THE DYNAMITE CARTRIDGE

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The Dynamite Cartridge by Mrs. Frances Grant Teetzel

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MRS. FRANCES GRANT TEETZEL

THE DYNAMITE CARTRIDGE



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DYNAMITE CARTRIDGE.

BY

Mrs. Frances Grant Teetzel.

"Suum cuique."

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DEDICATION.

This "short and simple annal" is lovingly dedicated to my dear son Harry, whose views on the subject of dedication exactly coincide with my own.

THE AUTHOR.

JANUARY 21, 1885.

CONTENTS.

Chapter			• =									PAGE.
CHAPTER	1	•	•					//*	00.00	•	2.40	
CHAPTER	11	٠	*6	*		*6	*	0.9	9.93		ii.	6
CHAPTER	Ш	-1	The S	now	Plow		٠	72	2	÷	3	10
Chapter	ıv	C	ousi	1 " T	ildy"	and	Lem	uel h	er H	usba	nd	17
Chapter	v-	Tl	ne Ar	rival	•	٠	•	٠	•		٠	23
Chapter	VI	-I	n the	Mon	ning	٠	*	()			•	31
CHAPTER	VI	ı —	Dinn	er!	20	٠	105	٠	٠	•		39
Chapter	VI	II	ě	G.	60	¥	•	((.)	•	,	•	48
Chapter	IX	— A	Му	stery	•			•	*	95		55
CHAPTER	X-	-Ar	nos I	Early	as ar	Off	ice-S	eeker		8.		60
CHAPTER	ХI	_v	Vaiti	ng	ĸ	*	08		*)×	800	65
CHAPTER	ΧI	I	•		٠		٠		٠	٠	•	72
Chapter	ΧI	11-	Why	Abs	ence	on t	he pa	rt of	Gabr	iel S	trong	75
Chapter	ΧI	v —	The	Dyn	amite	Car	tridg	e	•	٠	٠	82
CHAPTER	χv	- -:	Peter	Hei	nze	٠			٠			95
Conclusi	ON								Ŷ.	<u>.</u>	•	90

THE DYNAMITE CARTRIDGE.

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CHAPTER I.

"GOTTLIEB, Gottlieb!" the call proceeded from old Amos Early, as he stood by the kitchen door of his large farm-house, one cold day late in the fall, and held fast the bridle of his frisky little mare Zep.

When the call was again repeated, and again, the door opened and through the space thus made, out came the gray head of his wife.

"Can't y' make 'em hear ye, father?" said the woman who clipped and accented her words as careless western people, who know better, very often thus deflect from the beauty of their mother tongue.

"It's high time for all the boys to be up to dinner," she added.

"So 'tis," said her husband. "Still," remarked his wife, "I don't see why that boy ain't here to do the chores."

After Samuel her youngest son had explained to his good mother the meaning of "Gottlieb," she understood it as part and parcel of what she considered as foreign profanity. Ever since, she evaded its use and, instead of this name so objectionable, said "that boy" when speaking of the hired man's new assistant.

"If it wasn't fur my stiff knee," said Amos, "I'd go down the hill myself and water the mare—here he is, now," he said as he saw Gottlieb come up the path at an unusually slow gait. As one formed of wood the boy gathered up the reins and let the horse take her own way down the easy slope of the hill to the river.

"If any one always does things upside down it's Gottlieb," said Amos to his wife, who had now opened wide her door and stood there on the stoop while the kitchen cooled off before dinner.

Mrs. Amos had chronic catarrh and a troublesome cough, yet never did it occur to her to charge them to going bareheaded out into the cold.

Down the hill went Gottlieb because the mare did; as he let her wade into the water to drink, he let go the lines, and planted himself in vacant stare on the river bank. Gazing out into space, he presented a most ludicrous spectacle. His eyes were white, shallow and wide; his neck was long, and his blue shirt baggy about the waist; his trowsers were in welts and folds, held up in that condition by the tight legs of the boots he wore outside of them; his feet were broad, of vast extent. When one took note of the various features of his round face, not neglecting at the same time the flaring ears, and the shock of hair like corn silk in hue, one could well be excused for gazing at the simple fellow as a new and very comical study in human nature.

Zep drank her fill. On the opposite bank of the river she saw a particularly tempting bit of grass. In a fine splash she waded to the other side, where high and dry she shook her head as one who laughs in new pleasure.

The light plash in the water attracted the wandering attention of Gottlieb.

"Coom vonce!" said he, holding out his crazy old felt hat.

As the river was very cold, as it was slightly swollen by a late rain, as it must of necessity be over the tops of his boots, and as, moreover, he had a dislike to that innocent fluid he never desired to conquer, the rage of the lazy boy knew no bounds. What he said in German and English, and all at once, and both together, and finally ended in a prolonged expletive, shall be left to the imagination better equipped to reproduce the scene than pen and paper, not to mention the lacking coloring of words in themselves.

"Ach!" said he, looking over the muddy stream, as the horse pranced in great glee, and flew over the meadow.

Away went Zep; away after her the boy. It was a wild chase over many an icy rivulet and slippery hillock before she surrendered in a distant corner of the meadow.

Mounted upon her back, the need of exertion gone, Gottlieb allowed no efforts of his own to hasten her progress over the rough stony ground, and down the bank into the river, and so splash, splash, to his first stopping-place.

Zep sure now to go on up the hill, the boy slid off behind, took up the wet lines from the ground to