

SHORT STORIES.

She is a student in the psychology department of the state university. Last week in reading a work on the "Nature of Genius" she found an example given where an idiot by an accidental blow on the head was transformed to a musical wonder.

The girl was somewhat skeptical and talked it over with a boy who was also a student in the psychology department. He reasoned with her in that half superior way which always comes over a boy when he investigates for the first time the comparative brain weights of men and women. He told her that the idiocy might have been caused by some formation or deformation of the skull, which was in all probability removed by the blow on the head; or the brain might have grown fast to the "piamater;" or some part of the cerebrum might have been pushed upon by some other part. He gave a string of half a dozen technical names to illustrate his hypotheses. The blow might have removed this cause and genius could have blossomed.

She argued back.

"But he was a plum idiot. He didn't know any thing at all."

"That did not make any difference," he answered, "since genius did not in the least depend on how much or how little one knew."

She finally gave up the argument.

This week he was hurt in a football game. He came to school with a long strip of court plaster over his left eye. He looked the veritable hero that he felt himself.

She met him in the hall and saw his forehead. She sidled up to him with wide-open eyes and whispered in an awe-struck voice:

"You are a musical genius now, too?"

There is a fine mist falling to shut out the glare of the electric arcs. The stones are slippery with the moisture. Men hurry home from their work and I go with them, swinging my books. A few people are just shutting their shop doors, slowly, in the hope of letting in a few late buyers. The darkness hovers up above the pavement between the tops of the buildings.

Then she comes with her beautiful yellow face and stares for one moment into my eyes. Whoever she may be, I pity her. The smooth yellow of her skin tells her blood. The bold black eyes, where nevertheless lurks an expression of bitterness and despair, tells me she is not like the rest of us women. For this I do not care so much; perhaps I should be like her if I had her body. She has savage blood in her veins.

But she walks with the tread of a princess. There is something wrapped around her head. She puts up her hand to catch it closer about her throat and on her wrist gleams the dull light of gold. She passes me and I turn my head. The thing she presses so caressingly about her throat and face is a torn piece of a mottled leopard skin.

She sat in the insane asylum as the curious crowd passed through. The sun shone in at the south window and was reflected from the waxed floor. The room was still except for the shuffling noise of the visitors feet across the strips of carpet that led from one door to the other. She, an old woman, fixed her vacant eyes on one after another of the people passing by, not looking for a friendly face; they were all like dream faces to her. She had even forgotten the one face of her past, the face of the daughter who had killed herself for shame and had taken with her to her bitter grave her mother's reason.

The people filed through and looked with pity or with repugnance at the row of blank faces staring up at them. Among the last came a young girl. Her heart beat hard and moved the flower

on her breast—a white rose. She passed unsteadily along before the row of staring eyes. She met, as the rest had met, the look of the old woman who sat so quietly. But suddenly the old hands stretched out appealingly and the old face gleamed with a swift remembrance. She did not smile, but her lips fluttered wildly, and she cried up into the young girl's face, "Can I have a rose; my Rose is dead; my Rose is dead." The girl shrank back and the light died down in the old woman's eyes. Her head dropped listlessly forward and the people passed on out.

She carries with intense despondency the eight small years of her life. She goes to school; she has pretty clothes; she has plenty of dolls; she has no trouble with long division, and yet she is pessimistic. She moons at the piano playing the most discordant minor tunes that she can harrow up out of her mind. She reads gloomy things, preferably witch stories or Sunday school books in which all the characters die, good or bad. She doesn't like very many girls, she says, and adds with sombre satisfaction that they don't like her either.

Tonight as she sat dejectedly by the fire and watched the rest of us study and read, she seemed to think she had reached the last point of endurance. Evidently nobody cared for her in the least. So she announced in a heart-broken tone:

"I believe I'll try the home for the friendless."

Three little kittens and one old cat were too much for one house. One old cat was just enough. So the three little kittens were killed and thrown out in the back alley.

Nobody cared particularly except the old cat and Ethel. Ethel knew that the little kittens were lying out in the alley. She didn't go out there at all; she couldn't bear to. The old cat did not know; she wandered around and hunted for the kittens. They were not in their basket in the cellar nor under the boards around the potato bin; where were they? She mewed loudly, but they did not answer. If she had known why they did not hear!

But Ethel heard sitting in the dark on the cellar steps and her heart bled. She watched the old cat wandering around switching her tail and crying. It was crying, Ethel thought, and felt very much like crying herself. Her eyes were wide open and she had her hands clasped tight around her ankles on the steps.

"Kitty," she said softly, "you can't find 'em, can you? I'll find 'em for you, Kitty, kitty."

The cat came slowly and anxiously and submitted to being lifted awkwardly to the little girl's shoulder. Ethel carried her up the steps out into the cool wind and the hot sun, down past the barn, out into that terrible alley.

She knew just where the kittens were over on the pile of straw. She shut her eyes and walked over to the place. Then with a little gasp she threw the cat down and waited. There was not a sound. Ethel opened her eyes. The cat was licking the face of one of the kittens, the little white one. Ethel dropped down on the straw and put out her hand to touch the kitten. Then the cat did a strange thing. She caught up the little white kitten away from Ethel's hand and carried it to a place where the ground was soft and bare. She laid it gently down and came back for the other two. When she had the three in a nice little row she dug a hole in the ground and dropped them in. Afterwards she brushed the dust back over them and came to Ethel.

And then Ethel saw that the sun was shining and that the back alley looked very much as it always had.

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The Armstrong Clothing Co., have placed on sale 40 styles of mens' spring suits, ranging in value from \$12.50 to \$18. Your choice this week only \$10. Call early.

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BRUSH, COLORADO.

This bit of information is printed for convenience about answering the numerous inquiries now coming in concerning Brush, Colorado, and surrounding country.

- 1—BRUSH has about two hundred inhabitants.
- 2—A splendid, commodious school building, with all "high school" facilities.
- 3—Located in the Platte and Beaver valley, eighty miles east of Denver, in the midst of a large area of fine, arable land, covered by irrigation ditches, and only waiting judicious farming to develop wealth.
- 4—The climate is adapted to all sorts of crops grown in the North Temperate zone.
- 5—Excellent water can be had at depth varying from 30 to 60 feet, the lower strata furnishing the purest mountain water obtainable.
- 6—Fine building stone adjacent to the town, can be had at from \$1.75 to \$1.00 per cord, thus making it cheaper to build of stone than lumber.
- 7—Three crops of alfalfa are grown in the season, yielding as a rule six tons per acre as the product, while wild hay on the higher land grows well and always brings a big price. The rich yield of hay makes it pre-eminently a country in which to raise cattle and hogs to the feeding stage when it is easy to drive them to the cheap corn of Nebraska.
- 8—Small fruits and vegetables of all kinds can be developed to any extent almost—the real conditions when told seem almost fabulous.
- 9—Steam threshers in work of 1896 show average of wheat in this vicinity to be forty bushels per acre, oats fifty bushels.
- 10—Entire absence of contagious diseases of both man and beast; the atmosphere is a regular daily life giver.
- 11—The county of Morgan, in which Brush is located, is free of debt and taxes are low.

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