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R. A. BUMILLER, Editor.

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DO NOT BLAME HER.

Mark saw it before I did. I have wondered to-day, looking back, if I could have controlled myself sufficiently to prepare him for the shock, if I had read the newspaper first this morning.

Mark said but little to me, but I know that he suffered keenly. He made some enquiries in the city about Henry Parker and was convinced that he was an adventurer.

I think my brother could have borne his own burden better if Alice had chosen a man worthy of her love, but he feared for her future happiness, thinking her betrothed had dazzled her imagination rather than won her heart.

When we received cards for the wedding I thought of refusing to attend, but Mark decided to go, and we went our wedding-gift, and went up to the city to be at the ceremony in the church the dress reception afterwards.

Mark did not wonder when I saw Henry Parker but he had won Alice's love, the winningly handsome, and had changed her former calculations to love.

And he took the opportunity to betray both, to change the trust shuddering horror, the true love to a shivering fear.

Little by little the poor girl came to the fact that her husband despised the very gentleness he had so often praised, and that the charm of a full purse was the one that had attracted him to his wife.

Probably a father or a guardian would have protected Alice's fortune after marriage, but it was under her own control, her mother being her only guardian.

And Henry Parker spent it freely; at first in a profuse style of living, in luxuries his wife could share, but later in gambling and low vice, traveling the downward path with fearful rapidity.

Six years after his marriage he deserted his wife, who returned to her mother, and a year later the newspapers gave the account of his death in a bar-room, where he was shot in a scuffle.

It was after a year of widowhood that Alice came once more to Claymont, her sweet face pale and sad, and her blue eyes often dreamily mournful.

She was but little changed, though older and graver than in her girlhood for her timidity was, if changed at all, only increased by the trials of her married life. She was so nervous that an unexpected sound made her start in positive terror, and where the pretty fitting color had been in her cheeks there was only an added pallor when she was startled.

The free country life, the pure air and quiet, seemed to help her in regaining something of her cheerfulness, and Miss Arnold astonished us all by her tenderness.

She treated her niece like a sick baby anticipating her wants, coaxing her appetite, and bringing her cur sentences, that were usually like pistol-shots, down to tones of coaxing gentleness.

"The poor darling!" she said to me, with tears in her hard eyes. "How could anyone have the heart to say a rough word to her? I could as soon strike an infant as trouble her, the pretty dove!"

But what was the best medicine for Alice was soon apparent to me. She had learned to value such love as Mark's and she understood at last what his attentions meant.

For seven years he had kept her image in his heart, and when once more he could honorably woo her he made no secret of his devotion.

She brightened visibly, the shy, blue eyes looking more frankly into Mark's than they had ever done, the sweet musical voice losing its quiver when she spoke to him.

Very gladly did I hear that my brother had won the heart he coveted, and very sure was I that it was all his own, with a far truer, more womanly love than Alice had given in her girlish infatuation to Henry Parker.

And I, who knew Mark so well, knew that each year would add to his affection, and that Alice need never know again what it was to fear her husband.

The long, bright summer passed happily, and in September Alice was to return to her mother to prepare for a quiet wedding and an extended tour.

It was the evening before she was to leave us that Miss Arnold invited Mark and myself to tea. We were all in the parlor, early in the evening, when a gentleman asked for Mrs. Parker, and Alice turned very white as she introduced Mr. George Parker.

"My husband's brother," she said aside to me. "He was always very kind to me."

For a few moments after this introduction Mr. Parker sat in embarrassed silence. Then he said very suddenly: "I do not know whether my news will be good news or bad news to you, Alice, I came to tell you, as soon as

THE OLDEST MAN.

AN EX-SLAVE NEAR DETROIT CLAIMS THAT DISTINCTION.

He is Said to be 127 Years Old and Remembers the Revolutionary War.

When old "Dad" Freeman was buried across the river in Windsor a short time ago, says a Detroit (Mich.) letter to the New York Herald, it was believed that the oldest man in the world had been laid to rest.

"Dad" was 122 years old, as conclusively proved before his death, and left 138 descendants. Since Freeman was buried some relic hunters have brought forward a man whose authentic record fixes his age at the remarkable figure of 127 years.

The proof furnished leaves no room for doubt. The name of this man is Andrew Lucas. He is the father of Mr. P. A. Lucas, who for nine years past has kept a barber shop in Detroit.

Mr. Lucas was born a slave under the father of General Jackson, he of "eternal" fame, and was a grown man when the General succeeded to the paternal estate. He remembers the Revolutionary War distinctly and recalls many very interesting incidents of the second war between this country and Great Britain. He declares that it is as distinct to him as yesterday when General Jackson went to New Orleans during that very memorable struggle, when he accompanied the General as his body servant. He describes the cotton bales piled up as a temporary fortification.

Soon after this, at a time when the General was away, Lucas was whipped for some reason and ran away. He remembers very well why he was whipped, but does not give the reason. He worked his way slowly north and crossed into Canada at Black Rock, on the Niagara River. Andrew Kirby, then customs collector at Fort Erie, sheltered him and helped him across into the Kingdom of Liberty. Lucas found employment in the family of General Brock, who was killed in the War of 1812 at Queenstown Heights. Next he ran on the Niagara River, under Captain John Clinch, for whom he worked nine years, and was then discharged by his employer because the latter considered him too old to be useful. Lucas was then sixty-two years of age.

Lucas soon found employment again, this time at Kingston, Ont., where he married his second wife. His slave wife had borne him seven children. His second and free wife had borne him seventeen. One daughter by this union is now living at East Saginaw, Mich. Her name is Mrs. Williams, and she is seventy-one years old. Fifty years ago Lucas removed to Brantford, Ont. There he got work from the father of Judge Stevenson, of Cayuga. The Judge, though now an old man himself, remembers Lucas as a man about seventy years old when he, as a boy, was going to school.

For twenty-nine years Lucas was a driver for the express company at Brantford and resigned the place ten years ago for the reason that he was getting along in years and felt the need of rest. He has the frame of a once powerful man and stands six feet three inches in his stockings. A year ago he sawed and split twenty-five cords of wood for William E. Walling, of Brantford. Up to three years ago he never wore spectacles, and during the summer of 1883, when visiting his son in Detroit, Mr. Lucas read the City Hall clock from in front of the Kirkwood House, across the Campus Martius. He then walked without the assistance of a cane, being 124 years old!

This is a most remarkable case of longevity. Lucas is certainly as old as stated, and from his appearance to-day promises to hang on for some time to come. This man is probably the oldest person living. He has witnessed the development of the most wonderful era in the world's history, and has personal recollection of all the many great events in the career of this nation.

"How many times must I tell you," remarked the managing editor of a Chicago paper as he slowly filled up the waste basket with the funny man's "copy," "not to use the word 'paraphraser'?" There is no such word in the language. "Paraphraser" is the proper term.

"Paraphraser" is the better word, warmly contended the funny man. "That doesn't make any difference; it's not in the dictionary. You don't place yourself above Webster, do you?"

"In many things I do not," frankly acknowledged the Western humorist; "but I know more about writing paragraphs in a minute than Daniel Webster ever knew in his whole course of senatorial career. He can call it what he chooses. I call it paraphraser, and if this isn't satisfactory to the alleged managing editor of this journal, I will throw up my position if I have to go somewhere and work for a living."

This so alarmed the managing editor that he remarked a mother-in-law joke of the Elizabethan era to be double leaded.

ONE SORT O' HOUSEKEEPIN'.

It's munny a long year now gone by since me and Sarah Ann commenced housekeepin'. We've allers lived right here where we do this day, and I guess we'll continue to stay here under the old roof until some day when one or 't'her of us 'll hev to go, and the old church bell 'll toll and the 'narrow house' the poets tell about will open its door, and one or 't'her of us 'll hev to go in, and the door it'll be closed, and we'll go to our long-time rest. Mebbe it won't be so very long apart we'll go, 'cause did you ever notice, how the old folks who hev lived and loved together for munny a year, go a-way sometimes almost together—even the Dark River don't separate 'em long, they loved each other so.

And now friends, do you want ter know why I begun this letter so, and why Sarah Ann and me hev allers got on so well together? Well, it won't take long ter tell. It's because we've both of us had a little common-sense (if I do say it), and Sarah Ann hev used to use mine in providin' things as kom fortible-like es I could and 'lowin' her to do the housekeepin' part herself 'bout es she wanted ter.

I've lived long enough to diskliver some things, and one is that there's two kinds of housekeepin'—sensible and foolish. The sensible kind bes things neat, and orderly and pleasant about the house, jist as a matter of course. It don't take any frettin' an' foaminn' to hev it so—it sort o' has it'self that way. And the foolish kind is where the woman goes about the house with a double-barreled microscope, as it was, lookin' fur the least appearance of dirt, and with a dust-rag in one hand and a dust broom in the other she goes around makin' herself and everybody else miserable. She meets the children when they come from school, with a smile? Not much—if it's muddy, or dusty or even sunny? "Don't you come in here with those muddy feet onto my clean carpets," is the first thing said, even if they come into the most back door in the house and the clean carpet is natin' but an old rag heim-loom full of holes and greasy. Such a woman never goes nowhere, never has enny time. The stove wants blackin', the knives want scourin', the chamber wants sweepin', the cellar wants cleanin' the winders wants washin' or the mopboards wants scrubbin'.

She can't leave the dish-cloth and the dust-rag long enough to go to missionary meetin', and es fur enny charitable or neighborly work she does outside—it don't amount to a thimble-ful, don't get time. She's a housekeepin' slave bound down with dish-rags and dusters till she can't move, and she's so nice and neat she makes enny ordinary person feel like a miserable slattern if she calls on her and sits down for jist a five minutes' coyersation.

Of course I believe in hevinn' things neat and nice, but not over neat and over-ice. I believe in noslovenly sort o' housekeepin', but I don't bleeve in woman's makin' a eternal drudge of herself. What sort of earthly good dus it do? Ain't there nothin' higher in jivin' than keepin' the dust off of things? Ain't there enny duties that a woman owes to her family, and to society, too, that she should attend to, or should she narrow down her mind to the scrubbin' of the four walls surroundin' her? It don't take long for a sensible, common-sense woman to answer these questions. But there's munny a woman who'll read these lines that's doin' the very thing I'm objectin' against, and because she's doin' it is why I write, hopin' that this year will see a change in her method of housekeepin'.

I've read this over to Sarah Ann, Mr. Editor, and she agrees with me—probably largely because she knows, as I do, that her housekeepin' is of the sensible kind. UNCLE HEZEKIAH.

A Cleveland speculator sent his son to Wisconsin to buy hops, telling him to keep his eyes open for any other speculation. After a few days a dispatch came, saying: "A widow has got a corner on the hop market of this State. Shall I marry her?" "Certainly," was the reply sent over the wires. Twelve hours later the son announced: "Got the hops, the widow, and seven step-children, and shall go to Chicago to-morrow to see about a divorce."

"What are you waiting for, little boy?" inquired a kindly old gentleman of a street urchin who was watching each passer-by intently. "Waitin' for a long-whiskered gent smokin' a cigar. Then I'll foller him an' get the stub."

"Do long-whiskered men smoke better cigars?" "Naw, but dey don't smoke 'em so short."

A Brooklyn woman is keeping in a book a list of things she ought to purchase, but cannot afford to wear. She calls the book her ought-to-buy-ogragraphy.

THE MAN WITH A MISSION.

"Am Pickles Smith in de hall to-night?" anxiously inquired the president as the notes of the triangle died away.

"Yes, sah," was the prompt response. "You will please step forward; I hev a few words to say to you."

"Brudder Smith, it am come to my knowledge dat you believe you has a mission on airth. You believe it am your solemn dooty to be on hand at ebery funeral in your nuybarhood, whether friends or strangers, an' offer your sarvices an' consolation. You stand ready to knock off work in de day time, an' to rout out of bed at night, an' it seems a long week to you when somebody isn't on his dyin' bed or on de move to 'rds de graveyard."

"Brudder Smith, you am one of our oldest an' best members, an' I doan' want to hurt yer feelin's. Since you took up dat mishun your woodpile has run short, your rent gone behind, an' your family looks 'rtn down. If I were you I'd drop it. I'd bring myself to believe dat de mishun of a mar'd man was to take good keer of his family and lay by a few dollars fur a rainy day. Pull de stockin's off de feet of a woman wid a mission an' you'll find holes in de heels. Go into de home of a man wid a mishun an' you'll find a sufferin' wife, half-fed children an' a hat full of lunnin' letters. Brudder Smith, you may return to your seat."—Linn-Klin Club.

A Capricious Composer. If the stories told of him are true, Hans Von Bulow is getting crankier day by day. It is related that during his last concert tour, as he was about to take his seat at the piano, he saw some very plain woman seated near the platform. At that he walked off the stage, and to his manager's inquiries and entreaties said:

"Until those ugly women are removed I will not play a note; so you may do as you please about it."

The manager stepped up on the stage, announced that Herr Von Bulow had become suddenly indisposed, and the orchestra would play a symphony which was to have been played later in the evening. While the audience looked on in wonder he had a number of palms and shrubs from the conservatory near the concert room placed between the platform and the audience. Then calling Bulow to the wing the manager asked if the view suited him.

"Oh, yes, that's all right," quietly said the great musician, "as long as I don't behold those monsters of ugliness I am quite indifferent to my surroundings." And without any more ado, the capricious composer went on the platform and performed his share of the programme.—New York Sun.

No Help Wanted.

A young man who said he had left the farm to strike a job in the city, and who added that if he could only secure a place somewhere he felt certain of laying the foundations of a fortune, imperturbed a business house on Jefferson avenue until the chief clerk finally played a joke to get rid of him. He gave him the street and number of the County Jail and advised him to call and ask for the place of the last man sent to Jackson.

Half an hour later the young man pulled the sheriff's bell and said to that official:

"I am in search of a situation. I am twenty-two years old, never sick and—"

"I have nothing for you," replied the sheriff.

"I'll work mighty cheap. I can bring you twenty testimonials that I don't swear, drink, chew or gamble. If you'll—"

"Sorry, but I have no vacancies."

"Didn't a man leave here for Jackson a few days ago?" asked the young man.

"Oh, yes—half a dozen of them."

"Then give me one of their places. I'll work the first month for my board and clothes."

"They didn't even get that much," said the sheriff, as he began to tumble to the racket.

"Well, I've got to make a beginning, and I'll furnish my own clothes."

"I should like to aid you, but really I have no vacancies at present."

"Oh, come, now—give me a show."

"Can't do it."

"Can't; eh! All right for you. I'll find one somewhere, and don't you forget it, and the day'll come when I'll make you powerful sorry that you gave me the cold shoulder on a cold day!"—Detroit Free Press.

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