

THE STOLEN NOTE.

BY A RETIRED ATTORNEY.

EXCEPT that he indulged too freely in the use of the intoxicating cup John Wallace was an honest, high-minded and extraordinary man. His one great fault hung like a dark shadow over his many virtues. He meant well, and when he was sober he did well. He was a hatter by trade, and by industry and thrift he had secured money enough to buy the house in which he lived. He had purchased it several years before, for three thousand dollars, paying one thousand down and securing the balance by mortgage to the seller. The mortgage note was almost due at the time circumstances made me acquainted with the affairs of the family. But Wallace was ready for the day; he had saved up the money; there seemed to be no possibility of an accident. I was well acquainted with Wallace, having done some little collecting, and drawn up legal documents for him. One day his daughter Annie came to my office in great distress, declaring that her father was ruined, and that they should be turned out of the house in which they lived. "Perhaps not, Miss Wallace," said I, trying to console her, and give the affair, whatever it was, a bright aspect. "What has happened?" "My father," she replied, "had the money to pay the mortgage on the house in which we live, but it is all gone now." "Has he lost it?" "I don't know; I suppose so. Last week he drew two thousand dollars from the bank, and lent it to Mr Bryce for ten days." "Who is Mr Bryce?" "He is a broker. My father got acquainted with him through George Chandler who boards with us, and who is Mr Bryce's clerk." "Does Mr Bryce refuse to pay it?" "He says he has paid it." "Well, what is the trouble then?" "Father says he has not paid it." "Indeed! But the note will prove that he has not paid it. Of course you have the note?" "No, Mr Bryce has it." "Then, of course, he has paid it." "I suppose he has, or he could not have the note." "What does your father say?" "He is positive that he never received the money. The mortgage, he says, must be paid to-morrow." "Very singular! Was your father—" I hesitated to use the unpleasant word which must have grated harshly on the ear of the devoted girl. "Mr Bryce says father was not quite right when he paid him, but not very bad." "I will see your father." "He is coming up here in a few moments; I thought I would see you first and tell you the facts before he came." "I do not see how Bryce could have obtained the note, unless he paid the money. Where did your father keep it?" "He gave it to me, and I put it in the secretary." "Who was in the room when you put it in the secretary?" "Mr Bryce, George Chandler, my father and myself." The conversation was here interrupted by entrance of Wallace. He looked pale and haggard, as much from the effects of anxiety as from the debauch from which he was recovering. "She has told you about it, I suppose," said he, in a very low tone. "She has." I pitied him, poor fellow, for two thousand dollars was a large sum for him to accumulate in his little business. The loss of it would make the future look like a desert to him. It would be a misfortune which one must undergo to appreciate it. "What passed between you and Bryce on that day?" "Well, I merely stepped into his office—it was only the day before yesterday—to tell him not to forget to have the money for me by tomorrow. He took me into his back office, and as I sat there he said he would get the money ready the next day. He then left me and went into the front office, where I heard him send George out to the bank, to draw a check for two thousand dollars; so I supposed he was going to pay me then." "What does the clerk say about it?" "He says Mr Bryce remarked, when he sent him, that he was going to pay me the money." "Just so." "And when George came in he went into the front office again and took the money. Then he came to me again, and did not offer to pay me the money." "Had you the note with you?" "No; now I remember, he said he supposed I had not the note with me, or he would pay it. I told him to come on the next day and I would have it ready—that was yesterday. When I came to look for the note it could not be found; Annie and I have hunted the house all over." "You told Bryce so?" "I did. He laughed and showed me his note, with his signature crossed over with ink, and a hole punched through it."

"It is plain, Mr. Wallace, that he paid you the money, as alleged, or has obtained fraudulent possession of the note, and intends to cheat you out of the amount." "He never paid me," he replied, firmly. "Then he has fraudulently obtained possession of the note. What sort of a person is that Chandler, who boards with you?" "A fine young man. Bless you, he would not do anything of that kind." "I am sure he would not," repeated Annie, earnestly. "How else could Bryce obtain the note but through him? What time does he come home at night?" "Always at tea time. He never goes out in the evening." "But, father, he did not come home till ten o'clock the night before you went to Bryce's. He had to stay in the office to post books, or something of the kind." "How did he get in?" "He has a night key." "I must see Chandler," said I. "No harm in seeing him," added Mr. Wallace; "I will go for him." In a few moments he returned with the young man, Chandler, who, in the conversation I had with him, manifested a very lively interest in the solution of the mystery, and professed himself ready to do anything to forward my views. "When did you return to the house on Thursday night?" "About twelve." "Twelve!" said Annie; "it was not more than ten when I heard you." "The clock struck twelve as I turned the corner of the street," replied Chandler positively. "I certainly heard some one in the front room at ten," said Annie, looking with astonishment at those around her. "We're getting at something," said I. "How did you get in?" The young man smiled, as he glanced at Annie, and said: "On arriving at the door, I found I had lost my night key. At that moment a watchman happened along, and I told him my situation. He knew me, and taking a ladder from an unfinished house opposite, placed it against one of the second story windows, and I entered in that way." "Good! Now who was it that was heard in the parlor at ten, unless it was Bryce or one of his accomplices? He must have taken the key from your pocket Mr. Chandler, and stolen the note from the secretary. At any rate I will charge him with the crime, let what may happen. Perhaps he will confess when hard pushed." "Acting upon this thought, I wrote a lawyer's letter—demanded against you," &c.—which was immediately sent to Mr. Bryce. Cautioning the parties not to speak of the affair, I dismissed them. Bryce came. "Well, sir, what have you to say against me?" he asked, stiffly. "A claim on the part of John Wallace for two thousand dollars," I replied, poking over my papers, and appearing supremely indifferent. "Paid it," he said, short as pie crust. "Have you?" said I, looking him sharply in the eye. The rascal quailed. I saw that he was a villain. "Nevertheless, if within an hour you do not pay me two thousand dollars and one hundred dollars for the trouble and anxiety you have caused my client, at the end of the next hour you will be lodged in jail to answer a criminal charge." "What do you mean, sir?" "I mean what I say. Pay, or take the consequences." "It was a bold charge, and if he had looked like an honest man I should not have dared to make it." "I have paid the money, I tell you," said he; "I have the note in my possession." "Where did you get it?" "I got it when I paid the—" "When you feloniously entered the house of John Wallace, on Thursday night at ten o'clock, and took the said note from the secretary." "You have no proof," said he, grasping a chair for support. "That is my lookout. I have no time to waste. Will you pay or go to jail?" He saw that the evidence I had was too strong for his denial, and he drew his check on the spot for twenty-one hundred dollars, and after begging me not to mention the affair, he sneaked off. I cashed the check, and hastened to Wallace's house. The reader may judge with what satisfaction he received it, and how rejoiced was Annie and her lover. Wallace insisted that I should take the one hundred dollars for my trouble; but I was magnanimous enough to keep only twenty. Wallace signed the pledge, and was ever after a temperate man. He died a few years ago, leaving a handsome property to Chandler and his wife, the marriage between him and Annie having taken place shortly after the above-narrated circumstances occurred. At a Sunday-school at Ripon, a teacher asked a little boy if he knew what the expression 'sowing tares' meant. "Courth I does," said he, pulling the seat of his little trousers round in front. "There's a tear my ma sewed; I teared it sliding down hill."

SUNDAY READING.

Beginning Right.

A MISSIONARY of the American Sunday School Union, who has been for several years starting Sunday schools in Southern India, once stopped at the house of a man who was about to start a liquor shop. After dinner "mine host" addressed him as follows: "Mr., you seem like a mighty clever kind of a gentleman, and I aint no scholar, and I'd like to git you to do a little piece of written for me." "Certainly," I replied, "if I can. What do you wish to have written?" "Why," said he, "I'm thinken of starten a grocery, and I'd like to do it right. My pap used to say if you want to do anything right you must begin right, and I would jist like you to git up a notice for me and put it in the newspaper. I'll pay the printer and all." He wrote the "notice." We give it and the result below! "NOTICE—Friends and neighbors, you are hereby notified that I expect in a few weeks to commence the business of making drunkards, paupers and beggars. I will furnish you with liquors that will excite you to riot, robbery and bloodshed. I will, for a small sum, undertake to prepare men for the poor-house, the prison and the gallows. I will warrant that my liquors will deprive some of life, many of reason, property and peace. I will cause the rising generation to grow up in ignorance, and prove a nuisance to the nation. If any one should ask me what inducement I have to bring such misery upon my neighbors, my honest reply is "greenbacks." All can see that this is a profitable business. Some temperance men, and even some professing Christians give it their countenance, and besides I live in a land of liberty, and intend to get a license to shorten men's lives and ruin their souls. So come one come all, I pledge myself to do all I have herein promised; and, further for the annoyance of good Christian people, I will agree to keep open on Sunday. When I met him again, he said: "Mr., I'm the wust whipped feller ever you seed. The advertisement you put in the papers about my grocery jist opened my eyes. I tell you what's a fact, I never thought how much harm it might do, and I'm 'plumb' ashamed of it, and jist made up my mind I'd rather work for a quarter a day than to go into it." I told him I believed he was an honest man, and need only to see the awful consequences of the business to cause him to change his mind. He replied, "I'm mighty glad you writ jist as you did," and repeated, "I'd rather work for a quarter a day." The next trip to that region, I organized a school in that neighborhood. He attended the meeting, and when it was proposed to take a collection to purchase a library, he put a five dollar bill in my hand, whispering in my ear, "this part of the money I was going to buy whisky with."

Keep Away from the Wheels.

Little Charles Williams lived near a factory, and he was very fond of going among the workmen and the young people who were at work there. The foreman would say to him: "Keep away from the wheels, Charlie." Charlie did not mind, and would often say: "I can take care of myself." Often he would go near, and the wind of the wheels would almost suck him in, and two or three times he grew so dizzy that he scarcely knew which way to go. At length, one day he staggered while amid the wheels, and fell the wrong way; the band caught his little coat and drew him in, and he was dreadfully mangled. So it is, boys, when you go in the way of temptation; you may think you can take care of yourselves, and keep clear of the wheels, but Oh! you may find yourselves dreadfully mistaken. But before you are aware of it, you may be caught and destroyed. Keep away from the wheels.—Young Reeper.

A Mother's Influence.

A man finds he can not make his way in the world without honesty and industry; so that, although his father's example may do much, he has to depend upon his own exertions; he must work; he must be honest, or he cannot attain to any available rank. But the tender soothing of a mother, her sympathy, her devotedness, her forgiving temper—all this sinks deep in a child's heart and let him wander ever so wide, let him err, or let him lead a life of virtue, the remembrance of all this comes like a holy calm over his heart, and he weeps that he has offended her, or he rejoices that he has listened to her disinterested gentle admonition.

A Syrian convert of Christianity, as the story goes, was urged by his employer to work on Sunday, but he declined. "But," said the master, "does not your Bible say that if a man has an ox or an ass that falls into a pit on the Sabbath day he may pull him out?" "Yes," answered Hayon; "but if the ass has a habit of falling into the same pit every Sabbath day, the man should fill up the pit or sell that ass." The story has a sort of swivel "moral" which will fit a great many disputed points in these days.

A Valuable Dog.

A letter from Pine Tree, New York, says: At 10 o'clock on Friday morning a week, a dog belonging to one John Felter, a wood-chopper, was heard barking in the mountains some distance from the house. Mr. Felter's little son, 13 years old, knowing by the bark of the dog that some important game was on foot, set out for the mountains. His mother felt a little anxious after the boy had gone, and for some time listened to the barking of the dog. After half an hour the barking ceased; and, as hour after hour passed away and the boy did not make his appearance, the mother set out to go to one of the neighbors to secure their help in a search for the boy. On the road she met her husband returning from the village, where he had that morning been attending to some business. He listened to his wife's story, and, trying to calm her fears, went back with her to the house, and taking his gun started toward the place indicated by his wife. Mr. Felter travelled about through the mountains until late in the afternoon, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, and was about to return home when he almost stumbled over the dead carcass of a wild-cat. It was a very large male. Everything indicated a terrible conflict. The spectacle gave Mr. Felter an apprehension that some terrible thing had happened to his boy.—Examining the leaves and under-brush, he had little difficulty in finding a trail of blood, and this he followed nearly a hundred yards. Then he came upon the dog, standing over the body of his son, who was prostrate on the ground. The dog was earnestly looking at the boy, and occasionally licking his face and hands. On Mr. Felter's approach, he gave a loud bark and pranced about with joy. The father knelt by the side of his son and placed his hand over the heart. With joy he found the little fellow alive, but terribly wounded, as it appears by claws of the wildcat. The little fellow's clothes were almost torn to threads, and his flesh was terribly lacerated from head to foot. He was suffering from loss of blood, but his wounds had been handsomely dressed by the faithful dog, which had for hours been standing by him, licking them. Taking his boy in his arms, the father made his way to his home, followed by the ever faithful dog. After reaching the house, restoratives being administered, the boy was able to tell his story. He came upon the wildcat, and seeing that his catship held the dog at bay, having an advantageous position he attempted to dislodge him, first with stones; but these the beast did not seem to mind. Then he got a pole and attempted to poke him out. At this the wildcat became enraged, and springing upon the boy, scratched and tore his flesh as above related. At this the dog dashed at the cat and soon dispatched it. The boy attempted to go home, but sank to the ground exhausted. The little fellow is doing well. The good nursing of the dog had done much toward allaying the inflammation; the licking of his wound by the faithful animal has undoubtedly saved the boy's life.

Potato Bugs, Poison.

As Mrs. Benjamin Burditt of Wellington, Mass., was examining a hill of early potatoes on the 5th inst., she discovered several bugs on the vines, one of which flew near to her face, and at the moment she felt something strike upon the tip of her tongue which felt like a drop of water. Her tongue was instantly paralyzed, and began to swell very rapidly, her throat was soon swollen and sore, her neck grew stiff, with severe and indescribable distress at the stomach. She went into the house as quick as possible and put a spoonful of salt into her mouth, but could not taste it. Her family doctor being absent, she was obliged to send some ten miles to Parkman for a physician. At one time before his arrival her friends thought her to be dying. They very thoughtfully put plantain juice into her mouth, which gave partial relief, and, on the arrival of the physician she was further relieved by the external and internal application of muriate of ammonia. She will recover.

Stripped by a Thresher.

Mr. Askew, of Bristol, Va., came near losing his life on Saturday last near Bushong's Furnace. He was running a thresher and inadvertently stepping too near the tumbling shaft, his sleeve was caught in it and he was rapidly carried twice around it, striking him against the side of the thresher. Fortunately his clothes gave way to the terrible power of the revolving shaft, and he was thrown some ten feet distant. The only item of clothing left on him was a portion of one of his boots. Several of his ribs were broken, his ankle dislocated and one bone of one of his legs broken.

Stealing an Organ's Insides.

The Jersey City Journal, says that recently an Italian organ grinder put up for the night at a saloon on Grand street. The Italian, being deaf, of course never became disturbed by the kinky airs of his machine. Some time during the day some gamins stole the insides of the poor fellow's organ. In blissful ignorance of what had happened he stood out on the sidewalk, turning the noiseless machine, believing all the time he was discoursing most exquisite music. Such a look of astonishment is rarely seen as that of the poor fellow when he discovered the true condition of affairs.

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