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MATRIMONIAL STRATAGEM;

OR

How Two Households Became One.

Mrs. Benoni Benson was fat, fair, and forty-four, when her husband, a soap-boiler in very good circumstances, was called from his life-task of contributing to the general purification of mankind.—Mrs. Benson took refuge from her grief in a pretty cottage, situated on the principal street in the town of G——.

At first she was inconsolable, as she used to say with a solemn emphasis, which carried conviction to the hearts of her hearers, that nothing but the thoughts of her daughter Florence would have prevented her from terminating her existence by the intervention of poison.

Mrs. Benson was, in no usual measure, indebted to her daughter—since in less than three months, she threw aside her mourning and became as lively as ever.

Touching Florence, she had now reached the mature age of nineteen, and began to think herself marriageable, she was quite pretty, and tolerably well accomplished, so that her wishes in that respect were very likely to be fulfilled.

Just over the way lived Squire Markham, the village lawyer, just verging upon fifty, with his son Charles, who was about half his age. Being a young man of agreeable exterior, the latter was quite a favorite with the young ladies in the neighborhood, and considered in common parlance, quite a "catch."

As yet, however, his affections had never been seriously entangled, and might have remained so had it not been for the sudden apparition, one morning, of Florence Benson, riding by on horseback.

It struck him at once that she was remarkably graceful and really quite pretty. Thereupon he cultivated her acquaintance with increased assiduity, and after a while asked the fatal question.

Florence answered in the affirmative, and instead of referring him dutifully to her mother, hinted (being a romantic young lady) how charming it would be to steal away to the next town and get married, without anybody being the wiser.

Charles Markham caught at this hint, which chimed with his own temperament, and he resolved to adopt it.

In order that it might be carried out with perfect success, it was resolved to seem indifferent to each other until the day fixed, in order to ward off any suspicion which might otherwise be aroused.

So well were these arrangements carried out, that Mrs. Benson had no suspicion of what was going on.

Not so with Squire Markham. He had obtained a clue to the affair in some manner, so that he had not only discovered the fact of the elopement, but even the very day on which it was to occur.

"Sly dog, that Charles," thought he to himself, as he sat down before the fire in his dressing-gown and smoking cap, leisurely puffing away at a choice Havana. "But I won't wonder at it; he only takes after me. Still, I owe him something for keeping it so secretly from me. It would be a good joke, if I were a little younger, to cut him out and marry her in spite of him."

ital joke on his son, but looked no farther. He accordingly drew his writing materials towards him and indited the following epistle:

"DEAREST FLORENCE:—I find the day fixed for our elopement on some accounts objectionable, and would like, with your permission, to substitute to-morrow evening. If I hear nothing from you, I shall infer that you assent to this arrangement—I shall have a carriage in readiness under the oak tree, at half-past eight o'clock. You can walk there without attracting suspicion, and, as there will be no moon, we shall be able to carry out our plans without fear of discovery. I am happy to say that the governor doesn't suspect in the least that a daughter-in-law is in store for him. Won't he be ashamed. Your devoted

CHARLEY."

"Egad!" said Squire Markham, laughing heartily, "that isn't bad, especially about humbugging me. Charley couldn't have done better himself."

So saying, he sealed it up and sent it over by a little Irish boy in his employment, having first marked "private" in the corner.

"Be careful, Mike, to give it to Miss Benson, and don't let any one else see it," was the parting injunction.

Mrs. Benson was sitting in her quiet parlor, casting her eyes over a late number of Harper's Magazine. Florence being absent on a shopping excursion, she was left alone. The ringing of the bell brought her to the door. With surprise she saw that the person who rang the bell was Mike, Squire Markham's "boy of all work."

"Please, ma'am," said he, holding out the missive, "a letter for Miss Benson, and it's very particular that nobody else should see it."

The air of mystery conveyed in this characteristic address, aroused Mrs. Benson's curiosity, especially when she observed that it was addressed to her daughter and not to herself, as she supposed. She returned to her parlor not to read Harper's Magazine, that had lost its attractions.

"What in the world can it be," she thought, "that they should be so secret about it! Can Florence be carrying on a clandestine correspondence! It may be something that I ought to know."

Stimulated by her feminine curiosity, Mrs. Benson speedily concluded that she would be false to the responsibilities of a parent if she did not unravel the mystery.

"Here's a pretty doing!" she exclaimed, as soon as she could recover breath. "So Florence was going to run away and get married to that Charles Markham, without so much as hinting a word to me."

She leaned her head upon her hand, and began to consider. She was naturally led to think of her own marriage with the late Mr. Benson, and the happiness of her wedded life, and she could not help heaving a sigh at the recollection.

"Am I always to remain thus solitary?" she thought. "I've half a mind not to show the letter to Florence, but to run away with Charles to-morrow night on my own account. It's odd if I can't persuade him that the mother is as good as the daughter," and glanced complacently at the still attractive face and form reflected from the mirror.

Just then she heard the door open, and Florence entered. She quickly crumpled up the letter and thrust it into her pocket. Florence and Charles did not meet during the succeeding day, chiefly in pursuance of the plan they had agreed to, in order to avoid suspicion.

Squire Markham acted in an exceedingly strange manner, to his son's thinking. Occasionally he would burst into a hearty laugh, which he would endeavor to suppress, and pace up and down the room, as if to walk off some of his superabundant hilarity.

"What's in the wind?" thought Charles to himself. "It can't be the governor's getting crazy." Something was the matter, beyond a doubt. But what it really was he had not the faintest conjecture.

place secretly, in order to frustrate her plans.

"Egad! the very idea I had myself," said the Squire laughing, "but the fact is we've both of us been confoundedly sold, and the mischief of it is, I left a letter for Charles, letting him know it; so undoubtedly he will take the opportunity to run off with Florence during our absence, and plume himself, the rascal, on the way in which I was taken in."

"I confess that I left a note for Florence to the same purport. How she will laugh at me! What an embarrassment!"

"I tell you what," said the Squire, after a moment's "we pause, can carry out our plans out after all. We each came out with the intention of getting married.—Why not marry each other, and then, you know, we can make them believe we had it in view all along, and only intended to freight them."

Mrs. Benson assented with a little urging, in the course of an hour the twin were made one. They immediately returned, but found, as they anticipated, that Florence and Charles, discovering their departure, had themselves stepped off in a different direction with a similar intent.

They made their appearance the next morning, prepared to laugh heartily at the frustrated plans of their parents, but learned with no little astonishment that they had struck up a bargain for themselves. Squire Markham and his new wife had the address to convince them that it was a premeditated plan, and to this day the younger pair are ignorant of the plot and counter-plot, which led to this double union of two households.

Questions and Answers.

The following is a sample of the questions which some eager searchers after knowledge in the East annoy our western people with. We think the answers are to the point.

"What kind of a country do you live in?"

Mixed and extensive: it is made principally of land and water.

"What kind of weather?"

Long spells of weather are frequent, and sun shine comes off principally in the day time.

"Have you plenty of water and how good?"

A good deal of water about and generally got in pails and whiskey.

"Any good farms to be had?"

Several small patches have been fenced in here and there, and to be had by paying money.

"What kind of buildings?"

Honick, Gothic and Slap; the buildings are chiefly out of door; and so low between the joints that the chimneys all stick thro' the roofs.

"What kind of society?"

Good, bad, and indifferent and mixed.

"Any aristocracy?"

A few specimens of the codfish kind who smell strong of the fish market.

"Is it cheap living there?"

Only five cents a glass and the water thrown in.

"Any taste for music?"

Strong buzz and wood saw in the daytime out fighting at nights.

"Any pianos?"

A plenty, besides we have several eight horse power threshing machines and a dog in every family.

Speech of Hon. John Covode.

MR. COVODE. I object to the amendment of the gentleman from Kentucky, which limits the war steamers to twelve hundred tons burden each, because I consider they are to be used if used, at all, against those of the enemy of twenty-five hundred or three thousand tons burden. Although I voted for those ten steamers to-day, and voted for the four for the lakes, I was not influenced to do so because I had the remotest idea that there is any probability of a war, but because our naval force is inefficient, and will be so long as we rely upon our vessels. I voted for them that we might have a more efficient Navy.

Mr. Chairman, I stated some days ago that we were far behind the English in the strength of our naval force. I have been at some pains to look at the comparative naval power of the several nations of the world, and here are the facts I have collected; England had, at the close of the Crimean war, about five hundred war steamers. She had two years ago ninety-one lines of ocean mail steamers running direct from England to foreign ports, employing about four hundred steamers; and she had twenty-five lines running between foreign ports in connection with them, employing one hundred and five ocean mail steamers which receive large sums direct from the government as an inducement for their several companies to establish and run them.—These are all subject to the order of the government whenever the exigencies of war render it necessary for her to use them, either as war steamers or transport vessels. Thus it will be seen that she has a war force at her command of about one thousand steamers, besides nearly the same number of mercantile steamers, making a grand total of nearly two thousand ocean steamers. Sir, she has taken already a large share of our carrying trade, and nearly the whole of the most valuable portion of it.—There are now forty-four English, five Belgian, five French, and four Hamburg steamers running in the American trade, while there are but eight American—twenty-eight to eight. No wonder that seventy hundredths of our commerce was, last year, in the hands of foreigners; and they will soon have a monopoly of it if we go on much longer in the blundering way we have been going under Democratic rule, for five years past.

France, though not a first class commercial Power, has gone far ahead of us in building ocean steamers. She has one hundred and thirty war steamers on the Mediterranean, Levant, Black, North, and Baltic seas.

Austria, not a commercial nation at all, has one hundred and ten steamers on the same seas; and Russia over one hundred, and is constantly increasing her steam power.

The United States has only twenty-eight of which only carry from one to six guns; some of them not fit to be sent outside of a harbor.

We have a few line-of-battle ships, old sailing vessels; but of what use would they be to cope with modern war steamers? Besides, it will be found, I presume, upon their being surveyed, as they have been ordered to be, that it will cost more to repair them than they will be worth when repaired. I am, therefore, in favor of Mr. Chairman, of building steamers, so that we may be able to meet our enemies, when we have any, on a footing of equality, and not compel our brave officers and men to fight at large odds. Just as well might we continue to arm our soldiers with the old fashioned musket and expect them to whip an equal number armed with Minnie rifles and improved breech-loading arms.

Mr. Chairman, advocating the building of war steamers, I do not wish to be understood as countenancing the idea that we are at all in danger of having a war with England at this time or at any other time near at hand; but for the sake of having a Navy that can render efficient protection to our commerce in distant seas, and command the respect of those nations which respect only those that exhibit ample ability to protect their own flag, and all who are entitled to protection under it.

Sir, England is governed by wise and sagacious statesmen, and no people in the world know better than the English upon which side their "bread is buttered." She and her people are too wise and sagacious to run into a war with her best customer, unless absolutely compelled to do so. Does she not know that the dominant party have been fixing our tariff for her special benefit ever since they repealed the Whig tariff of 1842? Does she not know that under present tariff laws, foreign nations have almost a monopoly of manufacturing the goods our people wear and use, and that she comes in for the lion's share. It would be the height of folly in her to make war upon us, or to cause us to make war upon her, so long as the party in power renders her such inestimable services at the expense of our own manufacturers, laborers and merchants. Why, sir, it would be killing the goose that laid for her owner a golden egg daily. No, no, sir; we need have no apprehensions of a war, nor need we "prepare the hearts of the people for war." The only war we are to have is a continuation of the war we have had since 1846, upon American industry and home man-

ufactures. That is a cruel, unnatural, relentless war; it kills by starving, and its victims are powerless.

Sir, the Democratic party may well afford to sound the trumpet of war in these Halls. It calls no one to battle, and alarms none but old women and nervous invalids. We have, in years gone by, heard the daily cry in the Senate from a venerable, a very venerable old Senator, that "war was inevitable;" and one might suppose it to be so now; but it is not.—The free trade which England enjoys with us, the monopoly, which she now possesses of transporting our cotton to her own shores, of manufacturing it for us, and then of transporting the goods made of it back to us, she appreciates too highly to throw them away thoughtlessly.—And, again, she knows well the importance to her of having the privilege of putting her own instead of some valuations on the goods she sends us; by which means she evades the payment of a large portion of the duties that ought to be paid, and drives American importers out of business in our own cities.

England knows well that five years' war, or non-intercourse with us, would build up our manufacturers on a solid foundation, and thus take from them their most profitable market, and their largest, for many years to come. Our weak point is California; and until we get a railroad across the country, it would not only be very expensive to protect our Pacific coasts but with our small Navy it would be absolutely impossible, against any powerful nation; but so long as we dig gold for England, so long as we are simply their miners, and all we get goes directly into her lap; we taking fiery and gawgaws, and goods which we ought to manufacture for ourselves, in payment for this gold; so long as the labor of her women and children can pay for the productions of our mines; why should she desire to disturb the present state of things, so profitable to her?

No, Mr. Chairman, you need not alarm yourself or the country about a war with England. Instead of that it would be well for us to turn our attention to the state of our finances, our general trade, and manufactures; and see if anything can be done to benefit the country.

This Administration found some twenty millions in the Treasury; it has been in power a little more than a year, and what is the condition of the Treasury now? Bankrupt. And, although we have been digging gold at the rate of more than four and a half millions a month, still the government has been obliged to resort to what the party used to call "the rag-money currency," to the issuance of Treasury notes, formerly classically denominated "Treasury shipplasters." What a beautiful state of things! What statesmanship it proves the President and his Administration to possess! What wisdom, sagacity, patriotism! And yet, bankrupt as the Government is, it obstinately pursues a policy calculated not only to impoverish it still more, and compel the Secretary of the Treasury to heap debt upon debt, by borrowing, but it is also calculated to depress American enterprise, cripple American industry, destroy American manufactures, and to reduce to the lowest price American produce. Such folly and madness would astonish us if we were not accustomed to and familiar with it.

Mr. Chairman, I have a word to say on the war policy of the present Administration. It has displayed the same wisdom and foresight in regard to this as in regard to its financial policy. For some reason or other, a war upon Utah was deemed expedient. It was necessary to chastise the Mormons for Brigham Young's insolent and insane ravings. The war was commenced; the Army, at an immense expense of suffering, was marched thousands of miles through the wilderness, millions of dollars had been expended in recruiting and provisioning it for the campaign; and when, after months of toil crossing the mountains, forcing its way through valleys obstructed by snow, and in struggles with an inhospitable climate, it had at length arrived within striking distance of the enemy, peace commissioners were dispatched in haste to overtake and stop its advance, and to negotiate with the Mormons for peace.

It has been usual, especially in modern times, to exhaust diplomacy before resorting to arms. But this old time honored, wise, and Christian policy, was reversed by our Democratic President. He declares war first, and treats afterwards.—He mustered his battalions; marched them at an immense expense of money and suffering into the enemy's country; and when they had arrived, and every mail from the West promised tidings of the commencement of hostilities, the President bethought himself that it was time to check the advance of the Army, and send commissioners to treat with the enemy. Would it not have been wiser and more conformable to the usages of civilized nations, to have sent commissioners to inquire into and report upon the Mormon outrages, before sending an army into their country? By doing so, he would have saved millions to the Treasury, and the country might have profited by pursuing this course, the Kansas iniquity might not have been so easily or safely accomplished, had it not been for the war. The contracts and appointments incident to this Mormon war were strong levers to force refractory partisans back into the ranks of the party from which they had

been frightened by the Kansas enormity. Epaulots for sons or nephews, contrasts for brothers or other relations, are wonderfully potent in inducing those who have faltered for a moment, to return to the standards from which they have deserted. Strepulous of conscience are appeased; alarmed and startled honor is satisfied; and the partisan goes back to his ranks, bending under the patronage purchased by subserviency, and the ignominy due to his desertion of principle.

I am not prepared to say that any one, here or elsewhere, has been influenced by such considerations. But it would be nothing new in the history of human nature, to find out hereafter, that appointments to office and contracts for supplies had more or less to do in the consummation of the Kansas swindle. But whatever may be the opinions entertained respecting the wisdom of the President's war policy, its novelty will be universally conceded. Hitherto nations have sent ambassadors to treat, in order to prevent war; but our President has made war in order to have an opportunity to send ambassadors to treat; and I have no doubt that it will soon be the boast of the Democratic party that the President has been signally successful in his management of the Mormon war, and especially in the restoration of peace, which it appears had never been disturbed, except by the boisterous declamation of over-ardent demagogues.

But this is not the only ground of boast in which the party may rightfully indulge. Less than two years since, the then Administration was almost at its wits' end to discover means to deplete the national Treasury. Debts due a long time hence were brought up at large premiums, in order to prevent the accumulation of an undue and injurious amount of money in the treasury. And notwithstanding all its efforts, Mr. Guthrie left the Treasury a little more than fifteen months ago with a surplus on hand of the amount I have before stated. Mr. Cobb took his place, and straightway what Mr. Guthrie had had labored for in vain was achieved, and more than achieved. Under the management of Mr. Buchanan's Secretary of the Treasury, the inconvenient surplus was soon disposed of.

The first step in Mr. Cobb's financial policy was to get rid of the surplus left on hand by his predecessor. In this he succeeded. He not only emptied the Treasury, but things have been so managed by him and his party friends that he has not been able to again fill it, but was compelled, as the House knows and the country knows, to resort to an issue of Treasury notes. Here, too, we have had a sample of the wisdom and consistency of the Administration; and, after the denunciation, so loud and so often repeated, of "bank rags," have a recommendation to issue Treasury notes. Why not ask for a loan? Simply because it was supposed the people might be beguiled into believing that an issue of Treasury notes was not a public debt. He began by asking for \$5,000,000; then for \$10,000,000; and finally for \$15,000,000; and we now know that \$40,000,000 will hardly carry the Treasury through until the next meeting of Congress.

Where has the money gone? What great improvements have been made?—How much of this vast outlay has been applied to pay the thousands and millions of dollars due to claimants, whose claims are indisputably just? What account can the Administration render to the country of a stewardship so discharged!

A year ago the whole country was rejoicing in a constantly increasing prosperity. Commerce, agriculture, and manufactures, were all flourishing. The Treasury was full to overflowing. But now all it changed. Almost every branch of American industry is prostrate or paralyzed. Hundreds, who a year ago were properly employed, are now idle, and their families suffering. And all this is chargeable to Democratic policy, which breaks down our manufactures, by denying them the incidental protection that a sufficient revenue duty would afford; and upon all this the Administration and the Democratic party look with stolid indifference—their only care and anxiety being to keep their party together, and distribute among themselves the spoils of office. For the country and its prosperity they care nothing; for their party, everything.

Miss Sally Campbell has sued F. D. Tickle for a breach of promise, and claims \$4,000 damages.—Glasgow (Mo.) Times.

Four thousand dollars for refusing to tickle her? Make him sock, Sally. 'Twill learn him better, next time.

Earth is here so kind that, just tickle her with a hoe, and she laughs with a harvest.

I've heard people say, to take lives in a well; if so I'd advise you to take an early dip in the bucket.

Charity is such a lonely creature, my blood comes up when I see a set of rascals—and there's a pretty knot in this town trying to impose upon her.

To destroy rats—catch them one by one, and flatten their heads with the lemon squeezer.