## NEVER TOO LATE.

# Adage a True One.

It was decided at last. The homeplace would have to be sold, for none of the boys were willing to lift the mortgage-wouldn't pay, they said-and the father and mother would have to end their days apart.

"Because," said Matilda, the young-est, "it wouldn't do for any one of us to try to take care of them both together. We've always had to live in the quarrel and jangle ourselves, and to have the example of it before our children would be a downright sin."

Jane, the older daughter, said nothing, but she thought to herself that if lady was sobbling to herself upstairs, her husband were worth as much as Matilda's was she would take both parents to her home and risk the example they might set for the third generation.

But ever since Matilda had first lisped her voice had settled family matters, and so father was to go with Jane to the city and mother to move over to the great red-brick farmhouse which | he'd ort to forgit me now!" was Matilda's home.

"Mother will be right handy about the work," Matilda said to her husband, when he showed some inclination to object. "And there isn't a better hand in the country with children. We won't lose anything.

So the September morning came when the couple who had never parted in fifty years bade each other farewell, much as mere acquaintances would have done.

Father, dressed in his best clothes, muttered "Good-by" in a defiant sort of way and hobbled out to the spring wagon, while Jane paused to kiss the little old woman who sat looking out of the window in an Indifferent way.

"Good-by, mother. I hope you will be happy with Mat. Won't you come to the door and see father off?"

"Oh-I dunno as it's wuth while," returned the old lady, and then Jane, too, was gone.

When she was sure the spring wagon was out of sight Mrs. Paine put on her gingham bonnet and walked over to the cemetery just up the hill.

The graves where she paused were not well tended-no engraved stones marked their places and the grass was cut away only enough to outline the mounds. Two were small, those of infants; one was that of a man's size, and they were all her children, two daughters and one son. The son was her oldest child and he would have been forty-eight or forty-nine years old now. He had died while studying for the ministry. She had seven children living, but in her times of trouble and sorest trial she had always wandered over to this sacred spot ever since it was first made thirty years ago.

To-day she sat down in the sun-dried grass and cried for some time.

'He might a-said something more," she sobbed to herself. And then she heard Mutilds calling and hurried back to the house.

The months passed slowly. At Christmas time there was some talk of a reunion, but the talk did not materialize. Letters came from Jane saying fa-

ther was tolerably contented, but missed his loafing place at "The Corners." He sent his regards to mother. Jane always added that of her own necord, for father never sent any word to anyone. But when Matilda answered the old mother always told her to inquire after father's health and to send her re-Specia.

It was one warm day in March that the little old lady's cap seamed full to overflowing. Matilda had gone to town. iren were un relsome and boistrous. The grand mother had reproved them solidly, and at last she spoke a little sharply. "Brothers and sisters shouldn't wrangle the hull time! You ort to say a decent word to one nuther onet in awhile, anyways" she said. Lucy, the chief culprit, tossed her head disdainfully.

"Well, mother. It does seem to me How the Old Folks Proved the as much as I do for you, you might look after them better. It's all you've got to do. There's no telling what mischief they're in!" And again the old lady went to her

room in silence and with burn og chooles. When they called her to so per she said she was not hungry, not, as Lucy and George were in directly-grace and sent to bed supperious. Ma-tilds and her insband ate alone.

"Mother always did have such a disagreeable temper-stubborn and salky. If she had been milder with father they would have lived more like other people," said Matilda, indifferently, when explaining the cause of her mother's absence.

"I wouldn't keer so much," the old "if only pap hed sent me some little word that he wanted to see me Children's most allers ungrateful any ways, 'specially them that's hed the most done fur 'em, an' l've worked my life out for mine.

"But I wouldn't a had 'em if it hadn't a been for love of pap, an' I don't think

Down in the city the warm spring lays awoke a new restlessness in old Mr. Paine. His daughter Jane was as kind to him as a kind daughter could be. Her children were taught to address him respectfully and to wait on his every wish because he was their grandparent. But the warm sunshine called up visions of the country home where the grass would be just deepening into green again and the maple boughs bursting with buds.

He had always had a lettuce bed just through at this time. And the spring longings recalled the days of youth and the little children who had played about him as he weeded and hoed in his garden, and the busy mother often taking time from her own work to help him. But she had always scolded so much, he muttered defiantly to himself, and was ever so determined to have her own way. Then a twinge of conscience told him her way had generally been the best, for she was clearer sighted than he, and he picked up his cane and hobbled away to the park in a funny sort of little dudgeon. Then as he sat in the park he thought of Henry and tears came to his eyes in spite of him.

"He's mighty fond of his mother-an' she was a good mother, too; I'll say that for her anyways. Henry was a fine boy. He'd a-been the finest we got if he'd a-lived, for he seemed to hev more sense an' good-heartedness, someways. I don't know as I blame her. after all, for bein' so bound to hev him go to college."

And, the barrier of stubborn reproach once loosened, some way everything began to look different, and when he hobbled back to the house the old gentleman was very heart-sick to see the wife he had treated so brusquely the past many years.

He went straight to his old satchel and took out a well-cared-for book, but one of an old binding and print. It was a Latin grammar, and had been his secret and most carefully-preserved treasure for over thirty years.

As the mother had gone to the grave of her most ardent ambitions, so he now turned the pages of his boy's book, one word of which he could not understand, but could only regard with awe. Then he came to a page on the margin of which was much fine writing in elegant script. It was not hard for him to read, little book learning as he

"Mother-dear mother Wife and mother, man's truest friends-guardian angels iff death Mother-sweetheart -wife-Edith."

Fooling the Hackmen. Blinkers-All this talls about hach- B' F. SHARPLESE, Pres. men overcharging is nonsense. I use hacks whenever I am out with my wife and the drivers never try to get a cent more than the regular fare.

Winters- low do you man age! Illinkows-Verysimply, Juserely must in a lood tone to my wife this I'm glad she's got through her she plug at last. After the huchman loss of that he is thankful to get out of me what I actually owe him. - N. Y. Weekly.

### Why She Stayed.

Mr. Gayboy (who is homely, to a pretty servant girl)-My wife talked rough to you, but you haven't given any notice to quit. Tell me, candidly, Jennie, is it me that keeps you in this house?

Jennie-Yes, it is, Mr. Gayboy. This is the only house 1 ever was in where my sweetheart wasn't jealous of the boss.-Texas Siftings.

Professional Instinct.

Husband (the father of six daughters)-Come, Rosa, there is a gentleman in the drawing-room who wants to marry one of our daughters. He is a wine merchant.

Wife-A wine merchant? Heaven be praised! Then he will be sure to select one of the older brands -Le Nain Jaune.

Nothing the Matter with It. Juvenile Customer (at restaurant)-

Paw, this duck is spoiled. Paw-What is the price marked on

the bill of fare for duck? "One dollar and fifty cents." "The duck is all right, my son. You

musn't object to its gamey flavor."-Chicago Tribune.

> How Sad! He was a daring acronaut, And had a fine balloon. And had a nne cancer. He put his wealth all in it. And hoped to go up soon. The day came-it was missing. His grief none could relieve. His wife had gone and used it For the pattern of a sleeve. -N. Y. Recorder.

> > Non-Interference.

Robinson-My dear, I don't know why you should warn the cook so frequently about lighting the fire with kerosene. Let her do as she pleases. Mrs. Robinson-But she may blow herself up.

Teacher-"For men must work and women must weep." What is the meaning of that line. Tommy Figg? Tommy-It means that men has to work to get money and then the women has to cry before the men will

"I've been riding on the elevated for five years, and I've never offered a

"Then you've never had any man-

#### Superior to Any Congressman.

Mr. Smith-Un-you never conversed with Mrs. Smith, did you?- Chicago Record.

Lost rowthons.

Author-I have a great idea for a

write it. Only leave the idea out -Judge.

A Comforting Thought.



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Robinson-Exactly.-Brooklyn Life. In the Third Reader.

divide with 'em.-Indianapolis Journal.

Not Ills Fault.

adv a seat."

nor."

"That isn't it. I've never yet had a sent."-Life.

Mr. Jonnes-1 never believed so much time could be vested in talk till I read the speeches of those congress-

faree-comedy. Manager-All right: go shead and

"I guess you needn't to talk, grandmal Mamma says you and grandpa always lived like cats and dogs."

"And you're livin' off papa, now, too," added George, emboldened by his sister's example, and not particular as to whether his remarks were called for or not.

Mrs. Paine sat very still for a moment. Then a bright red spot flamed on each cheek, and gathering up her knitting she slowly went to her room upstairs.

Yes, it was true. But what had caused it? They had married young and for love only, for neither had any worldly wealth. How had the trouble commenced? She could not remember exactly, but the children were the main causes. The bables came fast and the mother had to work hard. Sickness and hird work do not sweeten a woman's temper. The father was impatient and easily rebuffed-that was how it commenced.

Then the jarring culminated in one great quarrel, when Henry, the oldest, was sent away to school. His father wanted to hire him out when he was seventeen, but the mother was ambitious and Henry had finished the course at the village academy with high hon-

He was thirsting for more study-a bright, handsome lad, and his mother was so proud of him-and he went away to college. But never again was there peace between the parents. At college Henry was converted to religion and decided to study for the ministrythen he was stricken with typhoid fever, and the greater part of his mothor's heart was buried with him in the village cemetery.

The poor little faded mother sat there recalling the long-lost years, now with a thrill, now with a paug, earthly am-bitions and death-despairs strangely mingled, and not noting the silence in the rooms below until the sun was near sotting. Then Matilda's voice was calling through the house and the mother awoke from her reveries and went downstairs.

"Where are the children?" demanded Matilda, sharply. "Now, I deelar 1 dunno!" confee

ar mother, shamefacedly,

He must a been in love with somebody himself," mused the old father. "but he didn't forgit his mother, neith-She was my sweetheart onct!"

Before grandfather went to sleep that night he had formed a fresh determination.

"Jennie," he said to his daughter in the morning, "you know the Barkin cottage up to the Crossings? Well, I'm goin' up and see if I can't rent it. They's a nice garden patch with it, and 'tain't too late yet to put in garden stuff, an'-an'-dop't ye taink mother'd be willin' fur to cook fur me-'

"Yes, father; you know she always sends you her respects." There were tears in Jane's eyes, despite the smile on her lips.

"An' I'm pretty sure I could make enough with the garden fur her an' me, an' you children could help ds. I don't believe Henry would want us to live this way: do you?"

"No, father."

That night, an hour or so after the express thundered past the station, a couple of miles from the crossing, Braudfather Paine walked up Matilda's front yard and around to the back door, where the old grandmother was putting away the night's milk.

Grandmother gave a little glad cry and dropped the crock of milk all over the tabby cat, and threw her arms around his neck.

"I just couldn't stand it no longer, Mary, an' I 'lowed as you and me hed run it this long we might stick together for the few years that's left to us An' mother, I'm powerful sorry I'fit you like I allers did about Henry's goin'to college."

Matilda started to oppose the new arrangements. She said they weren't fit to be left alone at their age and would be an endless trouble to the children.

But for once Matilda was overruled and in a few days grandmother was busily engaged in "fixin' up" the little rented nest, only a stone's throw from the old home where the ten children had been sheltered and had died or married. And, as they say in more romantic tales, they lived happily ever afterward --Belle V. Logan, in Chicago News

-Mrs Artlayer-"So her marriage turned out to be a happy one after all?" Mrs. Stayson-"Yes, indeed. She got all the alimony she asked for."-Modern Society.

-No man can do good as he has opportunity without enjoying the occupa-

Bragg (proudly)-I am a self-made mant Van Riper-Thank Heaven, then,

A VERY WAISTFUL GIRL



Persistent Questioning. "What did you say?" asked Mr. Testy of his wife.

"I didn't speak." "Well, what would you have said if

you had spoken?"-Judge.

A Scarce Article. "I'm willing to take a chance," said the young man in the betting ring. "Perhaps," said the old-timer, "but I don't believe you'll find any around here."-Washington Star.

Well.to-Do Philosophy. "Aren't you rich enough to keep a carriage and pair?" "Yes. That's why I'm satisfied with

a pony and cart."-Chicago Tribune.

