

[Grosh, Malvina French]

Bro. Grosh Again in Affliction

DEAR BR. AUSTIN:—I have been from home for more than five weeks—the greater portion of which were spent in Oswego, and now on my way home, I desire to relate, briefly, why I was there, and am here. Permit me to relate my sad story in my own way.

In 1832, while residing in this city, the Death-angel was unusually busy in removing the treasures and hopes of many homes to the unseen world. But instead of being bereaved by cholera of any of our family or large household, there was given us, on the 23d of September of that year, a little spirit embodied in flesh, to be nourished and developed into woman on earth and angel in heaven. We named her after a beloved sister and a family at New Hartford, N.Y., from whom we had received much love and kindness, and dedicated her to God, that she might thereafter be known on earth by the name of MALVINA FRENCH GROSH—our youngest daughter.

Under our care and instruction, imperfect as it was, but mainly under the training and examples of her angel mother [Hannah Rinehart Grosh, 1800-1849] she grew up to size and years of womanhood, her mind well stored with knowledge, of clear intellect, sound judgment, energetic will, lively disposition, and a much loving heart—but guileless, artless, and trustful as a child, in speech and manner, a very girl-woman.

In 1849, when her mother was preparing for her departure, this daughter received warning, in the form of *Laryngitis*, that sooner or later she must probably follow on the same path. From time to time, with decreasing intervals of health and enjoyment between, this notice was repeated. Last spring her health failed so much, that she desired to visit her sister, Mrs. [Mary Letitia] Williams, at Oswego, for both the benefit of travel, and of the skill of Dr. E. A. Potter, who had ably treated a similar attack the Summer previous. First visiting some dear friends near home, she reached Oswego considerably benefitted by her journey, and continued to improve until in September, when she burst a blood vessel. From that time she began to decline occasionally and generally—influenza, gastric fever and diarrhea in succession hastening the ravages of pulmonary consumption, and increasing its sufferings. This state of affairs called me to her side on the 19th of January. I found that all had been done and was doing, that medical skill and kind attentions of relatives and friends, and even sympathizing *strangers*, could do for her relief and comfort.

On the 17th inst., after three days and four nights of pain which prevented her from lying down, she summoned the family early in the morning, to receive her last farewells. "Father," said she, as I was first at her chair side, "Father, I am going—going to mother, and to brothers. I

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thought all night that our good God would take me this morning." Again she whispered, with a beaming smile all over her face, "I never even thought it could be so happy a thing to die." She thus continued to whisper faintly her joy at departure, and to deliver messages for absent friends, until her broken whispers became inaudible, when she lay thoughtful, and frequently looking around on us with much affection. Her breath and pulse were almost gone, when gradually again she revived, no less to her astonishment than her grief, often expressed.

To her physician she expressed reluctance to take any stimulus—"I do not wish to be strengthened, I would rather grow weaker"—but she submitted to his directions, though sadly, and as a mere duty. On receiving the anxiously asked opinion of Dr. Potter that she probably would not last much longer, hardly another day, her whole countenance shone with a heavenly smile of joy.

A second and third similar sinking of the vital flame followed in the ay and the evening—in which pulse and breath were scarcely perceptible, and the extremities became very cold. In both cases, as in the first, her joy increased as her strength failed, and was manifested in the same calm, rational and affectionate manner. And on her revivals from these, as at the first, she sadly yet resignedly expressed her disappointment at her detention. Shortly after her third revival, her mind began to wander; but the same theme and the same desire was manifest. "I was there, (she said,) but the curtain was not lifted up, and I could not go in." "I was *there*, and mother said I might come back, and stay with you yet two or three days. Wasn't she kind? And God also permitted it. God is so good!" Shortly after, she wished to be raised up that she might "return *there*," lest she should "overstay the time." On being persuaded to delay, and assured that she would be there in time to enter within the veil, she became composed and soon fell asleep—her first sleep in many hours. She breathed easily and freely as ever, and so at 20 minutes past ten o'clock that evening, she "went home" to "our good God," to mother and to brothers, without awaking again in time, and without a struggle or a groan—"made perfect through suffering."

Her remains were brought here on Saturday, and yesterday were taken to the "Church of the Reconciliation," [Universalist] where appropriate services were had, and a very feeling and suitable discourse was delivered by Br. Gordon to a sympathizing congregation and the mourning sisters and their families, and to myself. After this, the remains were removed to Forest Hill Cemetery, where in due season they will be interred with the remains of my brother Rufus, and my friend Powers.

It is a long and sad story, Br. Austin, but I suppose that beside the interest it may have for her numerous friends, it may be useful to many

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others, in showing the incalculable worth of our precious faith, and inducing some to so possess and exercise it in life, as to enjoy its blessings in sickness and death.

The kindness of many friends and strangers in Oswego smoothed her passage to the grave—may heaven bless them! Here, too, old friendships were sympathizingly exercised, and new kindness manifested, which will long be remembered by the mourning friends.

A. B. [Aaron Bort] GROSH

*Utica, Feb. 22d, 1859.*

*Christian Ambassador*, Auburn NY, Sat. 5 Mar 1859

[a Universalist newspaper]

Transcribed on 12 Feb 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY