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Permeant

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

## LECTURES

SEASON 1875-'76:

The Coming Crusade,  
 To-day in Account with Yesterday,  
 "Out of the Strong-Sweetness,"  
 The Ben Adhemite Era,  
 Southern Humor.

FROM ALBION W. TOURGEE,

Author of Toinette, &amp;c.

-LATE-

JUDGE SUPERIOR COURT NORTH CAROLINA.

GREENSBORO, N. C., Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> 1875-

My dear little Darling: It is now just twelve o'clock, about the hour that you were born eight years ago. I received this morning your Mamma's letter of last Thursday, in which she tells me that you think I must have forgotten you and also how deeply you were grieved at the bad news you received from me a short time since. I have not forgotten my little girl though I must confess that I have been very neglectful in not writing more for her of late, but you must remember that I have been very much troubled and could hardly bring myself to write to any one. It has been a very sad blow to me but you can hardly know how much it cheered me up to know that you felt so bad for me. I do not think that anything has done so much to comfort me. With such a dear, loving little daughter I am sure no father could long be cast down. I would almost be willing to be defeated again to know that you felt so keenly for my sake. God bless you little darling. Your prayers and love make my heart strong. I know I shall be braver bolder and stronger for them.

Shall I tell you a funny thing I did the other day. You know there was a big hole in one of the panes of the east window in my room - (I have had it mended since) - It was blowing and raining and I wanted something to stop the hole. It was only a few days after the election and I was feeling very badly indeed. I went to the wardrobe to get something to stuff in the broken pane. In pulling over the clothes which hung there, I found something which was curious and took it down. When I brought it out in the light it was a little girl's dress - an old purple calico - which I had seen her wear so much that it seemed, all at once as if she were here - or rather, as if I would give the world if she were. Now what do you suppose your papa did? You never

could guess and you must never tell anybody, not even your Mamma. I am sure even she would laugh, if she thought he was as silly. I don't believe I had better tell you - Gee, I will, because <sup>you</sup> I think I have forgotten my little girl. Well, I kissed that old dress and hugged it to my breast and sat down on the floor and buried my head in it and cried and kissed the poor old thing till it must have been very much surprised at the strange treatment it received. Do you think I have forgotten my little girl now.

If you could see me, when I am alone in my room you would hardly think as any more. I set up your likeness and that of your dear Mamma, side by side and look at them and talk to them almost as silly as a little girl talks to her dolls -

I suppose you have quite got beyond dolls now though. Somehow, I cannot imagine at all how you are now you seem there in Erie. I sometimes think I see you walking along the garden paths, and the other day I was really startled by thinking that I heard your voice under the window. It was not you though, and there were tears in my eyes when I came back to my work after looking out, because you were not there - I hardly ever step into the garden without thinking of you and every new flower that steals out for one more look at the sunshine, before its winter sleep calls you up to my mind, as you were in the sweet summer days when you prattled in and out among them - the sweetest flower of all.

I try and try to picture you as you must be in Erie but I cannot - It is only when I can look out into the garden, perhaps of a sunny morning, that I can see you and then you are here - the little girl I had but have quite lost now, - she is so far away - God bless you a thousand times little darling! You do not know what a treasure and a hope you are to your father's heart - Be as good as you can - Oh! as good to your dear Mamma!

You must love her for Mamma and Papa both now. Do not let her grow sad and downhearted. Tell her that Papa is working as hard as ever he can for his dear wife and precious little darling and it cannot be that the future will not be bright to her, if she will only look upwards and not down at the cold dark earth.

I hope you will be very happy in the crisp winter weather that must be upon you now. But you must be very careful—Oh so careful, darling. Remember that you are not in the balmy old North State where you need pay no attention to wind or storm or wet or cloudy weather. The harsh North is so treacherous and cruel!—Look out for wet feet and do not throw aside your wraps when warm but wait until you are cool. Remember that your Papa has but one little girl and the world would be very cold and dark to him without her. Take good care of yourself and be very good to Mamma for Papa's sake, will you, darling.

I do not know that I shall be able to send you a birthday gift. I cannot think what you would want. I don't know how to get such things without Mamma to tell me. If I do not you must not be disappointed darling, but remember that I send you my heart full of love and hope and prayer for you and that I am giving every moment of my life to work for you—God bless you darling. It is late and I was up all last night with neuralgia and have written all day today and I am so tired that I must not write any more. I send you a thousand kisses, a thousand prayers and more bright hopes for the little life which came into the world eight years ago this hour, than many hours could suffice to tell— lovingly ever, your Papa—Albion W. Tourgee