

and robbed it of its contents, which, trifling as they might be in themselves, would now be of sacred value to her.

She roused at length from her painful reverie, and, to the exertion of all her strength, applied as her uncle had directed, the springs yielded, and the secret apartment lay open before her, revealing nothing but a thickly folded paper, tied up with a piece of rope-yarn.

"Just like uncle Ben!" she thought, with a smile—"a piece of funny advice, I'll warrant!"

She untied the rude string, and unfolding the paper, which appeared to contain several closely written pages, her eye caught, at the beginning, these words in a heavy hand,

"In the name of God, Amen!" This looked strange and mysterious, and almost alarmed her, but, as she read on, she found she was perusing the "Last Will and Testament" of her uncle, in which he had bequeathed his entire estate to his "beloved niece, Mary Curtis."

Almost bewildered at the discovery, and in her simplicity hardly knowing its import, she returned silently to William, and laid the paper on the table beside him. He commenced reading it with ordinary curiosity, but soon his face flushed, his hand trembled, and, turning suddenly around, he exclaimed,

"Mary! where did you get this?" She brought the box, and told him its singular history, and then asked him if the paper was of any value.

William pointed to the seals and signatures of the witnesses at the foot of the document—the names of men whose handwriting he well knew; and he replied,

"It is of a value no more or less than this—from the humble position of a poor sewing-girl, it raises you to the possession of an estate worth, at least, three hundred thousand dollars; and more than this, it brings justice to one whose whole life has been a series of cruel sufferings!"

He spoke with strong emotion, but as he finished, his countenance changed to an expression of deep sadness, and he leaned upon the table and covered his face with his hands. Mary's quick sensibilities divined the cause; and stooping, she whispered in his ear,

"Remember! 'Faithful under all circumstances'—this piece of paper is of no value to me without you. Shall I tear it?"

William raised his tearful eyes, and imprinted a kiss upon those lips which had hardly ever uttered an unholy thought.

At the time he met Mary in the street, William had been in the city but a few hours, and had not yet seen Mr. Curtis, nor any other member of the firm; but was on his way to their place of business at the moment of the startling adventure. It was decided that he should keep his arrival unknown till the necessary steps of proving the will were gone through.

As soon as this was accomplished, a note was dispatched by aunt Rachel to Mr. Curtis, requesting him to call at her house the next morning, at eight o'clock, without fail, on business of the utmost importance to himself. He obeyed the summons and was punctual to the hour; and, on entering the cottage, was introduced to two or three ladies and gentlemen who were seated in the parlor. As soon as the salutations of the morning were over, the door of the adjoining room opened, and William and Mary entered, arm in arm, when one of the gentlemen, who wore a white cravat, immediately rose, and united them in the holy bonds of matrimony.

Mr. Curtis was astounded beyond measure at this unexpected scene, but no less delighted than astonished. He grasped William's hand with a nervous hilarity, and then affectionately embraced his niece—whom he always really loved—and congratulated her on her good fortune in securing such a husband.

When the few guests had gone, William and Mary asked a private interview with Mr. Curtis, in which the story of the Work-Box was related to him from beginning to end, concerning which he had never before heard a word. When they came to the will, and the document was laid before him, he was thunder-struck, at first, and remained sometime silent.—But he was a man of strict honor, and had a strong sense of justice; and turned at length to Mary, he said, with a smile,

"It is all right, Mary; the property is clearly yours. I cheerfully resign it all." Mary, deeply affected, threw her arms around his neck, and said,

"The possession of all the world would bring me no pleasure, dear uncle, if it must be enjoyed at the expense of your happiness. Be assured that the protector of my orphanage shall never be forgotten!"

Mr. Curtis kissed his niece, and wiped her generous tears.

"But your aunt," said he "it will be almost a death blow to her. She thinks much more of these things than I do.—Breaking this news to her will give me more pain than hearing it myself."

William delicately suggested, that, with his permission, he and Mary would perform the duty for him. Mr. Curtis gladly assented.

It must be confessed that William, in making this proposal, while it was kindly

intended as to Mr. Curtis was prompted also by a desire to enjoy a triumph over one who had for years been an unrelenting persecutor of innocence; and, as he now believed, was the cruel author of the obituary notices, which had rung tears of anguish from those who had never harmed her in deed or in thought.

At the sight of the fine equipage, as it halted before the Curtis mansion, the mother and daughters, who were peeping through the casements, were filled with curiosity to see the carriage opened.

"Who can it be, mother?" "I don't know—somebody," I suppose, who is ambitious to make our acquaintance. Don't be familiar, girls, till you find out what they are."

The bell was rung, and the strangers were ushered into the parlor, where the ladies were waiting to receive them with studied formality. They were not recognized in the half darkened room till William accosted Mrs. Curtis and the girls in his usual manner, and expressed his gratification at seeing them after his long absence. A stiff nod, and a cool "How do you do, Mary?" was all the notice accorded to her; while the conversation was directed altogether to the gentleman, with a show of cordiality evidently assumed.

After a few moments of ordinary conversation, William put on a serious countenance, and, addressing himself to all, said,

"Ladies, allow me to introduce you to my wife, whom you have as yet hardly noticed."

They started with surprise, and losing all sense of decorum, Emily broke into a smothered giggle, Helen, left the room abruptly, while Mrs. Curtis exclaimed,

"Why, William Betts! what a fool you are!"

"Fool!" said William, with a flash of instantly suppressed anger; "did you not tell me, the last time I saw you, in this very room, that you approved our attachment?"

"Yes," said the deceitful woman, glancing at Emily, "but it was only in compliment. Mary is not competent to fill the station of a wife in polite society, and you, who are only a year out of your clerkship, have no right to marry any body till you are in better circumstances to support yourself. You must excuse me, but I always speak frankly, and hate deception."

"I appreciate your frankness," replied William, "and beg you to extend it further, and inform me what anxious friend in the city has been so concerned for our happiness, as to endeavor to promote it through the public press."

So saying, he took two newspapers out of his pocket, and read the notices of his own and Mary's death.

"I know nothing about that," said Mrs. Curtis, with a blanched face; "it was doubtless a trick of some of your profligate companions."

"No matter," said William, compassionately, "we are both alive and well. We have called this morning, Mrs. Curtis to inquire for Mary's Work-Box, which you took in keeping for her. She would like it now, as she has learned how to use it."

Another change of countenance came over the unhappy woman, as she replied, petulantly,

"I told Mary, at the time, that I had given it away to a friend; and where it is now," she added, with warmth, "I neither know nor care."

"If you knew where it is, you would care; and if you had known what it contained, you would sooner have parted with this fine house than given it away. Your disposal of it has proved a greater benefit to Mary than a hundred empty boxes would have been."

"Why? what do you mean?" "I mean that Mary has recovered the box, and found in it the will of Capt. Curtis, bequeathing to her all his property."

Mrs. Curtis looked at him in blank amazement for a moment, and then exclaimed,

"I don't believe any such stuff, sir; for there was no paper in the box when I sold it."

"Sold it!" said William; "if you sold it you ought to have got a good price for it, for you sold with it all your right and title to a large estate—for the will was concealed in a secret apartment."

"I have not come to distress you," said William, in a softened tone, as he saw a tear of commiseration in Mary's eye. "The property in Mr. Curtis' possession must change hands; and it will be necessary for you to leave this dwelling in a few days.—Mary has already selected a pleasant cottage, which she will purchase and give to her uncle, where he may pass the remainder of his days in tranquil enjoyment.—Good morning, madam."

Mrs. Curtis spoke not a word either to William or Mary, as they left the house, and Emily had long since followed her sister out of the room.

The transfer of the property was made in a few days—the cottage purchased and deeded to Mr. Curtis, accompanied with a secured life annuity; and the little family of four was domesticated in their new home—all but three of them living happy and contented.

A few weeks after the change, Mrs. Curtis met one of her aristocratic acquaint-

ances in a fashionable store; who, true, to the copper-colored friendship in high-life, disdained to notice her—a slight which so enraged the humbled woman as to bring on apoplexy, from which she never quite recovered.

At twenty-eight, Emily married a respectable retail grocer in Plum street; and two years after, Helen was led off by the chief lamp-lighter of the city, who by fifteen years' diligence and economy in his calling, had acquired a tolerably competency.

Mary led a happy and useful life, avoiding the society of the fashionable, and cultivating that of the poor. Her name never appeared in the catalogues of watering-places, nor in the bulletins of fancy balls; but was deeply engraved on grateful hearts, whose sufferings she had sought out and relieved, and whose bowed heads she had lifted up by that powerful compound lever—consolation and cash.

Here endeth my story. Solomon wrote its moral three thousand years ago:

"The hope of the righteous shall be gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish."

Bob Gibbons' "Blind."

JUDGE SERVICE, the associate justice of the First District Territorial Court of Montana, is justly celebrated for legal learning, and is greatly beloved by his friends. He is stern, upright and honest. But with all his legal attainments, he is not the greatest man at cards in the Territory. It has been said that he did not know the jack of hearts from the ace of diamonds.

In the Radersburg Mining Camp three persons were sitting around a table in one of those log-cabin saloons, "with a billiard table attached," which are so common in mining camps, playing a small game of three-handed poker. A quarrel ensued, which resulted in an aggravated case of assault and battery. This did not end the affair, for at the next term of court at the head of the docket, stood the Territory of Montana vs. A. L. Parks, for an assault and battery with intent to kill Andy Anderson.

The trial came off, and the only witness to the affray was Bob Gibbons, who was the third in the game. Having been sworn, he was directed to tell the court and the jury everything he knew about the affair. After cleaning his throat, he commenced by stating that "me and Parks and Anderson were over at Hallbeck's saloon, the second day after election, when Parks proposed that we should have a game of poker. All agreed to it, and we went into the back room and sat down to the game; did not know that there was any hard feelings between Parks and Anderson, or I would not have played, but heard afterwards—"

Here Bob was interrupted by the court, who directed him to keep all hearsays to the facts of the case.

The witness continued: "Well, we sat down to the table. Anderson sat there, Parks here, and I there, (making a diagram on the clerk's table.)—Parks dealt the cards; I went blind; Anderson went blind over me, and Parks would not see him."

The Judge, who is a little deaf, was in the habit of making an ear-trumpet of his hand and throwing his head a little forward and sideways. Having gone through this pantomime, he interrupted the witness by asking him:

"What was the reason that Parks did not see Anderson?"

"The witness replied: "I don't know, but he would not see him."

"Proceed," said the Judge.

"Well, I saw him, he saw me, and just at that minute—"

"Stop, sir," said the Judge, throwing himself into a hearing attitude. "Did I understand you to say that you went blind?"

"Yes, sir, I went blind, and Anderson he went blind, and Parks would not see him, but I saw Anderson and then he saw—"

"Witness," exclaimed the Judge, striking the bench with his clenched fist, "do I hear you right, sir? Do you say that you went blind, and then you saw?"

"Yes, sir," replied the witness. "I saw Anderson, and Anderson saw, and just that—"

"Stop, sir," said the Judge. "Mr. Clerk, fine the witness \$50 for contempt of court, and direct the sheriff to take him to jail, and to keep him there until he receives further orders from the court. Call up the next case, Mr. Clerk."

Bob Gibbons was dumbfounded, and did not awake to the reality of his condition until the sheriff laid his hands on him, when he exclaimed:

"Good gracious, Mr. Judge, what have I done, that I must go to jail?"

The Judge, who was purple with rage, did not deign to reply to poor Gibbons, but reiterated the order with increased vehemence, and the members of the bar, who had been anticipating the fix that Bob would evidently be placed in, were convulsed with laughter, which increased the rage of the Judge to the highest pitch.—The prosecuting attorney endeavored to enlighten the Judge, and eventually suc-

ceeded, but not until he had produced a pack of cards, and, after dealing out three hands, made the blind as clear as day to the Judge.

The fine and the imprisonment were remitted, order was restored to the court, and Gibbons was allowed to proceed with his testimony.

Bound to have a Wife.

LOUIS BRABANT, the valet of Francis I, could not only emit a voice at a distance, or in any direction, but had also the art of counterfeiting any voice which he ever once heard.

Of this extraordinary man, the following story is related; and as, at the period when he lived, the existence of this quality was far from being known, it seems by no means incredible.

Our ventriloquist, it seems, had fallen most desperately in love with a young, beautiful, and rich heiress; but was rejected by the parents, as an unsuitable match for their daughter.

The father happened to die, Louis waited on the widow, who was totally ignorant of his singular talent, pretending to console with her loss, when suddenly, in open day, in her own house, and in the presence of several friends, she heard herself addressed in a voice perfectly resembling that of her deceased husband, and seeming to proceed from above—"Give my daughter in marriage to Louis Brabant! he is a man of great fortune, and excellent character. I now suffer the inexpressible torments of purgatory for having refused her to him. If you obey this admonition, I shall soon be delivered from this place of torment. You will at the same time provide a worthy husband for your daughter, and procure everlasting repose for the soul of your poor husband."

The widow could not for a moment resist this dreadful summons, which had not the most distant appearance of proceeding from Louis Brabant, whose countenance exhibited no visible change, and whose lips were close and motionless during the delivery of it. She consented immediately to receive him for her son-in-law.

Louis' finances, however, were in a very low situation; and the formalities attending the marriage contract rendered it necessary for him to exhibit some show of riches; nor must his real circumstances give the ghost the lie direct.

Accordingly, he went to work on a fresh subject; one Cornu, an old and rich banker of Lyons, who had accumulated an immense wealth by usury and extortion, and was known to be haunted by remorse of conscience, on account of the manner in which he had acquired it.

Passing over preliminary steps and preparations, behold Louis Brabant tete-a-tete with the old usurer in his little back parlor at Lyons; preparing for the ensuing operations, by artfully turning the conversation on religious subjects, the reality of demons and spectres, the pains of purgatory, and the never-ceasing torments of hell.

During an interval of silence between them, a voice is heard—which, to the astonished banker, seems that of his deceased father—complaining of his dreadful situation in purgatory, and calling on him instantly to deliver him from thence, by putting into the hands of the worthy Louis Brabant, then with him, a large sum of money for the redemption of Christians in slavery with the Turks; threatening him at the same time with eternal damnation if he did not likewise take this method to expiate his own sins.

It may easily be supposed that Louis Brabant affected a due degree of astonishment on the occasion; and that he further promoted the deception by acknowledging his having devoted himself to the charitable design imputed to him by the ghost.

An old usurer, however, is naturally suspicious; accordingly, the wary banker made an appointment with the ghost's delegate for the next day; when to render any design of imposing on him utterly abortive, he took him into the open fields; where not a house, a tree, a bush, or even a pit, was in sight, capable of screening any possible confederate.

This extraordinary caution called forth all the powers of the ventriloquist. Wherever the banker conducts him, at every step his ears are saluted on all sides, with the complaints and groans, not only of his father but of all his deceased relations; imploring him for the love of God, in the name of every saint in the calendar to have mercy on his own soul and theirs, by effectually seconding with his purse the holy intention of his righteous companion.

Cornu could no longer resist the voice of Heaven; and, accordingly, carried his guest home with him, and paid him down ten thousand crowns! with which sum the dishonest ventriloquist returns to Paris and marries his mistress.

The catastrophe proved fatal to the old usurer, for the secret being revealed, and reaching his ear, he was so greatly affected at the loss of his money, and the mortifying raileries of his neighbors, that he took to his bed, and soon died.

"My dear," said a wife to her husband, "do you know what is the most curious thing in the world?" "Yes," madam, "gruffly answered the brute, "the most curious thing in the world is a woman that is not curious."

Professional Cards.

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W. M. A. SPONSER, Attorney-at-Law, Office—adjoining his residence, on East Main street, New Bloomfield, Perry Co., Pa.—32 1 y

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91 ACRES, of Red Slate land, about 75 Acres are cleared, and in a high state of cultivation. The balance is well set with timber. The improvements are a good two story Log and Weatherboarded

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