

... was given, the silence of them both once more. For an hour the office clock ticked a solo in the quietness, when Walter Maitland rose slowly from his chair, with the Times unfolded in his hand, and, letting the paper fall, came and stood upon the rug beside his friend, who had just re-entered from the bank. Very gently he laid his hand upon his senior's shoulder.

"Dart, old friend! I want to speak a few words to you in great earnestness. Since we met yesterday morning, I have grown to feel quite certain of one thing—quite. The time has not in reality been very long, but it seemed so, and gave me plenty of opportunity for thought; and what I have grown to feel so sure of is this, I shall never marry now."

"Nor I," replied Maurice, meaning it as men do not often mean the phrase, though they utter it as freely.

"I—fancied not. Now, we are both wealthy men, Dart," continued Walter, bravely and gently, "and this wealth we offered a day or two ago, to Isabel Conyngham. You guess what I am going to say? Shall she benefit by our—love for her?"

The senior partner looked up slowly, questioning. A thought which had been haunting him all night made the full meaning of these words quite plain to him.

"Yes, I see you have felt this," resumed Walter, quietly, "just as I have felt it. I see that my words only came as an ending to your thought. I understand how it put itself to you. Leslie has invested all his father's savings—all his patrimony, as one may say—in our bank, and spends his whole days here most conscientiously, most trustworthily. All he draws for this can not keep a house which we—you and I—like to picture as Isabel's home. And then his mother has to be provided for. You think, Dart, that it would not hurt us and could not make any difference to Captain Dart, who has no voice in any bank matters, if Leslie had power to draw what would keep them more comfortably. In short—in short, old fellow, you would make him equal partner with me?"

"With ourselves," said Mr. Dart, shortly, "with ourselves, you mean? If we were all equal partners—"

"Let us discuss it this afternoon. Think it over till then, Maurice," put in Walter, feeling that the senior partner should have time to make his decision; "we will talk it over again."

The discussion was duly held that afternoon in the partners' private room. Then Tom was summoned to hear the result of it. Though not a long interview it was one impossible to describe, for how could any words show the utter failure of Mr. Dart's effort to maintain his grave reserve through Tom's extravagant, boyish, humble, proud, ridiculous gratitude? Or describe Walter Maitland's persistent (though always disregarded) assurance that as Mr. Dart had decided to make this arrangement, he was very glad to accede to it? And, after that interview, who could repeat the limitless promises Tom made to his fellow clerks when he told them of his marriage? Or tell how he reached home in half his usual time and put his arms around his mother, with his eyes full of tears, just as if he had been thirteen instead of thirty.

But above all, who could describe Isabel's mute, wondering gratitude to the two men whom she had given so much pain? "I am very, very grateful, Tom," she said, appealing to him with tears thick upon her lashes; "but I would rather not talk about it—yet. Let me have time to think about it."

Quick to understand her wish, and delicate in carrying it out, Tom left Isabel, delighted that his news had moved her so, yet wondering a little over it, too—because the secret of the partners was so safe in the keeping of the girl whom they had—not unworthily—loved. But hardest of all would it be to describe how brilliantly before Tom's eyes that night there came a vision of that identical brass plate which really met him face to face when, after his "holidays," he first reached the heavy, familiar doors of the Righborough Bank—"Dart, Maitland, Dart & Leslie." "Co." was no more.

The exiled Modocs are living peacefully on their reservation in Kansas, and occasionally turn a penny by selling bows, arrows and Indian notions to the whites.

In St. Martin, La., a duel was the result of a difficulty at a ball which occurred between two young men, Babin and Ducrest. The arms were pistols, and the distance twenty-five yards. At the first fire Ducrest was shot to the heart.

Mr. Warren McWhinney, of Providence, Rhode Island, shipped his household effects for the West just before the railroad strike, intending to settle in Ohio, but his goods were seized by the mob at Pittsburgh and everything appropriated or destroyed except a Bible, which was found in the street and returned to him. He loses almost \$2,500 by the robbery.

The Detroit Free Press tells of a Michigan farmer who wrote to the Faculty of Yale to inquire how much it would cost a year to send his son to that wonderful institution, and naively added: "Would it make any difference if my boy should choose to learn to read and write instead of row a boat?"

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The following is an extract from a description of Vineland, published in the New York Tribune, by the well-known Agriculturist, Solon Robinson.

All the farmers were of the "well to do" sort, and some of them, who have turned their attention to fruits and market gardening, have grown rich. The soil is loam, varying from sandy to clayey, and surface gently undulating, intersected with small streams and occasional wet meadows, in which deposits of peat or muck are stored, sufficient to fertilize the whole upland surface, after it has been exhausted of its natural fertility.

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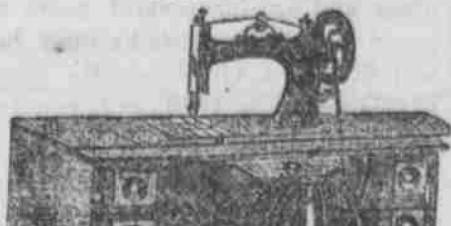
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