm, what a terrible fate was his! The boy for whom swimming and shooting were too dangerous goes to the north pole and perishes of Arctic cold and hunger! What a mockery of fate, what oriental fatalism is here!—*Boston Traveler*.

### SEEN IN SHOP-WINDOWS.

A Pipe that was Made for Longfellow and Some Pictures from Africa.

Anyone who keeps his eyes open can learn a good deal, says the *Boston Globe*, especially if he keeps them directed toward the shop-windows of the principal streets of a great city. Shop-windows and show-cases contain nearly all the materials which make up the world's fairs and industrial exhibitions, and they are to be seen at all times and without admission fee.

A section of this permanent exhibition which is just now of more than ordinary interest, is contained in the window of a mineralogist and dealer in precious stones and curios on Tremont street. In the midst of an attractive array of Brazilian agates, Burmese amber, set stones, antique earthenware, ivory carvings from India, and vases from Japan, is to be found a large and elaborately carved pipe, which was to have been presented to the poet Longfellow, but which was not finished until after his death.

A German residing in Illinois, and named Hermann was the artist who designed and carved the bowl, employing for the purpose red Indian pipestone, such as Longfellow referred to in his poem of "Hiawatha," from which poem the carver is supposed to have drawn the inspiration for his task.

The bowl of the pipe is five inches long, and it is carved to represent the face of an Indian with closed eyes, surrounded with leaves and ferns. The pipe has a long stem of wood, covered with the bark and trimmed with feathers.

Another exhibit in this section of the permanent world's fair of Boston is a collection of ostrich eggs, each of which is covered with pictures executed by native South African artists.

Upon one of the eggs pictures of various animals and birds are drawn in a style showing no influence of foreign or civilized tuition. The figures are shaded with scratches in the surface of the egg shell filled in with some black substance. The scratches in the drawings are crude and painfully regular, allowing only a guess at the creature intended to be represented. No attempt is made at grouping or systematic arrangement of the pictures in any way, but each seems to have been drawn wherever room was found for another effigy. This decoration was the work of a Bushman belonging to one of the savage tribes in the remote interior of Africa.

The illustrations upon another of the eggs show the influence of a civilization a stage further advanced than that of the preceding. Alternating with groups of strange flowers strangely colored are figures of natives of South Africa painted in crude colors and in more or less stiff and artificial attitudes. A Zulu warrior, who would be recognizable from his shield and spears without the title lettered underneath, stands in a photograph-gallery pose on one side, while a Malay fruit-seller in an eccentric suit of clothes, stands upon the other. The pictures executed in colors are from the hands of Kafirs, semi-civilized natives, who live in the vicinity of the South African towns.

### FOOTPRINTS IN THE ROCK.

Traces of a Race Discovered on Stone Fourteen Feet Underground.

A block of stone some twenty-four inches square arrived in this city a few days since and is now in the office of Mr. H. H. Leavitt, late United States Consul to Managua, Nicaragua. It is an object of curiosity, for deep in it is the impression of a human foot, which fact is rendered all the more singular as it was taken from a stratum fourteen feet below the earth's surface. This specimen, for after all it is only a specimen—not merely an isolated block curiously impressed—was taken from the bottom of a stone-quarry which for a space of 200 feet long and seventy feet wide bore traces of the countless feet of adults and children. No particular direction of motion was indicated by the imprints, as the toes pointed in many ways, which would not have been the case had the movement been a common one among the race of people who left their footprints on the sands.

Several blocks cut from the same stratum were sent to Vienna during the last year and are now in the National Museum, but the geologists and scientists were unable to arrive at any conclusion as to the period when the imprints were made, as the gentlemen who sent them did not send specimens of the overlying strata. This Mr. Leavitt guarded against, and he showed to the *Herald* reporter yesterday specimens of every strata to the number of eleven, as well as an engineer's diagram of the quarry and exact measurements. The stone itself is a remarkable specimen. The foot is most clearly defined, the

lines, curves, and toes being most distinct, having sunk into the soft material since turned to stone some five inches. A gentleman well informed gives several reasons to show it is the imprint of the foot of a prehistoric man.

Mr. Leavitt says that he visited the quarry with several gentlemen, and that he had the block cut. The quarry is near Lake Managua, which is forty to fifty feet below it on the dead level. Large trees at one time flourished on the surface, which is now in the vicinity of pasture. The whole district is of volcanic formation to a great depth, as shown by the many swells in the towns and neighborhood. As near as can be judged the strata in the quarry are level, do not vary in sequence and very little in thickness. Several strata are alike, save that the underlying ones are solidified. For instance, stratum 12, in which the footprints are to be found, is the same as stratum 3, ten feet above it. It is a dark gray conglomerate, very porous, no cracks or fissures, and full of pieces of hard black cinder.

No. 11, overlying No. 12, is the same as No. 4, a dark gray indurated mud called talpate. It is not used for any purpose. Through No. 11 are numerous horizontal veins or streaks full of impressions of leaves and twigs. Of these Mr. Leavitt has several specimens; they are similar to coal specimens, save in color. Stratum 5 is of indurated mud, light yellow color, interspersed with shale of some material and with pumice. Local name of stratum talpuga. No. 6, loose gravelly black sand, grains rounded, as though by action of water, and precisely similar to the sands on the banks of the lake.

The stone, if its date may be fixed, may tend to throw some valuable light upon the story of man before the Aztecs. Mr. Leavitt will invite scientists to see it at his office in the Stewart Building.—*New York Herald*.