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THE MISER'S WILL.

"WHAT!" muttered Noah Brennan, gazing into Walter Adams' face, "do you mean that you will provide for me and help me?"

"Yes," returned the youth, hopefully. "I could never be happy with Agnes, much as I loved her, if I thought her dear old father had no home. Come, we will live together, and be as happy as the days are long."

"But your salary?" "Is sufficient for us. I have five hundred dollars a year. We can live on that, and lay up something too."

"Well, well—take her—love her—be good to her—make her happy—don't never!"

When the old man saw the joyous tears streaming from his child's eyes he turned away and walked quickly from the house, but he was not so quick but that he heard the blessing that followed him. And when he walked alone beneath the starry heavens, he wiped his eyes as though something troubled him.

Gay as a lark, was gentle, beautiful Agnes, when she became the wife of Walter Adams. The rose bloomed again upon her cheek, and the smiles were upon her happy face, like sunshine, all the day long.

"Do you pray God to help you to love me now?" the old man asked, after he had lived with Walter some two months.

"Why, what do you mean?" Agnes asked, in surprise.

"You used to pray so, for I heard you," returned Noah.

A moment the young wife gazed into her parent's face, and then she answered, while she threw her arms about his neck:

"Oh, I pray that you may be spared to us for long years in peace and happiness. But—love you? Oh, I could not help it, if I should try. And Walter loves you, father—he loves you very much, for he has told me so many times."

There was something more than usual in the old man's eyes, now.

One evening, as the happy trio sat at tea, Walter looked more thoughtful than was his wont.

"What is it love?" Agnes asked.

"Oh, nothing," the husband said, with a smile, "I was only thinking."

"But of what?"

"Only castle-building, that's all."

"In the air," the young man replied with a laugh.

"But tell what it is."

"Well, I'd as lief tell you as not.—Mr. Osgood is to retire from our firm in a few days. He is well advanced in years and has made a fortune in the business and will now live for comfort and health alone. He has not been very well of late years."

"And is that all?"

"No, I am to be advanced to the post of head book-keeper, with a salary of twelve hundred dollars."

"And is that all?"

"Yes."

"But what castle in the air is there about that?"

"Oh, that isn't the castle."

"Then what is the castle?" urged the old man.

"Why, simply this," said Walter, laughing, but yet almost ashamed to tell it. "This noon Mr. Osgood patted me on the shoulder, and said he, in his playful way, 'Walter, I'll sell you all my interest here for fifty thousand dollars.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Noah Brennan, "and you thought he was really in earnest?"

"No, no," quickly returned the young man, "I did not think that, though I knew that the two other partners would very willingly have me for an associate."

"But it seems to me that Osgood estimates his share in the concern at a high price."

"O, no; it is a very low one. There is a clear capital of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars in the business at this moment. And think of all the standing and good will, which goes for nothing."

"Eh, how?" asked old Noah, now turning in his chair.

"I tell you," said Walter, with a spasmodic effort. "I had some long entries to post this evening, so remained in the counting room after the rest had gone. I was still at work when Mr. Osgood came in and placed some papers on my desk, saying, as he did so, 'Here, Walter, these are yours.' And then he went out. When I had finished my work, I opened the papers. The first was a sort of inventory of what Osgood had owned in the business, and footed up, in round numbers, forty-nine thousand, eight hundred and seventy-five dollars.—The next paper a deed conveying the whole vast property to me, and me a partner in the concern upon an equal footing with the other two."

"Well," said the old man, thumping his foot upon the floor, and keeping time with his hands, "I don't see any thing very bad in that."

"But I do," replied Walter. "It is cruel to trifle with me thus."

There was something in Noah's eye again, but he managed to get it out, and he spoke thus:

"Walter Adams, when young men used to hover about my child, I believed they were after my money, and I thought the same of you. I knew of nothing but this love of money, that could underlie human action. My heart had become hardened by it, and my soul darkened.—But it was for my child to pour the warmth and light into my bosom. It was for her to keep before me the image of the gentle wife whom I had loved and lost, but alas! who occupied a place in that love second to my gold. It was for my child to open gradually, but surely the fount of feeling which had been for a life-time closed up. I heard her pray for me—pray that she might love me—that she might have help from God to love me, and that was after I had refused to let her be your wife. I saw her grow pale and sorrowful, and I knew I had done it—and she loved me still. Still she prayed to God to help her—help her what?—Help her love her father! I was killing her, and she tried to smile upon me.—One evening I heard you both conversing in the old hut. My child chose misery and duty to her father, rather than break that duty in a union with a man she loved. And you uttered a prayer. You prayed that I might be penitential. Stop! hear me through! You would then show your disinterestedness. I walked away and pondered. Could it be that I had found a man who would love an old wreck like myself, with no money? If it were so, then that would break the layer of crust from my soul. I determined to test you. I had gained a glimmering of light—my heart had begun to grow warm—and I prayed frequently that I might not be disappointed."

"I went to the bank and drew out fifty thousand dollars in bills. That night my miserable old hut was set on fire—or—a—caught fire. I shall always think 'twas my candle did it. But the old shell burnt down, and room was made for a better building. I came out with the wrong trunk, and the other was burnt up. But the money wasn't in it. No, no. I had that stuffed into my bosom, and deep pockets and all buttoned up, and the next day I carried it back to the bank, and had it put with a few thousand more which I had not disturbed. And so my experiment commenced, and I found the full sunshine at last. Aye, Walter, I found you the noble true man I had prayed for. You took me into your home, and love me when you thought me penitential, and took my child to your bosom for just what God had made her. And now, my boy, I've paid Mr. Osgood fifty thousand dollars cash for his share in the business, and it is all yours. And let me tell you one thing, my boy, if your partners can raise fifty thousand dollars more to invest, just tell 'em you can put in five and twenty thousand more at twelve hour's notice. Tell 'em old Noah ain't quite ashore yet. Tell 'em he has found a heart, my boy!—Come here. Agnes, come here. Walter, God bless you as you have blessed me."

Nobody pretended that they had notes in their eyes now, for the occasion of the weeping was too plain.

When Daniel Webster was a young man, about commencing the study of law, he was advised not to enter the legal profession, for it was already crowded. His reply was, "There is room at the top."

I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed.

Young women, you don't know how much influence you have over young men. If you would labor earnestly, we should not have so many dissipated young men in our land. Do not let them fill the drunkard's grave. I suppose you will say, "I don't believe we have anything to do with young men's getting drunk." Think a moment. Did you ever do anything to prevent? Did you ever go with a young man which had been drinking a little? "I believe so."

Well, did you think as much of him as you did before he drank? "No." You did not let him know it, did you? "No." You should have said to him, "If you drink, I will not go with you any more."

You might have saved him from a drunkard's grave. Will you say to the young man who is attentive to you, that you do not mean to go with any young man who drinks one drop of liquor? He may shun you a few days, but he will think of it, and will make up his mind that you are right; for what woman wants a drunken husband.

An Injunction.

From Surprise Valley comes the story of an old fellow who got very jealous because his young wife went to a ball with a good looking fellow, and strayed out until broad daylight. The old chap went to a justice of the peace and told his story, winding up with "I want yer to help me, for that thing has been going on about long enough."

"Well," said the justice, "you can write down to Yreka and see if some of the lawyers can't get you a divorce."

"Divorce!" roared the angry man, "who the deuce wants a divorce?" The justice began to get wrathful.

"If you don't want a divorce, what in the deuce brought you here?" "Why I want an injunction to stop further proceedings."

The Darkey's Theology.

This is how uncle Caesar, a colored preacher, disposed of the mode of baptism question: "Now, bredren," said he, "I hear great fuss about dese words in and into. And folks want us to believe that they all mean under, and dat when the Scripture speak of an individual going down into the water, the Bible mean to say that he went under de water. Now bredren, yonder is brudder Solomon. Now 'spose some day I go over to see brudder Solomon, and brudder Solomon very politely say—Uncle Caesar, come into de house; do anybody 'spose dis here nigger would go under de house?"

A good joke was perpetrated the other day by a gentleman of Manchester, who was a passenger on the train from Boston. There was some conversation among some Manchester men on the train in relation to various churches that were passed on the route. On nearing the station at Lowell the jail in that city came in sight, when some one who did not know its exact character exclaimed: "What church is that?" "I guess that's a close communion church," said his neighbor in the next seat, "at any rate it isn't a free will church."

"May I sing, ma?" asked a young lady of four who had been taken to church by her mother, and whose bump of music was doubtless excited by the performance to which she was listening. Ma, whose eye was upon the pianist in the next pew, of course said, "Yes," as all indulgent mothers do; and the little hopeful, with a strong voice, commenced "Up in a balloon." "Hush! hush!" said Ma, don't sing that!" Pausing a moment, the young vocalist struck up "Not for Joe," and was immediately hustled out of the sanctuary.

Sold.

A common jurymen recently appealed to Mr. Justice Hannan, at the Glamorganshire Assizes, for permission to be excused from attending as a juror on the following day. "Upon what ground?" asked his lordship. "Oh, my Lord, I am extremely desirous to attend a funeral tomorrow." The requisite permission was given. Upon leaving the court the justice was informed by the under-sheriff that the juror was an undertaker.

Jesse had been doing something which her mamma had told her she must not do. She had been eating currants, and, of course, got her mouth all stained; that's the way she was found out. Her mamma said: "You know you were forbidden to eat currants." "But, mother, Satan tempted me." "Why didn't you say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan?'" "I did say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and he went and got behind me, and he pushed me right into the currant bushes."

SUNDAY READING.

Wesley's Preaching.

"I was, I believe, in October, 1790, and not long before his death, that I heard John Wesley in the great round meeting-house at Colchester. He stooped in a wide pulpit, and on each side stood a minister, and the two held him up, having their hands under his armpits. His feeble voice was barely audible. But his reverend countenance, especially his long white locks, formed a picture never to be forgotten. There was a vast crowd of lovers and admirers. It was, for the most part, pantomime but the pantomime went to the heart. Of the kind, I never saw anything comparable to it in after life. This incident was never forgotten by Robinson. He often related it at his own table, with the addition that so greatly was Wesley revered that the people stood in a double line to see him as he passed through the streets on his way to the chapel. In a letter written at the time to one of his brothers, he gave the following particulars of the same occurrence:—'At another time, and not knowing the man, I should almost have ridiculed his figure. Far from it now. I look upon him with a respect bordering on enthusiasm. After the people had sung a verse of a hymn he arose and said: 'It gives me a great pleasure to find that you have not lost your singing. Neither men nor women—you have not forgot a single note. And I hope by the assistance of the same God who enables you to sing well, you may do all other things well.' A universal 'Amen' followed. At the end of every head or division of his discourse, he finished by a kind of prayer, a momentary wish, as it were, not consisting of more than three or four words, which were always followed by a universal buzz. His discourse was short, the text I could not hear. After the last prayer he rose up and addressed the people upon liberality of sentiment, and spoke much against refusing to join with any congregation on account of difference of opinion. He said, 'If they do but fear God, work righteousness and keep his commandments we have nothing to object to.'—*Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson.*

Beautiful Thoughts.

Beyond all credulity is the credulousness of the atheist, who believes that chance could make a world when it cannot build a barn.

Be not proud of riches, but afraid of them, lest they be a silver bar to cross the way to heaven. You must answer for riches, but riches cannot answer for you.

There is hidden thunder in the stores of heaven ready to burst with burning wrath, and blast the man who owes his greatness to the ruin of his neighbor.

One of the hours in each day wasted on trifles or indolence, saved and daily devoted to improvement is enough to make an ignorant man wise in ten years.

The shadows of the mind are like those of the body. In the morning of life, they lie behind us; at noon we trample them under our feet, and in the evening stretch long and deepening before us.

An Alteration of the Lord's Prayer.

A few years ago nothing would have seemed more improbable than the deliberate alteration, by an authoritative body of Christian clergymen and orthodox Biblical scholars, of the phraseology and meaning of the Lord's Prayer, yet such has been the case. The New Testament revisionists, now in session in London, have voted that the literal translation of the phrase "deliver us from evil" should be "deliver us from the evil one;" and they have decided to expunge the doxology at the end of the prayer, as absent from all the earlier manuscripts. Thus shorn and altered, the great prayer of the ages will sound unfamiliar indeed.

God Works Silently.

Drop a piece of wool on the floor. Do you hear it? No. It is noiseless. How about the snow? Does it make a great shout to tell us it is coming? Certainly not. 'He giveth snow like wool. It is voiceless! And this is altogether characteristic of Divine operations. The great forces of the Universe are mute. The Sun never speaks. The Atmosphere is mute. Gravitation has no tongue.

A very religious old lady being asked her opinion of the organ of a church, the first time she had ever heard one, replied: "It is a very pretty box of whistles, but oh! it's an awful way to spend the Sabbath."