

THE AGITATOR.

Devoted to the Extension of the Area of Freedom and the Spread of Wealthy Reform.

WHILE THERE SHALL BE A WRONG UNRIGHTED, AND UNTIL "MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN" SHALL CEASE, AGITATION MUST CONTINUE.

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OUT OF WORK. A STORY FOR THANKSGIVING EVE.

BY ANNIE SOUTHCOMB.

CHAPTER I.

The rain fell in torrents; the demon of the storm shrieked through the now deserted streets like the voice of an angry spirit, while the windows rattled and branches of leafless trees grated harshly against the panes. It was a cheerless Thanksgiving Eve without, but in the well furnished parlor of Mr. Atwood all was gaiety and happiness. Tea was over; the family adjourned to the parlor; the bright, cheerful grate, filled with glowing anthracite, diffused an air of comfort through the apartment. Mr. Atwood was a merchant of well established reputation for wealth, and a man who, by careful examination, was able to form an estimate of the actual value of the services of every one in his employ, and one who would pay to the last farthing the wages due, but would invariably put them down to the lowest possible cent. He had been looking over the numerous gifts with which the centre table was loaded, when his daughter and son entered the room.
"Well, Ada," said he, "how do you purpose spending Thanksgiving?"
"O, Pa, you know we have a dinner party to-morrow!"
"Yes, Pa," said a little flaxen-haired girl by his side. "You ought to see the turkeys and pies. Such a heap; and O, this many cakes, (stretching out her little hands to indicate the quantity.) Ma has so many good things for Thanksgiving. And I have new dresses, gaiters, and O, such a darling little bonnet. O, ain't I glad to see Thanksgiving?"

"Ada, has your new dress come in?" asked Mrs. Atwood, on entering the parlor.
"No," said Ada. "Now don't you think it provoking. That hateful Mrs. Castleton has disappointed me. She sent a note informing me that it would be impossible to get my dress done, as her child is sick, and as it is Thanksgiving, she wants the day to attend to some necessary matters for the family. Her child sick! The little brat; it would be a good thing if all poor sick children were dead, I am sure. And Thanksgiving, too! What impudence! What is Thanksgiving day to her more than any other day! I declare some of these poor people do put on airs.— And then she had the audacity to send to see if I could let her have the little bill I owe her, to get something for Thanksgiving!"
"And of course you gave it to her, sis?" said her mother, a tall, handsome-looking young man, of perhaps twenty-one or twenty-two years, who had apparently been absent in the perusal of a paper, but notwithstanding had been a listener to the conversation.
"Of course I did no such thing! Charlie, do you think I am going to pay away the last cent, when you know I have spent so much for presents. Just look on that table, and you can guess the extent of my finances."
"Oh, sister could you refuse to pay a just debt, and squander away so much money uselessly. For shame!"
"Now, Charlie, don't go into one of your Forrest attitudes! I did not refuse to pay it, but told the girl that, when she brought my dress home, she should have the bill."
"Who is making your dress, Ada?" said Mr. Atwood, looking up.
"Mrs. Castleton."
"Castleton! Why that is Fred Castleton's wife. He is a clerk in my counting room. I don't think she can be out of money; Fred got his wages on Saturday night."
"Yes, but to-morrow is Thanksgiving," said Charlie.
"Thanksgiving! And suppose it is. What has that to do with their being out of money! What business have poor people to go to unnecessary expense in making preparations for a holiday if they cannot afford it? That is a principle I despise in the working class. They must follow the fashion, and have their turkey on Thanksgiving day because the rich have one. All wrong, all wrong!"
"Yes, Pa," said Charlie, "but the working class require a holiday as well as those in good circumstances, and of course like to have something better than usual when their friends call on them, as well as we. And, Pa, is it true that you gave orders to discharge Mr. Castleton this evening? Stewart tells me it was by your orders."
"Mr. Stewart is paid to execute my orders, not to repeat them; and if I choose to discharge one or all of my clerks, it is no business of Stewart's, or yours either." And with a heavy frown he passed into the street, closing the door violently after him.
"Charlie, what have you been saying to Pa," said Ada. "I wish you would mind your own business. Now, you have put him in a bad humor. I intended to ask him to get a box at the opera for to-morrow night, but it's no use now."
The spoiled beauty pouted her rosy lips as she looked contemptuously at her brother.
"Well, Ada, you ought to be ashamed of yourself to keep poor Mrs. Castleton waiting for her money when you know her husband was discharged this very evening. No doubt she needs it. I will step round and pay it for you."

"Go then, and pay her if you choose; but remember it is on your own responsibility."

We will now look upon the family of Frederick Castleton on the same Thanksgiving Eve. In a small, yet neat apartment, sat a pale but handsome woman, bending over the cradle of a sleeping child. The tears dropped from her eyes as she gazed upon the altered face of the sleeper. The table, covered with a coarse but snowy cloth, stood with the frugal supper upon it, near which sat a little girl of eight or nine summers, turning over

the leaves of a juvenile toy book. At length, growing tired of the book, she arose and sat down upon a low stool at the mother's feet.
"Mother, don't you think Miss Atwood mean to not pay you, when she has so much money. And O, you just ought to see the nice things they have there; and the biggest turkeys you ever saw! The girl says they are to have a dinner party to-morrow. Don't I wish we were rich. Mother, what are we going to have?—Is papa going to get a turkey to-night?"
"Hush, Lizzie, hush; here comes papa."
Mrs. Castleton arose and opened the door. Her husband entered dripping with the rain.
"Oh, Fred, you are wet. Let me help you off with your coat, and take off those wet boots. Here Lizzie, get papa dry shoes."
"There Ellen, that will do. You make a complete child of me." After Castleton's wet garments had been removed, his wife replenished the fire, and they took their seats at the table.
"O, Ellen I have been so worried that I almost forgot to ask how the baby is."
"Poor little fellow, he sleeps now, but the Doctor does not think him much better."
Mr. Castleton arose and looked at the child.
"Oh, Ellen this is a gloomy Thanksgiving Eve to us. I fear the baby will not see the light of another day."
—His wife's only answer was in tears.
The meal was partaken of in silence. Mr. Castleton sighed heavily, and ate but very little.
"Will you take another cup of tea?" urged his wife. "You look tired and cold."
"No, Ellen, I cannot eat. Tell me, do you think our coal will last this week?"
"I am afraid not."
"Well, Ellen, I do not see how we are to get along through this gloomy winter, and we owe two months rent now!"
"Papa, ain't you going to get my new shoes to-night for Thanksgiving? Ellie Boon is going to have a little party to-morrow, and mother said if I got my shoes I might go."
Mr. Castleton covered his face with his hands.
"Fred," said his wife, "I hate to ask you, but if you would ask Mr. Atwood to advance us five dollars to get some coal it would be such an accommodation to us. The baby being sick has hindered us so much that I could not finish Miss Ada's dress, and she won't settle the bill now standing until it is sent home. Besides, I want to get Lizzie's shoes. The two younger girls must wait for theirs; though, poor things, they will be so disappointed. Why do you not speak?"
"Because, Ellen," said her husband, in a voice of emotion, "Mrs. Atwood's husband got into a way of emulating Mrs. Atwood's husband in making a listener to the conversation."
"Oh, Fred—! Well, never mind. The God who has taken care of us in our former trials will take care of us now. And you really feared to tell me the evil tidings, did you?" said Mrs. Castleton, laying her hand upon his arm. "We have seen some bright, happy days, and some stormy weather, but if God only spares my child I will try to take this trouble lightly."
"Lizzie, dear, clear up the table, and I will sit down and finish Miss Atwood's dress."
Then turning to her husband, she said:
"I guess you need not go out in the storm to market. I think I can make out with what provision I have in the house."
"Oh, Ellen, why do you try to disguise the fact of our not being able to afford a Thanksgiving dinner?"
"True, we cannot afford it, and therefore it would be wrong to get it. What little money we have, it is necessary for us to economize, until you can obtain another situation."
"Oh, Ellen, another situation! But when will that be?"
"Let us hope for the best, and not despond."
"Ellen, put away that work and take the baby; something unusual is the matter with him."

Mrs. Castleton arose in alarm and found the little one in spasms.
"Oh, Fred, run for the doctor. Our child is dying. Dying! Great God! Is not my cup of sorrow overflowing?"
The doctor soon made his appearance, and prescribed the usual remedies, leaving orders for the medicine to be given regularly through the night, and a careful watch kept over the sufferer.

CHAPTER II.
Mrs. Castleton sat by the side of the sick child, sewing on the dress destined to adorn the person of the haughty Ada Atwood at the dinner party to be given on Thanksgiving day. The tears would flow when she thought of the gloomy future. She strove to suppress all signs of emotion before her husband, fearing to worry him; but her heart sunk within her when she thought of the coming winter, the want of fuel, the rent in arrears, of sickness, perhaps of death. Was it any wonder that, in the bitterness of her spirit, she asked her husband: "Did God make a Thanksgiving for the poor?"
"So, you have come to that at last! You have always preached upon patience and resignation. But do you think I can tamely submit to be put down by those who can count dollars where I cannot count cents; that I must be satisfied with poorly paid labor, until I am discharged, and then sit down patient while my wife and children starve? No, never! That old wretch, Atwood, keeps a schedule of all the sales made by his clerks and because I have not made as large sales as the others he has put me down as a failure. And at this time too, when business is so dull, I am afraid that I cannot get a situation before Spring, and God only knows what will become of my family in the meantime.

Food and fuel are necessary, and to obtain these we must have money. Money! Oh, if those who have the means of employment only knew the feeling of utter desolation embraced in those three little words—out of work—they would hesitate to pronounce them to those who have wives and children depending upon their labor for subsistence.
Mrs. Castleton arose and took down the Bible from the mantel.
"Now, Ellen, do put up that book. It only makes me angry to hear the Bible read when nothing but poverty stares us in the face and you sewing on that dress for the haughty daughter of the purse-proud Atwood! Great God! to think that you must submit to the degradation of sewing for her! You, who are ten thousand times her superior."
"Not in dollars and cents, Fred. Now, do try this once to trust in God for our Thanksgiving, and forget my hasty words."
At this moment a rap was heard at the door, and Charlie Atwood entered, his cheerful face glowing with benevolence.
"Good evening, Mrs. Castleton. O, Mr. Castleton, how do you do? (Taking his hand.) How is the little one? Is the baby better?"
"No, sir."
"I am sorry to hear that, but hope it may be better to-morrow. O, I had almost forgot my mission. Sister requested me to call and settle her little bill. You need not hurry with the dress as it is of no consequence. And now will you accept of the present from me of a turkey and accompaniments, for Thanksgiving? Your little girl told Ada that the child was sick, and I thought you might not be able to get out to purchase one. (The tears glistened in Mrs. Castleton's eyes.) And now that you are out of employment, Mr. Castleton, will you allow me to be your banker until you get suited?"
"God bless you, Charlie; you were always considerate. Oh, if your father had been like you!"
"He is my father!"
"Well, will you say no more on this subject," said Mr. Castleton.
"I must go now, but I will tell you a piece of news, just to put you in good humor for Thanksgiving. You know the firm of Steady, Trust & Co? Well, I heard to-day that their second clerk will go into business for himself. So, thinking of you, I stepped around and spoke a word in your favor. You are to have the offer of the situation at \$500 a year. Something better than our \$8 per week, ain't it?"
"Yes, yes? Heaven bless you, Charlie," Mrs. Castleton exclaimed, "I will tell you my present to-morrow morning. Stop, I forgot the children! And putting an eagle into the hand of Lizzie, he told her it was to buy presents for the little ones."
"Did the Kris Kingle send this?" asked Lizzie.
"No, no," said Charlie. "Kris Kingle only comes at Christmas times; but it is so near Christmas now that I shouldn't wonder if he did send some coal and flour here to-morrow. So, Lizzie, if any does come you may know that Kris Kingle is about."
"Good night all; there; never mind; no thanks. I am only anticipating Pa, for I know he would do the same if he thought for a moment; but the fact is, he has met with some losses lately, and I suppose he must retrench; so don't think hard of Pa, for my sake. And with a kiss to Lizzie, he left the humble home of industry and peace.
On his return home he found quite a number of his young persons assembled to spend the evening with his sister.
"So, Charlie," said a pretty girl as he entered, "Ada tells me that you are quite a Don Quixote, in a limited way; not exactly rescuing damsels in distress, but paying seamstresses bills. How is it? I wish I had a big brother! Is the seamstress young and pretty?"
"You know 'tisly is akin to love."
"You may spare your rallery, Miss Mary; the lady you allude to is married. So you see you have lost a trifling subject for sport. But suppose she had been single, what difference would it make?"
"None at all; only Ada might have a sister-in-law, and have her dresses made in the house."
"That is all."
"Charlie knows better. He would not dare to pay attention to a sewing girl," said Ada.
"Indeed, you are going to considerable trouble concerning my affairs," replied Charlie laughing. "I think I will have to wait for little Lizzie Castleton. She bids fair to be a handsome woman. She gave me a very sweet kiss this evening. None of your cold, prudish, fashionable forms; but a bona fide kiss—warm and glowing from a pair of the rosiest lips I ever saw."
"Why, Charlie is going to be a poet, I believe, along with his other accomplishments," said Mary.
"And suppose I am, would that be an objection?"
"None in the least, if you do not write for pay! It looks very well for people in good circumstances to write poetry, especially if they are good looking; but everybody knows that poverty and poetry are nearly allied. So, Charlie look out for a garret in prospective!"
"Thank you for your compliment, particularly the good looking portion of it!"
"Don't thank me for that; Charlie; for persons who write are generally not gifted with beauty, and therefore take to literature to compensate for the want of that desirable commodity!"
Mr. Atwood now came in. The conversation took a general turn, and the Castle-

tons were temporarily forgotten.
"Well, this is Thanksgiving Eve," said Mrs. Atwood. "I think it is very pleasant to have these national holidays. As first it seemed odd in the South to have a Thanksgiving, but it is now a fixed institution.— These dinner parties form happy reunions. For my part, I like the idea of the day, especially for the poorer class."
"Yes, ma, if they have the means of celebrating it, but Thanksgiving day without money, or its equivalent, is but a name.— Now, the family I have just left were in no circumstances to rejoice in the festivities of the season."
"Will you never get done talking about that Castleton protegee of yours?" said Ada. "I am sure I cannot see what you can take such an interest in them for. Really Charlie, I am ashamed of you."
"Never mind, sis, Lizzie will be a woman one of these days; and then—"
"Why, she may marry somebody! That's all."

CHAPTER III.
Thanksgiving day dawned clear and cold. The bells pealed forth their welcome to the general holiday. Churches were thrown open for the well dressed worshippers to enter. Mr. Atwood attended the church of the Rev. Dr. —, for he made it a point to occupy his cushioned pew on Thanksgiving, and listened to an elaborate dissertation on charity and the approaching winter, after which a collection was taken up to defray the expenses of sending two missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, and Mr. Atwood headed the subscription list with \$500 to build a new church for the civilized natives of Feejee; all of which appeared in the columns of the Daily Gazette, and Mr. Atwood's liberality was duly commented on by the editor.

Such is life! Yet this very man had the evening before thrown a clerk out of employment whose services he had for the miserable pittance of eight dollars per week; and on those eight dollars depended the subsistence of a wife and four children. Rent to be paid, fuel to be purchased, and provision furnished, besides clothing for all, out of that small sum.
He had remorselessly taken from that family their surety of support, and given \$500 to a foreign charity! "Oh, shame, where is thy blush!" It is an old adage that "Charity begins at home!" If some of the missionaries would explore the streets, lanes and alleys of their own city, perhaps they might find fit subjects for charity and commiseration.

How many families are there who eke out a living upon the small earnings of the husband or father; and oh, how many little comforts have to be dispensed with, in order that the necessary expenses may be met! How hard it is for a mother to know that she must deny her children proper, and often necessary, clothing! For a large family involve expenses that eight or ten dollars a week is inadequate to defray. What, then must be her feelings when the only support is taken away from her children for an indefinite period! With the knowledge that even did he succeed in procuring another situation in one or two months, yet they would be involved in that worst of slaveries—debt! This is not an isolated case. There are more than one Mr. Atwood in our city.

Ada's dress was sent home in season for the dinner, and Lizzie was acknowledged to be a handsome child for poor people. Her features were pronounced aristocratic and her manners faultless. Ada even condescended to give her a dime for bringing her dress home.
Early in the morning the porter arrived at the residence of Mr. Castleton, bearing a large basket containing Charlie's present; and a few minutes after, a ton of coal and a barrel of flour, accompanied by sundry hams and groceries made their appearance—all of which were directed in a familiar hand, signed, Kris Kingle. In the course of the day a communication was received by Mr. Castleton from the firm of Steady, Trust & Co., tendering him the clerkship that would be vacant shortly, and with a grateful heart he accepted it.
"Now, Fred, you will trust in Providence in future," said Mrs. Castleton, after dinner was over and the little ones dressed and gone to the party. "See, the baby is so much better; that alone is abundant cause for thanksgiving."
"Yes, Ellen. And not the least of my thanksgiving is that I have such a dear devoted wife to cheer me up when in trouble and to comfort and lighten my cares. Oh, how thankful I should be that God has sent light out of darkness, and raised up help for us when all looked as cheerless as the gloomy night just passed."

Time sped on, and Fred Castleton had become, first, head clerk, and then one of the firm of Steady, Trust & Co. He had now the satisfaction of seeing his wife situated in the manner her graceful habits deserved. His children, too, were well clothed; and, what is far better, well educated; while his home was furnished with every luxury that refinement could suggest. Lizzie had improved in beauty as well as in mental accomplishments, and was universally beloved for her sweetness of disposition, and kindness to those who were dependent upon their own labor.
Mr. Atwood had, in the meantime increased his business so far that he had removed to New York, where his family occupied one of the fifth avenue palaces of upperdominion; and the firm of Atwood & Co., for Charlie was partner now, was known as one of the most

extensive mercantile houses in that city.
It now became necessary to establish a branch in Europe, and the younger Atwood sailed for London for that purpose. Before leaving he paid a visit to our old friends, the Castletons, and laughingly bade Lizzie to take care of herself, as he intended to bring her a beau from London.
A few months after his departure Ada was married to a French adventurer, who captivated her with his high-sounding name and glossy moustache; while on his part her father's wealth was the principal attraction.— This marriage in high life created quite a sensation in the fashionable world, as he was reputed to be a millionaire; but unfortunately for Ada's hopes of grandeur, it was discovered to be a mistake! Mr. Atwood became so enraged at the imposition practiced upon him that he never forgave Mr. Montmorency, for such was the name of Ada's husband. A few brief months served to dispel the romance of this marriage. She soon sincerely hated him who had been the angel of her dreams, while he heartily despised her for her ill temper and capriciousness. At length, in an evil hour he forged his father-in-law's name to a check for several thousands, and fled, leaving his disgraced wife to face the wrath of her enraged father. With Mr. Atwood's increased wealth grew his anxiety for more. Like the man in pursuit of the "last dollar," he left no means untried to accumulate his wealth. His vessels sailed to and from foreign ports, laden with valuable cargoes, but money hardened his heart and he became parsimonious. He was at the counting-room first in the morning and last at night, keeping the strictest surveillance over the clerks, whom he invariably kept on poor pay, and consequently they were of the kind that would take advantage whenever they could. When his cat-like step was heard, every face lengthened. Not the shadow of a smile was to be seen! But the moment he was out of hearing they fell back on their cigar and the last copy of the Transcript! Old Grabb, as he was familiarly called in his absence, was "brick and no mistake!" But riches often make to themselves wings. Mr. Atwood speculated largely and had it been successful, would have added largely to his fortune. The speculation failed. Misfortune never comes singly. The paper that chronicled the failure of the magnificent bubble also recorded the wreck and total loss of the Ada Atwood, heavily laden with silks, wines and spices, consigned to the fire broke out in the counting-room, caused by the carelessness of one of the last clerks, which consumed the remnant of his fortune.
Mr. Atwood was a man who had no fixed religious principles and his mind recoiled with horror at the prospect of poverty in his old age.

Ada had disappointed his darling hopes, but Charles was as dear to his heart as it was possible for aught to be save gold; and the thought that he had dragged him down to poverty was gall and wormwood to his heart. All day he remained in his chamber. To his wife's tearful inquiries, his invariable answer was: "I do not wish to be disturbed."
Long after midnight, the wretched woman heard his heavy tread, pacing the floor. The morning came. All was quiet. There was no response to the knock at the door. The family becoming alarmed, forced it, and the bright sunlight beamed upon the face of the miserable suicide. A vial labeled, morphine revealed the means of death.

CHAPTER IV.
The widow Atwood and her miserable daughter—now a faded, sickly woman—retired to a furnished lodging in a quiet street, where they could live secluded from the prying gaze of idle curiosity until Charlie's return. A kind friend had written to him on the death of his father. Immediately on the receipt of the intelligence of the total failure of the firm, he placed his affairs in the hands of his creditors, and, with a heavy heart, sailed for home, but evil fortune pursued him. The vessel in which he embarked sprung a leak, and the crew, after enduring many hardships, were rescued by a brig bound for his native home, consigned to Steady & Castleton, for our old friend was a junior partner.
The brig had anchored, and Mr. Castleton stepped aboard, when Charlie came on deck.
"Why, Charlie, how glad I am to see you! Come, you must go home with me. Ellen will be delighted."
On entering the home of Mr. Castleton, he found a hearty welcome from the wife of his friend. The children all came in for their share of attention from him. At this moment Lizzie made her appearance, with the bright glow of health upon her cheek. Charlie looked the admiration he felt, though he could scarcely believe the lovely girl before him could be the child he left a few years before. Lizzie Castleton was a perfect Hebe in form and feature. Her hair, which was of a soft, chestnut hue, fell in graceful curls over her snowy neck and bosom. Her complexion was so transparent that the brilliant color came and went with each varied emotion. The long, silken lashes shaded her lovely eyes of heavenly blue. The red, pouting lips—when she smiled—revealed her teeth, even and white as pearl; and when she spoke, her every tone was music. Meeting the gaze of Charles, she crimsoned to the temples.
"Lizzie, this is Mr. Atwood!" said her father.
"No, no!—Charlie still,—changed in

nought but worldly circumstances—though I would not have believed the young lady before me to be little Lizzie."
"Now," said he, after they had left the tea-table, "I must tell you of my prospects. You know there is nothing left; so I will have to begin the world over again, for I have a mother and sister depending upon my labor. I will start for New York in the morning, and see that they are situated comfortably. I will then return and try to get a clerkship in my native city; so if you hear of a situation just let me know. I will be satisfied at a low figure, and work my way up."
"Charlie, you want a head clerk. Will you take the situation? O, if you will, how happy it will make me."
"Take it! Yes, my dear sir, and bless you for the chance; for those I love better than my own life look up to me for support."
After a short stay in New York, he returned and assumed the duties of his situation. Night after night found him in the parlor of Mr. Castleton, where he was ever a welcome visitor. Lizzie had begun to listen for his well-known step, and color at his approach. One evening he asked her if she remembered the promise he made on going to London, namely—to bring her a beau.
"Yes, I do," replied she, "but you have not fulfilled it."
"I have, dear Lizzie—I have brought myself! Will you accept the grateful homage of a heart that reflects but your own image. Will you give me this little hand? Believe me, I value it more than all the gold in the universe. Tell me, may I hope you regard me with favor."
Lizzie blushed a deep scarlet, and buried her face in his bosom.
"Mine at last!" said he. "Well, who would have thought that the little girl that asked about the Kris Kingle would be my wife! Say, Lizzie, do you believe in Kris Kingle now?"
Charlie asked Mr. Castleton's consent, and received it, with the assurance that nothing could have pleased him better than to see his daughter the wife of one who had been as firm and true a friend as himself. "I can only wish," said he "that she may prove as good a wife to you, as her mother has been to me."
A brother of Mrs. Atwood having arrived from the West, prevailed on her to make his house her home for the remainder of her life. A scheme, indeed, to make the death of the senior member of the firm, and being in easy circumstances concluded to be married.

We will look in upon our friends once more before leaving them forever. It is Thanksgiving Eve! But how different from the one on which we introduced them to our readers. Lizzie is now a wife. Charlie and herself had been paying a visit to her parents, and were talking of the evening he made his first visit! "I will ever regard it as a special Providence that I came to see you that night."
"Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days," replied Mrs. Castleton.
"Ah, I have realized the truth of that promise, for what would I have done had it not been for Mr. Castleton, when I had lost all! And then, Lizzie, you might not have been my wife, which misfortune was averted by my paying a bill on Thanksgiving Eve."

A Widower's perplexity.
A disturbance of a somewhat unusual character took place yesterday morning, at the dwelling of Mr. Thomas Fothergill, a fine old gentleman of sixty-five, who had been a widower for eighteen months. Mr. Fothergill, having become tired of his solitary condition advertised for a wife, stating according to custom, the qualifications which applicants for the situation were required to possess.— The advertisement could not have been more than an hour before the public, when a brisk widow, Mrs. Rachel Morrison by name, might have been seen ascending the steps of Mr. Fothergill's residence, in Eighth street.— This lady remembering the proverb that "the early bird catches the worm," presented herself for the advertiser's inspection almost as soon as there was daylight enough to answer the purpose; and to reward her business-like alacrity, she proved to be the first competitor for the prize.
Mr. Fothergill being a man of mercantile habits, is very prompt at making a bargain, and moreover, is not very hard to please.— Having examined Mrs. Morrison's credentials, he seemed to decide that she would suit him exactly, and the whole affair was about to be concluded, to the satisfaction of all parties, when a hard pull at the door-bell announced another arrival. Almost immediately a second lady entered the room and glanced around apprehensively as if afraid that she had come too late. She was a thin, elderly female, whose name afterward proved to be Miss Naomi Price. "Are you the gentleman who advertised for a wife?" said Mrs. Morrison.
Price, as soon as she entered. Before Mr. Fothergill could reply, Mrs. Morrison answered for him, "Yes, madam, he advertised; but I reckon he's supplied." "I spoke to the gentleman himself, madam," answered Miss Price, sharply, "and I suppose he knows his own mind." "He made a declaration of his intentions before you came," said Mrs. Morrison. "I think you must have misunderstood him, madam; persons at your time of life are apt to hear imperfectly," answered Mrs. Price. "You appear to be very anxious

to be married." "Yes, madam, I do," answered Mrs. Morrison. "I have a daughter of sixteen years, and she is so fond of you that she would give up her education to be a housemaid in your family." "I have a son of twelve years, and he is so fond of you that he would give up his education to be a housemaid in your family." "I have a daughter of sixteen years, and she is so fond of you that she would give up her education to be a housemaid in your family." "I have a son of twelve years, and he is so fond of you that he would give up his education to be a housemaid in your family."

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