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TOWANDA:

Thursday Morning, January 8, 1857.

Selected Poetry.

MAIDEN RESOLUTIONS.

BY MARY F. TUCKER.

Oh! I'll tell you of a fellow,
Of a fellow I have seen,
Who is neither white or yellow,
But is altogether green;
Then his name isn't charming,
For it's only common "Bill,"
And he wishes me to wed him,
But I hardly think I will.

He has told me of a cottage,
Of a cottage 'mong the trees,
And don't you think the gawky
Tumbled down upon his knees!
While the tears the creature wasted
Were enough to turn a mill;
And he begged me to accept him,
But I hardly think I will.

Oh! he whispered of devotion,
Of devotion pure and deep,
But it seemed so very silly
That I nearly fell asleep;
And he thinks it would be pleasant,
As we journeyed down the hill,
To go hand in hand together,
But I hardly think I will!

He was here last night to see me,
And he made so long a stay,
I began to think the blackhead
Never meant to go away.
At first I learned to hate him,
And I know I hate him still;
Yet he urges me to have him,
But I hardly think I will!

I am sure I wouldn't choose him,
But the very dance is in it;
He says if I refuse him,
That he could not live a minute;
And you know the blessed Bible
Plainly says, we "mustn't kill."
So I've thought the matter over,
And I rather guess I will!

Selected Tale.

[From Dickens' Household Words.]

The Beechgrove Family.

"So you think, my lad, that you would be quite happy if you had such a hall as that we passed this morning, with a park of old trees and a terraced garden, and pheasants feeding and crowing in every corner. Ay, but you're wrong, my lad. It isn't halls or parks, or anything that money can buy, that can make you happy."

The speaker was a white-haired, hale old man, with that clear tinted complexion that speaks of an active and not too hard life spent out of doors. From his dress he might have been a small farmer, or a head gamekeeper, or a bailiff, or chief gardener; and from his way of speaking, it seemed as if he had been in the habit of conferring with his superiors, and had caught up some of their phrases and tones.

"Why, here," he said, pulling out of his pocket a printed auctioneer's catalogue, "here is a paper that I picked up in the bar of the station hotel, that tells a very different story of the place where I passed more than fifty years of my life.

"There was not a prettier estate in this country than Beechgrove park. A thousand acres in a ring fence, beside common rights and other property that went with it. It was in the family of Squire Corburn, they say, for five hundred years and more. But the last three Squires dipped it each deeper than the other; for they all drank and played deep, and drank and dice don't go well together. Squire Andrew—he was the last—lived as his forefathers had done; kept his bounds and drove his four-in-hand, and had open house always at that time, and strong ale and bread and cheese for any one that called any day in the week; and which would not have hurt him so much if he had not always had either the dice-box or the brandy bottle in his hand. He was the last of a bad sort who are called jolly good fellows, because they flung their money about to every lad or lass that would join their mad waked pranks.

"Well, one evening he rolled off the sofa after dinner; and, before his poor wife could remove his handkerchief, he was dead. Then it turned out that for three years he had been living at the place on sufferance; that everything there—land, house furniture, pictures, horses, carriages, everything—belonged to old lawyer Rigors of Blexborough. Squire Corburn left no sons—only two daughters. So the poor lady gathered up the little that was left to her, with a small income that the Squire could not touch, and was seen no more.

"My father was bailiff over the home farm under Squire Corburn, and I was his deputy. You may believe we had a nice place of it. The old lawyer had the character of being a hard man in business, and had mortgages over half the estates in the county; but as soon as Beechgrove park came into his possession he altered his ways, retired from business, and did nothing but the same as before; only, he had his money. Except that he parted with the bounds, he put down no part of the Corburn estate. He furnished the best rooms; engaged a first-rate cook; laid in some famous means, with capital pheasant preserves, and the reputation of having money to lend, he was soon visited by almost all the first people in the county. At first the old lawyer seemed to be a new lease of life, looking after his business and farm, and riding out to pay visits; but he was a handsome old fellow, not much more than sixty—a widower, and mothers thought him a very merry man.

"But it was too much for him at last. He was drinking, and played such tricks with

low company that he went back as fast as he had gone forward, and one by one was dropped by his new friends; for although they might pardon strange behavior in one of themselves, they could not put up with the liberties of a man that some remembered an office boy in Blexborough. The end of it was that he made jolly companions of whoever would be jolly with him, and ended by marrying the daughter and barmaid of Bob Carter, of the Swan inn, a bouncing girl of eighteen.

"Now the lawyer had a son whom he had brought up for the church, and was at college long enough, though he never became a parson, nor did he agree at all with his father. He used to be away a great deal traveling, until his father came into the property. Then he returned with his wife, a very nice lady.

"The father and son, whom we call the young Squire, did not get on at all together—they were so different. The old lawyer was loud, noisy and hearty; the young Squire was pale, shy, and silent. He had not married according to his father's liking, and he did not push himself forward. He liked his book and hated the bottle.

"When lawyer Rigors married Kitty Carter, the young Squire left the park and went abroad, traveling in foreign parts—France, Italy, and such like; for the old gentleman made them a handsome allowance. At length the old gentleman went too fast, though Kitty took all the care of him she could—was taken sick, lingered for several months, and died.

"Of course the young Squire was sent for; it turned out that he had left a curious will; that no one could understand, with all sorts of directions; but above all, a great income and one of his best estates for life, if she did not marry to Kitty. They say the look the Squire gave Kitty when the will was read was awful. And that he flung out of the room without noting the hand—Kitty, who was always a friendly soul—held out to him.

"Now, when the old lawyer died, I will say there was not a more beautiful place in the kingdom. You went up a drive through the little park, after passing the lodge-gate under an avenue of beech and oak trees—that led straight to the lake fed by the springs that flowed out in a water-fall and went murmuring along for miles—a stream swarming with trout. On the other side the lake was the place, a stone house, standing behind some terraced gardens that led down to the water, with rich parti-colored beds dotting over the green lawns flanked by groves and bright evergreens. Behind the house the lawns and gardens rolled until bounded by plantations where vistas opened views of the distant hills and the pasture fields of the home-farm. The range of walled gardens were placed on the warm south side, quite out of sight; the best fruit trees had been grown ever since the monks made the gardens. The old lawyer spent thousands in building greenhouses and pineries, for he prided himself on having the best of everything.

"To walk out on an autumn evening on these terraced-gardens all red and gold and green with flowers, and turf, and evergreen, and see the lake where the coots and wild ducks played, and the swans sailed proudly, and the many colored trees of the park, where the pet deer lay or browsed, with everything as perfect as men and money, scythes and brooms and weeders, could make it. Often I was up by daybreak to see that the gardeners made all ready for Lawyer Rigors to see, when he came from his annual London visit.

"And the house was a fine old place,—suites of rooms, one leading from another, without end, and a great hall and a long gallery where the family portraits hung, and the lawyer put up a billiard table where he and his friends played in wet weather.

"The old lawyer was buried before the letter telling of his death reached his son, so Mrs. Kitty cleared and went up to her jointure house and from that up to London, where she met young Mr. Rigors, and heard the will read.

"We had orders to get all ready to receive him. I mind it as if it was yesterday, seeing the big traveling coach, piled with trunks and imperials, come up the avenue and wind round the lake, as fast as four horses could trot.—The children had their faces all out of the windows, wild with delight, and in a minute after the coach stopped at the hall-door, the boys were out and over the garden pulling the fruit, and into the stables, and then back to the house and running races through the corridors.

"At first, the Squire, as we still called him, kept up some thing of his father's style, though he put down four horses to a pair, and got rid of a lot of idle men servants. The calls of those gentry that came he returned, but excused himself on the ground of ill health and the education of his children from receiving formal company.

"The children were very happy—every day hunting out new stores and treasures, riding the ponies and donkeys, and making all sorts of pets in the preserves and on the home-farm. But month by month expenses were cut down, until at length the Squire sent for me—having taken it into his head that I was the steadiest fellow there—and told me that he was not what people thought, but very poor, and that everything must be made to pay. The gamekeepers were all to go, except two woodmen, and all the fancy gardeners. The old lawyer had a dozen, one for each department. All the land that could be to be let, and the fruit and vegetables sold. He did not say this at first, but he hinted, and I understood him.—Do the best you can, says he, don't ask me for money, and I shall expect the house well kept in dairy and poultry, and the land in hand to pay a fair rent.

"In two years you never saw such a ruin! I verily believe the master's fractions mean ways broke his lady's heart; anyhow she pined away and died before the worst. After her death the Squire went fairly wild on saving.

"You never saw such a change in a place in all your life. The coach horses were not sold, but set to plow and cart. And many of the fancy beds for flowers were sowed with potatoes, turnips, mangolds and such like. The lawns were let to grass, and even grazed over. And as for the park it was grazed

down to the bare roots with stock at so much a head, until no one would send any more in to be starved. Geese and ducks were reared in the garden temples and fed in the basins made for gold-fish.

"Everything was left to fall to rack and ruin, except just what could be turned to profit, or what, at any rate, the master fancied to be a profit. He took a fancy to me from the first, because you see I was a sort of a Jack of all trades, and did not mind turning my hand to anything. So I grew from that to be a kind of bailiff. We had a deal of fruit to sell in Blexborough, which, though not such a big place as it is now since these railways were found out, was beginning to be a pretty good market. Then there was the hay and the potatoes, the sheep and the pigs, and I managed all. So, of course, I got to speak to the Squire pretty often, and I said to him once, 'I think, Squire, if you're for farming you'd do better to take a regular farm, and let on sale this place that's planned for pleasure grounds, and never was meant for profit.' But, bless you, he'd never listen to any common sense, for I believe the truth was he could not bear to put money out of his pocket, and many and many a time when he wouldn't order a joint of meat from the butcher's, he'd have pork, that, what with one experiment or another, would cost him a shilling the pound.

"One day he made up his mind to break up a fine mere of land to plow. Says I, 'We want some horses very bad. Squire, for that stuff clay.'

"Why, Robin, says he—my name's Robin Spudder—haven't you the four horses?"

"Lord, sir," says I, 'they're no good at all; they may do in the light carts, or for harrowing, though that wasn't what they were meant for; but for plowing, you see, you want some weight and substance, and it's my belief you'll kill the horses, and do no good to the land.'

"The Squire was a mild spoken gentleman, unless you put his back up; but when I said this, his eyes flared like a forcing furnace.—Says he, 'Robin are you in a conspiracy to ruin me, like all the rest? Those horses cost my father four hundred pounds, and you told me yourself they would not fetch twenty pound apiece, and now you want me to buy more!'

"Well, it was no use saying anything, for I dare not tell him that he had ruined the poor brutes with feeding them on a mess of potatoes and chaff-stuff he had learned out of a French book.

"Another time, I've known him sooner than give an order for a load of coals, make me cut down two ornamental trees.

"So, you see, we lived on the farm off vegetables, poultry that didn't sell, skim-milk; all the cream went for butter, pork, and such old fat wethers as were not fit for market. I used to be sorry for the poor children, walking among the fine fruit, and not allowed to touch so much as an apple unless it was braised, and obliged to be content with dry bread, when we were making pounds and pounds of fine butter; talking among themselves how different it was when their poor ma's was alive.

"But they were so young that they did not feel the change much as long as they could play about; and of course, when their father's back was turned, they had the best of everything. We servants out of the house, did very well; our wages were regular, and of course we had the best of everything that was sold, beside our perquisites.

"I lived in one of the park lodges, and made myself and my missis very comfortable with a garden. A cow's grass was part of my wages; and many a time the children came down from the hall, and had a better tea with us than they were allowed at home. The worst of it was the Squire was always trying some new-fangled plans, and never stuck to any of them long enough to make 'em pay. He used to read something out of a book and come down full of it and try it, if it could be done without laying out too much money, and then, before it was half done, he would try something else.

"One time he was for fattening cattle; so he fits up with faggots and clay some old sheds, and buys a lot of poor Welsh cattle at a low figure, and goes to work very hot for a few weeks. But the beasts wouldn't feed, or the food was not right, and all went wrong.—They didn't sell for more than they cost. Then he was all for pigs, and we had pigs by the hundred, eating their heads off. Well, that didn't answer, and the dairy—made in one of the wine cellars of the old house, with fifty cows—didn't turn out much better. The cows died or gave no milk, and the dairy maids stole the butter, or else no one would buy it; and the cheese, made on a new plan from Holland, or Switzerland, or some other outlandish place, never turned out right. The Squire, you see, was quite a bookman, and when he'd given his order, and read his explanation, he thought he had done all that was necessary.

"It wasn't my business to make any difficulties. Mine was a comfortable place; and so were all the servants' and laborers', for the matter of that; but we could none of us understand the Squire, no more could the neighbors. For it was said that though the old lawyer had not left him so much as he expected, still there was a pretty tidy lot; some thousands a year at the least, I've heard say, beside the house and park. But he had got into his head most times that he was going to be ruined, or that he was ruined, and was always dwelling on the large fortune he had to pay to his father's family. He'd talk to me, he'd talk to any laborers about it; I don't think he ever used to talk to his lady about anything else; and that's the way he moped her to death. I've heard him myself talk to little Rupert and Master Charles about the duty of being content with dry bread when they were not more than seven or eight years old. The children were dear creatures. Me and my missis loved them all, and they loved us. There was the eldest, Master Rupert, a high-spirited chap, always in mischief when his father's back was turned—a fine, free spirited lad, and the kindest, bravest heart in the world; and Charles, as quiet as a lamb, always at his book; and Norman, the youngest, rather spoiled, but a merry sharp little grig; and the two young ladies, the twins that my

wife nursed and took to almost altogether when their poor mother died—Miss Maria and Miss Georgina.

"They had no playmates; for the Squire wouldn't let 'em have any if he knew it. They weren't dressed like other children. The boys always wore the same corolleros, except cloth on Sundays; and then they wore these until they were too short in the arms and the legs by half a yard. The poor young ladies were in the same way; always cotton gowns and common straw bonnets, and their hair cut short like boys, until they were quite big girls. They used to creep into church ashamed, for they knew they were gentlefolks, and not like being so shabby.

"They never went to school; the Squire could not bear the idea of the expense. First he taught them himself; then he found that took too much time; so he hired a curate in the next parish, a curious sort of a snuffly old man to teach boys and girls. But they only made fun of him, and did not learn much, I doubt, except Charles. Then he got a cheap governess for the ladies; but she did not like the living, and married Bob Cannon the forester. I believe the Squire loved his children dearly; but he was so busy saving up money for them, and he was so severe with them about every trifles, and always lecturing them about one thing or another, that they feared too much to love 'em.

"Lord Splatterdash says, I am told, that all children are alike. He would not have said so if he had known my young masters—Rupert, and Charles, and Norman. Rupert was proud naturally. He could not do what his father did. I've seen him cry with shame and vexation when the Squire has taken him with us to market to drive the old pheasant, and he has heard his father disputing about a groat in the bill with the innkeeper. For we used to take our own chaff with a sprinkling of oats in a bag, and feed outside the town, near a haystack, in fine weather, and stood out all the time. In wet weather we were obliged to put up at an inn; and then we had to bear with a deal of sauce because Squire Skindrift, as they called him, was known never to spend a penny if he could help it. He'd give five miles round, and creep over any hedge on horse-back, to avoid a turnpike. Many a time at a crowded fair we have been turned out by landlords, saying: 'I can't afford to take in folks that neither eat nor drink.'

"But for all that the Squire was not a bad man to the poor—far from it; and would come down handsome at times, by fits and starts, if there was any case of distress. But his whole mind seemed to be set on the notion of saving fortunes for his children. He used continually to say, 'You see they're five of them; and my father's behaved so cruel to me that they've very little for them, Robin, when I'm gone.'

"Now, when Master Rupert grew to about fifteen and the two young ladies thirteen, although they were kept so close, they got to hear many things making them think that their father was not so poor as he always said; for servants will talk. At that time one single bit of furniture had been bought since the old lawyer died. The carpets were worn out and patched one with another, like a patch-work quilt. In the living-rooms they made up with old sets of chairs, and he'd patch the broken windows with paper himself. They got rid of servants until they had only two oldish women in the house beside the farm servants. They used to dine at one o'clock in what was the servants' hall, on a long deal table; and I've known them sit down day after day to a dish of potatoes, chosen from the best of those kept for the pigs (the best of all went to market), with one egg and one rasher of bacon apiece, and dry brown bread. The fitches and hams and all that could be were locked up in the store-room, and the Squire kept the keys and gave out daily what he thought was wanted. As for the young ladies, when they were big enough, they were dressed to their mother's dresses as long as they would last. I have seen them shivering in a cold October day for want of a shawl or a cloak when he had three or four locked up in the great wardrobe; but the Squire said it was too soon to begin warm clothes in October. No matter what kind of weather, we never began fires until the ninth of November.

"One Saturday just before Christmas—it was Master Rupert's seventeenth birthday—not that they kept any birthdays—the Squire went to Christmas fair with me to sell a lot of bullocks, the best he ever had, fed on the summer's grass in the park. An hour after we were gone, Master Rupert called his brothers and sisters into the hall that was never used, and there he had got a roaring fire in the grate. Old Jenny Crookit, who told me the story, said he shouted out like a madman, 'Look here, children, I have got orders to give you a treat on my birthday. Here's wine.' And so there were several cobwebbed bottles. He must have broken into the vault. 'Here are fowls and turkeys ready for the gridiron. Georgy, Molly, and you, Dame Crookit, help to make a good broil; and while you are doing that, I will show you something.' He went out to the room, and returned dressed in a complete set of new clothes, like a farmer's son riding to market. He was very tall and strong of his age, and handsome. Grand he did look, with a red flush on his cheek and a strange, wild look in his eye. The children shouted with pleasure and surprise. Then says he, 'Dame Crookit, I am going on a journey—a long journey. The king has sent for me, and I must give you all a feast such as we read of in story-books before I go.' So they all set to work, and cooked, feasted, and laughed, and rejoiced, and he the loudest of them all. When they had done, he called in all the laborers that were in the cattle yards and round the house, and made them drink his health and a pleasant journey.

"Drink, he said, the wine won't hurt you; it's old; it has lain in the cellar ever since my grandfather died, and long before that. If you don't like wine, here's rum marked on the cask ninety years old—So you may believe they all drank. He made the men go out and fetch in more logs and pile up such a fire as

had not been seen for many a year. Then he said, 'come, my friends, I will sing you a song.' So he sang first one and then another ballad—all mournful ditties that made the lasses weep; but he was a fine singer. Many a time he rode before me when he was a child and sang all the way through the park. His beautiful voice went ringing through the empty halls, and winding up the stairs where the cow-boys hung listening.

"He was in the middle of a ballad—we could hear the last verse as we came up the avenue. 'What's that?' said the Squire.—For the house was always mute as an empty church. When we turned into the stable yard the flames of the hearth fire flashed out through the dusty, cob-webbed window. 'Good heavens!' he cried: 'the house is on fire!' Next, as he hurried along the passage came the gable of cheerful voices. He flung open wide the heavy door; and cried, in a voice of dismay and rage.—'What's all this? Who dared do this?'

"It was I, father," said Rupert, stepping forward, looking flushed, and even still more fierce than his father. 'It was I who did it all. I am going to leave you, sir, on a long journey, and thought I should like to give my brothers and sisters and old friends one farewell feast, after years of starvation; and if you grudge it me, why then you can deduct it from my share of my mother's fortune, which you must pay when I come of age.'

"Villain! It's false. You've not a shilling unless you've robbed me.' And he raised his whip to strike him.

"Don't strike me," said Master Rupert, stepping back, and turning from red to white; 'don't strike me or you will repent it for many a long day.'

"But he did strike him again and again, right across his face, until the blood flew.

"In one minute, before I could step between them, the son, who was a head taller than his father, had him in his arms pinioned, snatched out of his other hand the big black pocket-book he always carried, and then full of the price of twenty bullocks, burst it open over the fire, shook out the notes into the crackling flames, then threw the book into the embers and put his heel upon it. Some of the notes flew burning, like evil spirits, up the chimney; the rest were ashes in an instant.

"There!" he cried, 'there! That's how I should like to serve all your cursed money; it is your curse and ours.'

"Before the Squire could recover himself, Master Rupert was gone. We heard a clattering in the yard of horses' feet. I ran to the window and saw him by the light of the moon gallop down the avenue on his gray colt that he must have had already saddled. We never saw him again.

"The Squire took to his bed and lay there night a week, scarcely eating anything. I tended on him myself. I could hear him groan as I passed his door; but when I came in he looked just as usual—pale, and hard, and grim. You could never tell what he meant by his face.

"Some said he fretted for his son; others said it was for the money Master Rupert had burned, and the loss of the gray colt, the best he'd bred. Anyhow he said no word, but was up at the end of the week, moiling and striving and screwing, and grinding worse than ever. I think myself he loved Master Rupert, for all his hard lines to him; for, once—when his son had been gone six months—I found him in the old lawyer's study standing looking at two pictures—one of himself, taken when he was about ten years old, and another of Rupert when he was seven or eight, drawn for his grandfather by some foreign artist. I heard him mutter to himself, 'so changed; and I half fancied there was a tear in his eye. But turning him sharp round on me, he said grimly, 'Could any one believe that pretty child could have turned out such a villain, to rob his poor old father! What?' he cried to me, as I muttered something—for the boy was my favorite—'do you defend him?'

"Master Rupert was not a villain," said I, 'if it was the last word I was ever to speak.' And with that I threw down the sample of wheat I had brought, went out, and never near him all day. But he could not do without me. So the next time I had to go to him he took no more notice.

"When we came to settle with the miller, who took part of our corn and sent us meal, we found that he had paid Master Rupert cash for a brood mare that used to be called his. Before that time the Squire had taken care of the money (as he said, for them) of any calves or lambs sold belonging to the children.

"Two years afterward a son of the head plowman that had gone to sea wrote to his mother, saying he had met Master Rupert in Calcutta, dressed in cavalry uniform; that he knew him in a minute, although he was very much altered. But that Master Rupert denied his name, and refused to own to ever having seen Bob Colter before. But Bob was quite clear that it was the young squire. I went and told my master, who said nothing at the time, but it seems set to work with his London friends to buy Master Rupert out. I did not know this at the time. Long afterward, when the squire fell sick of the illness he died of, I found the letters under his pillow. First there was a letter from some one in India, saying they had seen the soldier Thomas Rupertson, of the fiftieth K. O. Light Cavalry, and that he had entirely denied that he had any parents living, or that he had any pretensions to be a gentleman; and further said he should enter some other regiment immediately if bought out. There was another letter, saying that since the first had been written, private Thomas Rupertson had died of a wound received in a fight with some mounted robbers. And the chaplain inclosed a lock of his hair, and a portrait made on something like glass, only tough, by an Indian. Poor led! it was the very moral of him; though the thick dark mustaches and the fierce look was very different to when he used to go shepherding with us on his rough pony.

"Master Rupert's going was only the beginning of our troubles.

"Every year the squire seemed to grow richer. He could not help it; for, though the home farm was miserably managed, he spent nothing to speak of, and was saving up his rents and laying them out every year on interest. People came to him from all parts to borrow money; and he sat up all night beside the day, when he was not busy in the farm, looking over parchments and counting up money, and packing it up to take to the Blexborough bank.

"The young ladies were growing up; but he only seemed to notice them by fits and starts. They were afraid of him, always skulked out of the way, and only spoke in whispers, or just ay and nay, before him, though they could laugh loud enough behind his back—joking with the lads who made an excuse to call when they knew the Squire was at market or bank. Oh, but they were bony lasses, with color like roses! but strange and wild in their way as any young jillies, and no one to look after them—scampering about the park on their ponies, with their hair flying about ears, and just an old shawl or a horse-rug round their feet instead of a habit; or playing hide-and-seek round the old hall. They were at the age when sorrow and sad thoughts soon pass. So poor Rupert was forgotten, except on Winter evenings round the fire.

"Well, one day they were both missing; they had gone off and married two wild fellows, lawyer's clerks—not bad looking chaps though—who got acquainted with them in the park while coming backward and forward to raise money on writings for their master, lawyer Johns—Jesuit Johns they called him. It was a sad business. First, the husbands sued the Squire for their wives' share of their mother's fortune; then, when they got it, and found it not to be so much as they expected, they ill-used the poor things. Langston, that married Miss Georgy, gave up the law and opened a public-house, where all the racing and sporting fellows from the High Moor training grounds used to go; and poor Miss Georgy, that always had a spirit of her own, when Langston got in the way of being her, ran off with Captain Lurcheer of the Lancers, the steeple-chase rider. What became of her afterward I don't know; but they did say she died in a London workhouse. Miss Maria, the first one, was always a meek spirit; and when she found that Mr. Sam Woods had only married her for her money, she fretted away to a shadow, and soon faded away altogether.

"The next that left us was Master Norman, the spoiled darling. He was a keen hand from a child, and would take anything he could lay his hands on. He cheated at marbles; was never so happy as when he could get a few halfpence and play pin-ball-toss with the farm lads or the postillions down at the Flying Childers. He took to betting by going on the sly to his brother-in-law Langston's public-house. How he got the money we could not tell; but he came to be a regular blackleg before he had a beard, at every race he could steal away to. He finished by breaking open the Squire's desk, when it was full of the price of the wheat-stacks, and going off to Doncaster, where we heard he won a sight of money. He never showed again until he was come of age. Then he drove up, dressed like a lord, in a curlicue, with two men servants, a bulldog, and a black-faced blackguard looking dandy fellow alongside of him. The Squire was getting feeble then, but more fond of money than ever. Norman frightened him so, that he was glad to give him more than his share of his mother's fortune down the nail, to get rid of him. When he heard what had become of his sisters, the boy cursed and swore awfully. From what his groom said, it seemed as if he had brought the black-looking dandy to marry one of his sisters. His last words were to warn the Squire that he should be back in a year for more cash. But he never came; for he was upset and killed coming from Newmarket spring meeting, the year before we heard of Mr. Rupert's death.

"So there was none left but Mr. Charles, who was always a quiet, careful lad, and had persuaded the Squire to let him go into the Blexborough bank, where they were glad enough to have him. So he used to be there all the week, and come up on Sundays, walking the ten miles, unless he could get a cast in gig, and going back the Monday with me in the market cart. He was the very same sort as the Squire, but not such a spirit. You might see the old man and the young one, with a very old look and stooping shoulders, walking up and down the terrace, deep in talk, every Sunday. Sometimes they stopped and looked over printed papers Mr. Charles would bring out of his pocket. If the weather was too rough, they would take their walk in the long gallery, and so save fire. Then they would sit down to do to dine off a bit of bacon, or perhaps a rabbit caught in the park, or any cheapness, and all the time their tongues went slowly, steadily on—but never about anything that I could understand but money, money, money.

"After a while, Mr. Charles left the bank, and set up in business for himself, and, according to what we heard, grew wonderfully rich. Then there came a time of plagues of American mines, where the orchids came from, and canals, railroads, and all sorts of schemings. The old Squire's eyes used to glisten again when he heard what a sight of money Mr. Charles was likely to make. He used to say, when Mr. Charles was getting ready on the half-steps to go home on Sunday nights, 'Good boy, good boy; if all your speculations come off right, you'll have all I have.'

"How much may that be, father?' Mr. Charles asked him one night.

"The old man's eyes glistened, and he rubbed his hands together gleefully. 'Thousands, boy, thousands!' he said, and then went back into the parlor, rubbing his hands faster than ever.

"After a while, however, things changed very much. Mr. Charles lost his cheerful looks on Sundays, and I noticed that whenever he came the old Squire grew black and pinched about the nose and mouth, as he always did when any one asked him for money. It seemed to me that Mr. Charles' speculations had not come off right.

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