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## THE TWO ROADS TO WEALTH.

“What a fine thing it is to be rich!” exclaimed Charles Ashton, as he passed Esquire Wilkins’ great house.

“A fine thing indeed,” replied his friend Frank May, “provided—”

“Provided What?”

“Provided we can have a few other good things with it!”

“Other good things! why man, money will buy all the good things in the world.”

“Not quite,” replied Frank. “To be sure it will buy some small matters which are convenient, but there are things essential that it will not buy.”

“Such as what?” interrupted his friend.

“Such as health, happiness, and a clear conscience.”

“Well Frank, I suppose it would not be exactly the right coin for these commodities, but I’ll tell you of one nice article which it will buy.”

“And what is that?”

“A wife!”

“Ah!” replied Frank, “that’s the only article in the world I should rather beg than buy!”

“Well, Frank, you are a man of independent feelings, but I’m afraid you’ll never be a man of independent property.”

“Why, Charles, what makes you think so? I like money, and I mean to get my share, provided I can do it honestly.”

“Ah! you will be too much hindered with scruples, to make any head-way in the world. My motto is, ‘Go a-head, bit or miss!’”

“And I,” said Frank, “should as lief have nothing to eat but sugar, as to have nothing to enjoy but wealth.”

Here the friends parted, one to his workshop, and the other to his counting-room. These two young men lived in the pleasant village of B—, on the banks of the Connecticut. Charles Ashton was a merchant, and Frank May was a mechanic. They were both what the world calls ‘very fine young men.’ But the world is a superficial observer. Its eyes never look down into the heart. It is the prerogative of one Eye alone to look on the secret springs of action; to that Eye the difference between the two characters was very great.

Both applied themselves with all diligence to their respective callings, and both hoped to be rich.

Frank May resolved that every dollar should be gained, not only honestly, but honorably. As for Charles Ashton, he had but one purpose, and that was to acquire wealth—untrammelled by scruples about ways and means.

“I’ll be a rich man before I die!” said he to himself one night, as he was studying his ledger—the only book in the world that he thought really interesting.

He was uttering in his application to business; and if he did not absolutely cheat, he made what are called ‘pretty tight bargains.’ ‘Hard and honest’ was his maxim, which some think means ‘hardly honest.’

He soon acquired the reputation of a keen, money-making man. But making money is not always making friends. At the end of years Mr. Ashton was a richer man than his friend May, but he was surprised to find himself not so much respected, or so happy. He began to think there were some things money would not buy.

“But I’ll see if it won’t buy me a wife,” said he. “I believe it’s living a bachelor that makes me so blue!”

Now it never occurred to our friend that a wife that could be bought, might not be worth having. But it did occur naturally enough, that while he was about it, he might as well try for a rich one.—So he went peeping round amongst the heiresses—nothing doubting that a young lady who was heir to a fine fortune, would inherit every other fine quality. It was not long before he fixed his affections!—no—his thoughts, on Miss Jemima Wilkins, the youngest daughter of Esquire Wilkins. It was not the color of Miss Jemima’s hair, or the sparkle of her eyes, or the dimple of her cheeks, that attracted our hero’s attention. Oh no, Mr. Ashton was too sensible and prudent to be influenced by such trifles in the important matter of choosing a companion for life. It was well that he quite forgot to look for graces of mind or person, for the young lady was scantly endowed.—But then she had ‘ten thousand charms,’ in the shape of good round dollars, and that was enough for Ashton. He was the richest young man in the village, and that was enough for Jemima. So the bargain was struck up in a trice, and no time lost in moonlight walks and serenades, and no money wasted in rides and presents.

This interesting couple were married, and took possession of a nice new house, full of nice new furniture, and settled themselves down, to get as much comfort as empty heads and empty hearts, with a full purse, could give.

Here we will leave them in the full glory of the honey-moon, to look after our friend, Frank May. Let us see what the lapse of ten years did for him. He was not a whit behind Ashton in activity and industry, and he reaped the usual reward of present comfort and prospective plenty. Though, as he told his friend, he meant to acquire wealth, it was not for his own sake, but for the benefit of others. It was good proof of his sincerity that he did not defer doing good till the time should arrive when he could call himself rich. He knew that if he did not form the habit now, he would not have the heart hereafter. He knew, and what is better, he felt, that no one should live to himself—not even a young man, just setting out in the world, who has his fortune to build up with his own hands.—He early came to the conclusion that he had four things to attend to in this life, viz., his own temporal and spiritual welfare and the temporal and spiritual welfare of others—and is, of all the human family who should come under his influence, either directly or indirectly. Here was a wide field, a noble work; sufficient to fill the largest heart, and task the highest energies. This was the grand outline of his scheme of life, and he left it to the finger of Providence to point out daily the particular manner in which it was to be filled up. With these views he stood ready for every good word and work.—He was never so busy about his own affairs, that he could not stop to do a good act. When called upon to leave his work to do something for a poor neighbor, or hand around a subscription paper in aid of some benevolent object, or do some thing for the Church, or the village, he did not call it an interruption, but considered it as a branch of his business.

Ashton used to laugh at him, and tell him he had chosen a strange road to wealth.

“Never mind,” Frank would say, “my road is rather circuitous to be sure, but it is pleasant. You, Charles, are on the high road to wealth—a straight, dull turnpike, where there are so many driving by, and so many trying to overtake you, that you are blinded with dust. While my path is through a green, shady lane, among murmuring brooks and singing birds.”

“All good bye to you, Frank,” replied friend, “you are welcome to your brooks and birds and shady lane; I like the turnpike best, and don’t mind getting a little gold-dust in my eyes, provided the rest settles in my pockets.”

Though Charles spoke so gaily as he turned away, there was still a small voice which whispered to his heart, and told him that Frank was right and he was wrong. But as this monitor had not been listened to when its tones were loud, was it to be expected that its whispers would be heard?

Among the poor neighbors who shared Frank’s kind attentions, was one whose peculiarly lonely and desolate condition gave her a strong claim to sympathy and kindness. The widow Green, as she was commonly called, had seen better days; but she had lost her husband, her children, and her property. One after another, she had laid her little ones in the grave, till only two remained, a son and a daughter. All the generous sympathies of Frank’s nature were moved, when that only son was cut down just as he had reached an age at which his poor mother might begin to lean upon him.—He resolved in the fulness of his heart, to make this widow his especial care, and do all in his power to supply the place of her lost son. He was unwearied in his attentions, and though time was money to him, he gave it freely to provide for her comfort. The widow Green had, as I have said, an only daughter; this was all that had been saved from the wreck of her earthly happiness. A rich treasure was the daughter—at least, so thought the widow—and so thought another.

Now I beg the reader not to call in question the disinterestedness of Frank’s attentions to the widow; for I do assure you, that when he resolved to be a son to her, he had no idea of a literal fulfillment. But Benevolence meets with unexpected rewards.

Mary Green was at this time about nineteen years old. I suppose you expect me to say she was the prettiest girl in the village; no such thing—there were a dozen as pretty, perhaps prettier; but I don’t believe there was one who had a kinder heart, or more sweet and gentle manners. Though while her features were at rest, you would not say she was handsome, but when they were lighted up with thought and feeling, as they always were in conversation, you would acknowledge there was beauty there. And the very best kind of beauty too—that which will not fade. This was just the sort of beauty to take with Frank. He found too, that her views of duty, of the great end of life, accorded with his own. That the afflictions of her family had matured her character, and produced a chastened and elevated spirit, which eminently fitted her for the companionship of one whose great desire was to be good and do good.

One evening Frank and Mary had been taking a long walk, (it was a bright moonlight evening, of course,) and then reached home just as the village clock struck nine. They stopped before the little gate which was fastened with a string.

“Mary,” said Frank, as he reached over to undo the string.

“Well,”

“I have been thinking, Mary—hem—here he stopped, and worked away for some seconds on the string. It had got into a hard knot, I suppose.

“I have been thinking,” he began again, and then he waited so long, that Mary wondered what he had been thinking about, and whether he would ever be done thinking.

“I have been thinking, Mary, that—” as he had now advanced one word further, he would probably have got out the whole sentence, but just then widow Green, who had been sitting at the window, and seeing Frank working so long over the gate, the kind, officious old lady must needs come out, to see ‘what in the world was the matter with that ‘are string.’” So Mary was left to finish the sentence according to the dictates of her own feelings or imagination. But Frank took the more satisfactory method of finishing it on paper.

How the sentence really ended, may be inferred from the fact that the next week Frank was bustling about, with an extra gleam of satisfaction on his fine countenance, making preparations for building a house. A light heart makes light work. In an incredible short time he had finished one of the prettiest cottages you ever saw. It was painted white with green blinds, and a portico all round. It stood far enough from the road to allow a large garden, which was enclosed by a white fence, with a little gate fastened with a string. Behind the house at some distance, rolled the Connecticut river, with its beautiful expanse of interval land on either side, ornamented here and there with a solitary, graceful elm. Is there a river in the world whose path is marked with more beauty and verdure than the Connecticut? Among all the dwellers on its banks perhaps there never was a happier couple than the one who on May day took possession of the new cottage.

“And so,” said Miss Jemima Wilkins that was, as she was returning with others from the wedding visit, “poor Mary Green is Mrs. Francis May! I suppose she will carry her head pretty high now.”

“Frank’s a fool,” thought Mr. Ashton, “to marry a girl who hasn’t a cent in the world!”

Years rolled on. Frank and Mary were living in each other, and ever active promoting the happiness of all about them. They had two children, Willy and Mary—the prettiest and most interesting children in the world—at least, in the eyes of their parents.

But when the sun of our prosperity shines brightest, the storm may be gathering. One night as the May family were retiring to rest, there was a knock heard at the door. On opening it they found a poor beggar, who asked the favor of a night’s lodging in the barn. He was rather a suspicious looking character, but Mary said, “Let him stay, poor fellow!” and Mr. May consented. The family then retired to rest, little dreaming how much their hospitality would cost them.

About midnight there was a cry of “Fire!” They started from their beds and rushed out of their house. What were their feelings when they discovered the barn in a blaze, and the flames just communicating with the house!

“Run, Mary,” exclaimed Frank, “take the children to the little grove, while I see what can be done.”

But he soon found there was nothing to be done, for he could get no water; the well was so near the burning buildings that he could not approach it. Poor Frank stood still, and with his arms folded across his breast, looked on in silent agony; while the trembling family saw all from the grove. The village was alarmed, and in a few minutes almost every man was on the ground. But a fire is a thing of such rare occurrence in the country, that the people do not know what to do with it.

Though these worthy neighbors could do nothing but stand with Mr. May and look on, yet could you see their faces, as the light flashed upon them from the blazing pile, you would have read in each, the strongest expression of sympathy.

When all was over—when the last raft had fallen in, and the last blaze had flickered out, Frank turned away with a heavy heart, and went towards the grove, where Mary and the children were waiting.

“Well, Mary,” said he, “what are we to do?”

“Do!” replied his wife, “let us kneel down and return thanks that we are all safe.”

“Ah, Mary, you are right. I was thinking only of what we have lost, you are thinking only of what we have saved. With such a treasure left to me, how can I repine, even for a moment?”

And there, on the green grass, under the light of the moon, and the shade of the trees, they knelt down and poured out heartfelt praises for their merciful deliverance.

Some of their friends now approached, and perceiving how they were engaged, waited at a distance in respectful silence, till the little group arose, then they came up, and taking each by the hand, gave utterance to their feelings of sympathy and congratulation. The words were few, but they were such as go straight to the heart. One of these friends insisted on taking them all to his own house, where he said they should be welcome to stay till they could do better.

“I cannot imagine how this fire originated,” said Mr. May, as they entered the

kind neighbor’s house.

“O, I can tell you, pa,” replied Willy, “it must have been the old man’s pipe, for when he went out to the barn I saw him smoking. So I suppose he ran away when the fire first broke out, for fear you should lay it to him.”

“So much for taking vagabonds into your barn,” thought Mr. Ashton, who was one of the company, but he did not feel just then, like saying it.

Next day, I believe, every man, woman and child, in the village, turned out to see the ruins. As they stood looking at the smouldering heap, the murmur went round, “that such a man should meet with such a calamity!”

“He has always been helping us,” said one, “and now it’s our turn to help him.—Come, let’s show that we haven’t forgotten old scores.”

The suggestion took in a moment, and a subscription was opened on the spot.—For want of paper and pencil, they took a piece of clean, smooth board, and a bit of newly made charcoal. It was banded round, and in a few moments every name was down. Enough was subscribed in money, labor, and materials, to rebuild the house. To work they went forthwith. If the former house went up in a hurry, this went up still quicker. In a very short time, a new house and barn were completed, exactly like the first.

I shall never forget the day the Mays took possession. As the men of the village had built the house, the women and children determined to furnish it. All day the presents were pouring in. Mrs. Wilkins and Mrs. Ashton and a few of the first ladies, furnished the heaviest articles, for the parlor and chambers, while the farmers’ wives filled up the kitchen, pantry, and cellar. One brought a tub of nice butter, another a couple of fine cheeses. One old lady brought a dozen pair of nice woolen stockings which she had sat up nights to knit since the fire.

Among the rest, came Rosy Lyman, Willy’s favorite playmate, a sweet little girl about six years old. She had something wrapped up in her apron. When she came in, Willy, who had been espousing about with childish joy all day, ran up to her, and peeping into her apron, exclaimed, “Why, Rosy! if there isn’t your bantam chicken!”

“Yes, Willy, it’s for you—mother said I might give it to you.”

It was Rosy’s pet, and the only thing in the world that she could call her own.

“There, Willy,” said she, as she opened her apron, and let it hop down on to the floor, “take good care of it won’t you, and don’t let it get singed; as yours did!—And then she ran away, for fear Willy should see a tear in her eye.

Meanwhile the farmers said the barn ought to be furnished too. So one drove in a fine load of hay, and another followed with a nice cow; another came dragging along a squealing pig, ‘because,’ he said, ‘Mr. May’s pig got roasted before his time.’

Such a scene of joyful bustle, as house yard and barn presented, you never saw. I believe it was the happiest holiday the village of B— had ever enjoyed. That night Mr. May was richer than he was before the fire.

“Well, Frank,” said Mr. Ashton, as he stood with his hands in his pockets, looking at the heaps of good things, “you have indeed taken a very circuitous road to wealth, but I believe you will get there before me after all.”

And so it proved; for from this time, Frank continued to rise in wealth and influence, and at length became the richest man in the place. For a while Ashton went on as before, but at length he tired of his ‘turnpike,’ and concluded to make a flying leap. He and Esq. Wilkins engaged in a grand speculation, which turned out to be a great humbug, and plunged them both in irretrievable ruin. Had Ashton resembled Frank, his ruin might not have been irretrievable; but in the day of prosperity he had cared for no one, and now in his adversity, no one cared for him.

INTELLECT IN RAGS.

It was a black wintry day. Heavy snow drifts lay piled up in the streets of New York, and the whole appearance of the city was cold and dismal.

Seated upon the steps of one of the large dwellings on Fifth Avenue, was a boy apparently thirteen years of age.—He was literally clothed in rags, and his hands were blue, and his teeth chattered with cold. Lying upon his knee was a newspaper he had picked up in the street, and he was trying to read the words upon it. He had been occupied thus for some time when two little girls clad in silks and furs, came towards him. The eldest one was about twelve years old, and so beautiful that the poor boy raised his eyes and fixed them upon her in undisguised admiration.

The child of wealth stopped before him and turning to her companion, exclaimed, “Marian, just see this feller on my steps? Boy what are you doing here?”

“I am trying to learn to read upon this little bit of paper,” answered the boy.

The girl laughed derisively and said: “Well, truly! I have heard of intellect in rags, Marian, and here it is personified.”

Marian’s soft hazel eyes filled with tears, as she replied: “Oh, Louise, do not talk so; you know what Miss Fannie teaches in school! ‘The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all.’”

Louise laughed again, and said to the boy:

“Get up from here you shall not sit on my steps, you are too ragged and dirty.”

The boy arose, and a blush crimsoned his face. He was walking away, when Marian said:

“Don’t go little boy, you are so cold, come to my house and do get warm. Oh, do come,” she continued, as he hesitated; and he followed her into a large kitchen, where a bright farm-fire was shedding its genial warmth around.

“Well, Miss Marian, who are you bringing here now?” asked the servant woman.

“A poor boy, who is almost perished; you will let him get warm, will you not, Rachel?”

“Oh, he shall warm; sit here little boy,” and Rachel pushed a chair in front of the stove; she then gave him a piece of bread and meat.

Marian watched these arrangements, and then glided from the room; when she returned, she had a primer, with the first rudiments of spelling and reading. Going to the boy, she said:

“Little boy, here is a book that you can learn to read from better than a piece of paper. Do you know your letters?”

“Some of them but not all. I never had anybody to teach me. I just learned myself; but oh, I want to read so badly.”

Marian sat down beside him, and began teaching him his letters. She was so busily occupied in this work that she did not see her mother enter the room, nor hear Rachel explain about the boy; and she knew not that her mother stood some time behind them, listening to her noble child teaching the beggar boy his letters.

There were but few that he had not already learned himself, and it was not long before Marian had the satisfaction of hearing him repeat the alphabet.

When he arose to go, he thanked Rachel for her kindness, and offered Marian an her book.

“No, I don’t want it,” she said, “I have given it to you to learn to read from.—Won’t you tell me your name?”

“Jimmie,” he replied.

“I will not forget you Jimmie, you must always remember Marian Hays;” was the little girl’s farewell.

Louise Gardner and Marian Hays were playmates and friends. Their dwellings joined, and almost every hour of the day they were together for they attended the same school. These two children were very differently disposed, and very differently brought up. Louise was proud and haughty. Poverty in her eyes was a disgrace and a crime, and she thought nothing too severe for the poor to suffer. These views she learned from her mother. Mrs. Gardner moved in one exclusive circle—the bon ton of New York. Without its precincts she never ventured, for all others were beneath her. Louise, taught to mingle with no children excepting those of her mother’s friends, was growing up believing herself even better than they.

The teaching that Marian Hays received was totally different from this.—Mrs. Hays was acknowledged by Mrs. Gardner as one of her particular friends; yet though she moved among that circle, she was far from being one of them. Her doctrine was the text her little girl had used. “The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all.” This she taught Marian, there was no distinction as to wealth and position; that the distinction was in worth alone. She taught her to reverence age, and to pity the poor and destitute; and that ‘pleasant words were as sweet as honey comb, sweet to the soul,’ a little kindness was better than money. Marian learned the lesson well, and was ever ready to dispense her gentle words to all, whether they were wealthy and influential, or ragged and indigent as the by she had that cold morning befriended.

A gay and brilliant throng were assembled in the city of Washington. Congress was in session, and the hotels were crowded with strangers. It was an evening party. The brilliantly lighted rooms were filled with youth and beauty.

Standing near one of the doors were two young ladies, busily engaged conversing together. The elder of the two suddenly exclaimed—

“Oh, Marian, have you seen Mr. Hamilton, the new member from W?”

“No, but I have heard a great deal about him.”

“Oh, I want to see him so badly. Mrs. N. is going to introduce him to us. I wish she would make haste, I have no patience.”

“Don’t speak so, Louise, I wish you would not be so trifling,” said Marian.

A singular smile played around the mouth of a tall, handsome gentleman who was standing near the girls; and as he passed them, he scanned them both very closely.

In a short time, Mrs. N— came up with Mr. Hamilton, the new member, and presented him to Miss Gardner and Miss Hays. As they were conversing together Mr. Hamilton said:

“Ladies, we have met before.”

But Louise and Marian declared their ignorance of the fact.

“It has been long years ago, yet I have not forgotten it, nor a single sentence uttered during that meeting. I will quote that that may recall it to your memory—‘The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all.’”

The rich hood tinged the cheeks of Marian, but Louise, still declared herself ignorant as before. Mr. Hamilton glanced for a moment at Marian, then turning to Louise, he said:

“Long years ago, a little boy, ragged and dirty, seated himself upon the steps of a stately dwelling on Fifth Avenue, New York, and was there busily engaged trying to read from a bit of paper, when his attention was attracted by two little girls, richly dressed. The eldest of the two particularly attracted him, for she was as beautiful as an angel; but they came near to him, she lifted up her hand and exclaimed:

“Boy, what are you doing here?”

“The boy answered that he was trying to read. The child of affluence derided him, and said that she had heard of intellect in rags, and he was the very personification of it. Her companion’s answer was, that ‘the rich and the poor shall meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all.’ The elder girl drove the boy away from the steps, but the younger one took him into her dwelling and warmed him and fed him there.—When they parted, the little girl said,—‘You must not forget Marian Hays.’ And Miss Hays, he never has forgotten her. That ragged dirty boy is now before you, ladies, as Mr. Hamilton, the member of Congress; and allow me, Miss Gardner, to tender my thanks to you for the kind treatment of that boy.”

Overwhelmed with confusion, Louise knew not what to say or do.

In pity for her, Mr. Hamilton rose, and turning to Marian said:

“I will see you again Miss Hays,” and he left them.

Louise would not stay in the city, where she daily met with Mr. Hamilton, and in a few days returned to New York, leaving Marian, with the consciousness of having done nothing to be ashamed of, and enjoying the society of distinguished Congressmen.

Marian and Mr. Hamilton were walking together one evening, when the latter drew from his bosom an old well-worn primer, and handed it to Marian.

“From this,” he said “the man who is so distinguished here, first learned to read. Do you recognize the book?”

Marian trembled, and did not raise her eyes when she saw the well remembered book. Mr. Hamilton took her hand and said:

“Marian, Jimmie has never forgotten you. Since the day you were so kind to him and gave him this book, his life has had one great aim, and that was to attain to greatness, and in after years to meet that ministering angel who was the sweetener of my days of poverty. When I left your house with this book, I returned to my humble home ten times happier, and went assiduously to work to learn to read. My mother was an invalid, and ere long I learned well enough to read to her.”

When my mother died, I found good friends, and was adopted by a gentleman in W—. As his son I have been educated. A year ago he died and left his property to me. Of all the pleasant memories of my boyhood, the one connected with you is the dearest. I have kept this primer next to my heart, and dwell upon the hope of again meeting the giver. I have met her. I see all that my imagination pictured, and I ask if the dear hand that gave this book cannot be mine forever!”

Louise felt deeper grief than ever when Marian told her she was to become the wife of Mr. Hamilton, the poor boy whom she once spurned from her door, and derisively called ‘intellect in rags.’ But she learned a ‘severe lesson, and one that soon changed the whole current of her life. For while she shunned Mr. Hamilton; but by persevering kindness he made her feel easy in his presence, and she the acknowledged friend of the Congressman and his noble wife.

Years have passed since then, and Louise is training up a family of little ones; but she is teaching them to despise not intellect in rags, but to be guided by Marian’s text—‘The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all.’”

Is Anybody Looking for Me?

A party of Louisville bloods were standing on the forward deck of a steamer bound from St. Louis, and watching the varied scenes of the levee. A man who looked as though he might be “from the rural districts,” attracted their attention and one of the crowd suggested that some fun might be had out of him. One, more aspiring than the rest, volunteered to ‘try it on,’ and going on shore he approached the stranger, who was evidently in deep cogitation.

The ‘Blood’ walked quietly up to the ‘Green ‘un,’ and slapping him on the shoulder, exclaimed—

“So I’ve found you at last, have I? you’re the man I’ve been looking for!”

“I be, eh?” said ‘Greeney,’ not at all disturbed.

“Yes, I’ve been looking for you all day,” at the same time winking to those who were waiting to see the joke.

The green one raised his arm, and with a powerful blow knocked the enterprising young man prostrate, and turning around, shouted out, “May be there’s some one else looking for me?” if there is, I am waiting to be found.”

The ‘right of search’ was at once relinquished by the bloods, who from the steamer’s deck had seen how much fun was to be made out of a ‘green one.’