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The Pawned Watch.

BY REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

"Taking the line 3, 4 as the base, 1"—David Kershaw's eyes wandered from the box to the window. There was nothing to be seen there but a red brick wall, about three feet distant. Then they traveled wearily over the walls of his room, with their soiled red and yellow paper, the bare floor, the cheap pine table piled with books, the cot-bed in the corner.

"If one had even a fire or a stove!" he muttered, kicking at the black grating of the register, through which a feeble supply of warm air crept into the room.

He took up his book, scowling impatiently.

"If I take 3, 4 as the base"—and again the book dropped on his knee. "Four years of this! Four years of utter solitude! You've taken too big a contract, Dave! You can't go through with it!" and he fell to staring gloomily at the bricks outside of the window.

David Kershaw was a country boy, used to a free, out-door life, to a big house, with roaring fires, and to a large, gay family of young people. He had been working for years for the money to carry him through college, and had come up to begin his course three months ago.

He had not an acquaintance in the great city. He rented his attic room, bought his dinner for ten or fifteen cents at a cheap eating-house, and ate crackers and cheese for breakfast and supper. His clothes were coarse and ill-fitting, and he was painfully conscious of it, and held himself haughtily aloof from his fellow students. College lads are not apt to break through any shell of pride and silliness to find the good fellow beneath. They simply let David alone, with a careless indifference more galling than dislike.

He plodded silently from the college to his bare room, and thence to the miserable eating-house day after day.

Being naturally a genial, friendly fellow, the thought of the four long, lonely years to come sickened him.

He threw up the window presently and put his head out to catch a glimpse of the street into which the alley opened. A young man on horseback passed at the moment. It was Jourdan Mitchener, one of his class. He rode a blooded mare, and was fully equipped in eorduroy coat and knickerbockers, cream-colored leggings, and gauntlets.

"A regular swell!" thought Kershaw, laughing good-humoredly. He had noticed this Cereus of the college before. "He has a good, strong face. Well, luck's unevenly divided in this world!" taking up his book with a sigh.

Half an hour later there was a knock at the door. David opened it, expecting to see his landlady, but there stood Mitchener, smiling, whip in hand.

"Mr. Kershaw?" lifting his hat. "Ashamed not to have known you before, but there are such a lot of us fellows, you know. Thanks, yes," taking a chair. "My mother saw your name in a catalogue, and sent me to tell you that your mother and she were school-mates and friends. 'Daisy' and 'Lily'—that sort of thing I believe. My mother married a city man, and for that reason, during the years that have passed, has lost sight of her old school-mates who lived away from the city."

"And my mother married a farmer, and has been poor all of her life," interrupted David, morosely.

"Yes, yes. American life! Up to-day and down to-morrow," carelessly.

Something in Mitchener's manner made his wealth and David's poverty appear paltry accidents, to which they, as men, were loftily superior. Before they had been together ten minutes, David felt his morbid gloom disappear. He began to talk naturally and laugh heartily. "This Mitchener was a thorough good fellow," he wrote home that night. "Was not conscious, apparently, that he was worth a dollar."

The truth was that Jourdan fully appreciated the value of his father's great wealth, but he was a well-bred and courteous young fellow, and knew how to put a poor and awkward lad at ease.

Kershaw was invited to dinner at Mrs. Mitchener's on Sunday. He went about the next day after this dinner in a daze of delight, as if he had been passing through a golden mist and had brought some of it still clinging to him. He hummed a tune, as he pored over his problems. He did not see the bare floor and hideous wall-paper, but the beautiful home in which he had been treated as an honored guest. The Persian carpets, the statuary, the table brilliant with flowers and silver, even the delicious flavors of the dishes lingered gratefully on his long-starved palate. He had met, too, women more charming and men more gently-bred than any he had ever known before.

What a world they lived in! He was even yet bewildered by his glimpse into it. Every luxury and delight waited on the lifting of their hands. Libraries, galleries of art, operas, balls, voyages to Europe, to the Nile! This was life! He wanted more of it—more of it.

Mrs. Mitchener had asked him to come often; had offered to introduce him to her friends, "a gay young set," she said. He walked up and down the room, flushed and panting. He had never dreamed of such a world! He must see more of it! How stale and dull the Latin and mathematics seemed now!

But how to compass it? He could not go again without a dress-suit. He had seen one that day in a second hand shop, very cheap. His blood grew hot at the idea of wearing some other man's cast-off clothes, but he pushed that thought aside.

How could he raise the money? He drew out his watch. It was a good one, the one luxurious possession in the family. His father had solemnly given it to him when he left home, saying:

"It was my father's. I've kept it in my bureau drawer for twenty years. Take it, David. You're going out into the world. You'll never disgrace it, my boy. Remembering the old man's face as he said this, David thrust it back into his pocket.

"What a snob I am! To part with daddy's watch for a suit of old clothes!"

But the next moment he thought that he could pawn it. He would soon have it back. Save the money, or earn it—somehow.

It was not as if he were yielding to a vicious temptation of the town—gambling or drinking. The society of these high bred people would elevate, educate him. There was a tap at the door, and Mitchener came in.

"No, can't sit down; I'm in a hurry. Brought a message from my mother. She would like to have you join an opera party to-night. Eight or ten young people. Meet at our house, box at the opera, and back to supper afterward. You'll come? That's right. Good morning!"

"No! no! Stay! Mr. Mitchener! His common-sense suddenly rose strong and clear. "I ought not to begin this life. It's your life, not mine. I'm a poor man. I have four years of hard work here before me, and after that my living to earn. Even the hour at your house yesterday ruined me for study to-day."

"Well! well!" said Jourdan, carelessly. "Don't be so reticent about it. Going once to the opera will not make you a man of fashion for life. Think it over and come. Give the college the go-by for a day."

"Oh, by the way!" he added, coloring a little. "Can I be of pecuniary service to you, Kershaw? No, don't be offending. I have more of the filthy lucre than I know what to do with. The fact is, I was just going to buy a terrier that I don't want. Now, if I could lend the money to you, it would be a real pleasure to me."

"Thank you! Kershaw stammered, touched, yet angry. "I do not need any money. I have everything I need—clothes and all," he added, with a gulp.

"Now I am in for it!" he groaned, when Mitchener was gone. "If I don't go to their party, they'll think I had no clothes fit to wear. The watch has to go!"

He paced the floor, one minute blaming himself for a snob, the next thrilled with delight at the thought of the evening's pleasure. His books lay neglected all day. He could not quiet the raging whirl and confusion in his mind enough to think of study.

He decided on nothing until nearly dark, when he rushed out, pawned the watch for one-fourth its value, and bought the evening suit. There was not money enough left to buy the shoes, gloves, etc., necessary to complete the dress. When he was ready to go, even his inexperienced eye could see that his costume did not set on him as if it were made for him.

But what matter? His friends—his welcome—the music. Who would care what clothes he wore?

Arrived at Mrs. Mitchener's, he did not find himself at all at ease. That lady was quite occupied with her duties as hostess, and received him with careless civility, giving her attention to her other guests. They talked of people and things of which he knew nothing. The tall awkward lad, his hair carefully oiled and parted, his red hands protruding from his short coat-sleeves, sat silent, and felt thoroughly miserable as it did of place. Now and then he thought he saw one of the dainty women near by scanning him with furtive glances.

They drove to the opera-house and entered one of the proscenium boxes. David had a seat at the back, where he could catch but an occasional glimpse

of the stage and the brilliant audience. He had been the leader of the choir at home, and fond of the waltzes and marches which his sister played on the old piano, and fancied himself a connoisseur in music. But he was not educated to understand this music.

A very pretty, flighty young lady, Mrs. Bellew, who was the chaperone of the party, tried politely to make him talk to her, but in vain. She turned to Jourdan at last with a shrug of her bare shoulders.

"Your friend," she whispered, "seems to be absorbed by his own thoughts. He does not look as if he were enjoying himself. Who is he?"

"One of my mother's last hobbies; a student in the college from the country," he replied in the same tone.

They turned to the stage. Kershaw saw their smiles, and knew they were talking of him. His brain was on fire. Why had he come here? Was he not the equal of these dainty folk, as well-born, as virtuous, as clever, as they? They dared to despise him because he was awkward and ill-dressed!

In his embarrassment and misery he thrust his hand into the breast pocket of his coat, and drew out a little painted paper tablet, when he fingered mechanically, scarcely noticing what it was until he saw Mrs. Bellew's eyes fixed on it with amazement and suspicion. When the curtain fell on the first act, she came back to him, making some incoherent remarks about the play, while she looked at him keenly. Suddenly she grew pale, and interrupting herself in the middle of a sentence, said to Kershaw: "Will you be good enough at the close of the next act to go with me and Mr. Mitchener into the ante-room? I would like to speak with you."

When they had reached the ante-room at the close of the act, she said: "I have a most disagreeable question to ask Mr. Kershaw. Our house was robbed by burglars last Monday, and silver and jewelry and clothes were taken. Among the rest was an evening suit of my husband's. You have it on!"

"Aren't you mistaken, Mrs. Bellew?" said young Mitchener. "One dress suit is exactly like another, and—"

"My husband," she went on, excitedly, "wore it to a ball the night before it was stolen. As we came home, he put my tablet, with my ducats on it, in one pocket. In the other was my ruby ring, which was too large for my glove. Mr. Kershaw has the tablet in his pocket."

Kershaw mechanically thrust his hand into the pocket of the coat, and brought out the tablet and a second later the ring, which had caught in the lining and so escaped the notice of the thief. He silently held them out to her. The power of speech and action seemed to be frozen out of him with horror. Mitchener looked at him excitedly, but said, politely:

"Have you any objections to telling Mrs. Bellew how the suit came in your possession?"

Kershaw stared at him a moment, full of repugnance and contempt for himself. These were "his new friends," this was the party he had parted with his old father's gift to enter!

"I did not, of course, steal the clothes and all," he said at last. "You cannot really think I did that. But I bought them at a pawnshop to-day. I pawned my watch to do it. I wanted to come here."

"All right! all right!" interposed Mitchener, soothingly. "You can send Mr. Bellew the name of the pawnbroker, and he will recover his silver and jewelry. Mrs. Bellew, the curtain is up." She fluttered softly back to her seat, arranging her airy draperies and flowers, and glanced meaningly at young Mitchener, as if to express disgust for the poor wretch who had bought cast-off clothes to thrust himself in among people whom he regarded as his superiors. David saw it all, and rose from his seat panting and trembling.

"Sit down! Sit down! Kershaw!" said Mitchener, putting his hand on his shoulder. David shook it off.

"No; I've been a fool, but I've done with it all now. I'll send back the clothes."

"Oh no!" said Mrs. Bellew, looking back with a supercilious smile. "Pray keep them."

David left the box and rushing home stunned with rage and shame, tore off the stolen clothes and carried them to Mr. Bellew's house. The next day Mitchener, who had a good deal of kindness and tact, arranged the matter. The pawnbroker, who was a receiver of stolen goods, was forced to give up the plate, jewelry and David's watch. The thieves were discovered and punished.

Mrs. Mitchener, still loyal to her old friend, sent David an invitation to a ball the next week. He declined it. "I have made a mistake," he told Jourdan, "but I will not do it again. My

path in life is straight before me. With God's help, I will keep in it."

His bitter humiliation had taught him juster views of life. As time passed, he made friends among the other students, clever, unpretentious young fellows, who, like himself had their own way to make in life. His college days passed quickly. He studied medicine, and returned to his native town to practice.

Twenty years afterward, Mr. Jourdan Mitchener, passing through this town, now one of the most important cities in Pennsylvania, became suddenly ill, and was attended for several weeks by Dr. Kershaw. He heard from others of the high position held by the physician in the community, not only as the head of his profession, but as an influential citizen, foremost in every good work, the founder of asylums, while his family were the centre of the most cultured circle in the city.

Mitchener had married a very wealthy woman, and had continued to live only in pursuit of fashionable amusement. "And what have I gained by it?" he thought, bitterly. "If I were to die to-morrow, I should be remembered only as the man who kept the best French cook in New York."

"You were right," he said to the doctor when he came that afternoon. "You were right to keep your own straight, honorable path, and refuse to ape fashion."

"I tried it once, you remember," said the doctor, smiling. "The most fortunate event of my life was my humiliation about my pawned watch. It was a bitter dose, but it cured me effectually. Every tick of this old watch since—drawing it out—has said to me: 'Don't be a snob. Keep steadily on your own path.' I owe much to Mrs. Bellew. Her treatment of me and my foolish act turned me back from the wrong road. It would have made my life a failure."—*Youth's Companion.*

Statistics Wouldn't Lie.

A Lover Loses His Sweetheart Through His Knowledge of Figures.

A young English statistician who was paying court to a young lady thought to surprise her with his immense erudition. Producing his note book she thought he was about to indicate a love sonnet, but was slightly taken aback by the following question:

"How many meals do you eat a day?"

"Why, three, of course; but of all the oddest questions!"

"Never mind, dear, I'll tell you all about it in a moment."

His pencil was rapidly at work. At last, fondly clasping her slender waist and—

"Now, my darling, I've got it, and if you wish to know how much has passed through that adorable little mouth in the last seventeen years, I can give you the exact figures."

"Goodness gracious! What can you mean?"

"Now, just listen," says he, "and you will hear exactly what you have been obliged to absorb to maintain those charms which are to make the happiness of my life."

"But I don't want to hear."

"Ah, you are surprised, no doubt, but statistics are wonderful things. Just listen. You are now seventeen years old, so that in fifteen years you have absorbed oxen and calves, 5; sheep and lambs, 14; chickens, 327; ducks, 204; geese, 12; turkeys, 100; game of various kinds, 824; fishes, 160; eggs, 324; vegetables (bunches), 700; fruit (baskets), 603; cheeses, 103; bread, cake, &c. (in sacks of flour), 40; wine (barrels), 11; water (cailions), 3,000."

At this the maiden revolted and, jumping up, exclaimed:

"I think you are very impertinent and disgusting besides, and I will not stay to listen to you!" upon which she flew into the house.

He gazed after her with an abstracted air and left, saying to himself:

"If she kept talking at that rate 12 hours out of 24 her jaws would in 12 years travel a distance of 1,322,124 miles!"

The maiden within two months married a well-to-do grocer, who was no statistician.

My First Antelope.

David W. Judd writes from the Par West to the *American Agriculturist* for November:

An incident to-day recalls my first antelope. Equipped with Sharp Carabines and Winchester, supplied with provisions for three weeks, we pushed southward from Laramie, Wyoming Territory—Auditor Weston, of Nebraska, his son Ralph, Tim Foley, the well-known frontiersman, a trusty guide, and I were. It was a bright, crisp morning, and in that peculiar atmosphere Sheep Mountain, seemed but five miles away, though the distance proved to be more than twenty. Before noon the antelope began to appear in the distance, and, as we approached the mountain, occasional small droves trotted leisurely by and whirled with eager curiosity to turn and gaze at us. Then after them we would go as fast as our horses could carry us, emptying chamber after chamber of cartridges, but with no seeming effect. Army officers stationed near here and elsewhere on the frontier have frequently run them down with greyhounds. It is reported of one of Gen. Stanley's dogs that he brought to bay and "downed" twenty-four antelope on a single expedition. We loaded and unloaded our rifles all the afternoon without striking, as far as we could ascertain, a single antelope, though several jack rabbits and an occasional sage hen rewarded our constant fusillade. On the second day we were glad enough, after our long ride, to lay up for repairs at Pimkham's, in North Park, Colorado. Here droves of antelope were seen in large numbers at a distance. Chafing under my constant failure to bring one down, I determined on resorting to the old ruse of "flagging" them. Possessed with incordinate curiosity, they can sometimes be drawn within shooting distance by raising one's handkerchief on the tip of the rifle or on a pole suspended above the long grass in which the hunter is concealed. At early daybreak I started off alone, stealthily crawling through the grass toward a small drove in foot hills a mile or more away. After maneuvering in this manner for a full half hour, I got within less than six hundred yards of the game unperceived. I then attracted their attention, and the animals, after approaching me for some distance, came to a halt. I then took deliberate aim at what appeared to be a noble buck, and enjoyed the exhilarating satisfaction of seeing the animal stagger and fall. Imagine my chagrin and sorrow, however, when, upon mounting my broncho, and quickly riding to the stricken antelope, I found a doe bleeding to death with two fawns standing over her. Instead of trotting away at my approach, they remained by the dying doe, and with their beautiful gazelle eyes, bestowed such looks of piteous reproach as one could never forget. It was a sight which occasioned no little remorse, and though the succeeding days we were constantly surrounded by the antelope in close proximity, I could not bring myself to shoot at one of them again while we remained on the expedition, excepting one morning when we were out of supplies. We subsequently killed our Rocky Mountain lion and other game, but the antelope, so far as I was concerned, remained undisturbed.

How He Once Ran a Locomotive.

They were gathered in the office of the railroad yards. Colonel Bob Leach was one of the party. "Gentlemen," said he, "I don't know how fast an engine can travel, but I'll give you an idea of how fast one did go. During the war I ran a scouting engine for the Confederate government. It was my duty to carry a telegraph operator, who, at different points, would cut the wires and send dispatches. We were running at a rapid rate one day, when, upon rounding a curve, I saw a thousand gun barrels blazing in the sunlight. I also saw that a number of crosses had been piled on the track. To stop in time was an impossibility; to go on seemed certain death, for even if we escaped being killed by the wrecking of the engine we would be shot to death, for we were regarded as spies. I decided in a second what to do. Telling my companion to lie down in the tender, I seized the throttle, and, in locomotive parlance, threw her wide open. The engine jumped like a rabbit. I threw myself flat in the tender, expecting every moment to be hurled to an awful death. Bang, bang, bang! went the guns. Then all was silent, save the whir whir of the wheels. Could it be possible that the engine had knocked off the obstructions? I arose and looked out. We had passed the enemy and had scattered the ties. My companion, as much astonished as myself, got up. I looked back, and just above the tender I saw what I took to be a swarm of big black flies. I reached out and took hold of one. Gracious! I then discovered what they were. They were a shower of bullets that the enemy had fired after us. Well, we ran along at this rate until all the bullets fell behind. Then we slackened up. The gentlemen looked at one another, but no one disputed the statement.—*Arkansaw Traveler.*