

# The Kaffman's Journal

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## MR. KUNG'S UNCLE.

Perhaps, my dear reader, you never heard of Puffingham Allgax. Well, I am the identical individual. I am a family man. At the present moment I am living with my third wife. Her maiden name was Lucinda Pasters. She was an orphan, and had been disappointed in love when I met her. She was a bonny lass then, though she is more bonny than bonny now. Our son, P. Walter Allgax, resembles her especially in the loaves—perhaps you have remarked this.

I am the happy father of three children. The eldest, a daughter, was christened Maria Jane, but we call her Violet, not because she is very modest or unassuming, or particularly like a violet, but because—because she is—well, you know Lord Dunsany's teacher called him "Wolbert" because his name was Frederick, and we call her Violet because her name is Maria Jane. She is not perfectly beautiful, I confess, although she hath a pretty face, a cherry lip, a bonny eye, a pleasing tongue, a form as comely, and an amiable quantity of sunny hair, which is quite an item in these times. She was my second wife's child, and consequently is not too dear to my dear Lucinda, who, as I remarked before, was disappointed in love in early youth, from the disastrous effects of which she has never fully recovered.

Our second child is of the masculine gender, originally named Puffingham Walter. To distinguish between father and son, I intended that he should be called Walter, but my wife persists in calling him Puffy—not because he is puffy, but because he isn't. Physically he is a most remarkable child. His hair being so unaturally white as to give his head the appearance of a dandelion gone to seed. Then his eyes, which are blue, have a fashion peculiar to themselves, of revolving entirely independent of each other, so that he has in reality the ability to "look two ways for Sunday." Moreover he has another peculiarity, his mother having been disappointed in love, it gave a twist to her disposition, and said twist having been transmitted to the child, it found a lodgment in his spinal column, and consequently he is for ever trying to outwit himself, giving him the semblance of an animated cork-screw. As you may suppose, P. Walter considered the flower of the family.

Our third child is a girl, and was christened Florida Pasters. She is a grand creature to her mother, as Mrs. Levensel, the divorgent, assured her she would be. Yes, she is a great comfort to her mother—and so were both to Joe.

I am not wealthy, although I live in good style in a beautiful cottage at Forest Hill. No, I am not wealthy, notwithstanding the fact that I have carried on business ever since my twenty-first birthday. But I have succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of my friends. Yes, sir, astounding as it may seem, I have managed by close attention to my business and almost superhuman sagacity, to sink my entire business capital upon two different occasions. Indeed my creditors to accept fifty cents in the dollar. The inducements which I held out were such as they could not very well refuse. We called it a compromise—I like the name, and in fact I like that way of paying debts. At present I am doing business upon capital borrowed of my father, my brother, and my uncle, and if I succeed as well as I expect to, I shall soon be able to compromise with the above mentioned parties on liberal terms—say ten per cent.

Now after these preparatory remarks, I will proceed with my story, which relates to the loss of that angelic creature whom I have mentioned above—my eldest daughter Violet.

I think that I had entertained hopes that she would yet do honor to the name of Allgax. She had always been in the best society that Forest Hill afforded, and I never found that she would step out of her own little orbit, and therefore you may easily imagine my surprise when I learned that she had removed her affections upon a young man very much beneath her in the social scale.

It was the first to enlighten me regarding the state of my daughter's heart. "Where is she?" I exclaimed. "In the city," replied Lucinda. "She loves a young man, I am sure, and you know how to get on with him." "The young man?" I demanded. "Yes, sir, I know the family. His name is Kung."

"Kung?" I asked. "Yes, sir, I know the family. His name is Kung."

"He has called here several times," my wife remarked. "And I never heard anything about it until this moment. But enough, I will speak with her to-morrow, and forbid her, on pain of my everlasting displeasure, to speak to this Kung again."

It was Tuesday morning and my wife had a bad headache. She has been subject to headache ever since she was disappointed in love. She was reclining on the lounge, with the "infant phenomenon," Florida Pasters, in her arms. P. Walter was scattered artistically about the room, and Violet was deep in the contents of one of Mr. Boodle's thrilling tales.

"Violet, my dear," said I, "will you please to abstract yourself from the realms of fancy for a few moments, as I wish to have some conversation with you?"

"Well, father," and the lovely girl turned her soft eyes upon me and closed her book.

"I understand that you have received attentions from a certain person called Kung, and I understand moreover that you have encouraged these attentions. Have I been rightly informed?"

"I love him, father."

"Love him?"

"Yes, father, I knew you would think only of his poverty, but I thought if we could only marry, you would then forgive us, take us home, and board us for nothing, just as they do in novels," answered Violet, with charming simplicity.

"Marry him? Impossible—you can never be his wife."

"But I have promised to," she cried.

"Unheeded vows may heedfully be broken," I returned. "No, I can never sanction such a marriage as this, my child. Do you realize who you are? Methinks you do not—no, you cannot. Ha! the idea of your marrying Kung! You mate with a Kung—the peerless daughter of Puffingham Allgax—why, it is preposterous!"

Violet sobbed.

"My dear girl," I continued, patting on my benign aspect, and stroking my red and yellow whiskers, "I cannot really blame him for loving you, for you were born to be loved. You are indeed a lovely female, and so was your mother (here Lucinda winced). I loved her—but who was she? She was the daughter of Judge Sponger, and consequently my equal. Your grandmother was Ruby Sponger, once the belle of Jungston. Remember your descent, my love; remember your grandfather and grandmother, and also remember that you are an Allgax and forget this vile plebeian."

"But Kingsley loves me so," she urged.

"I admit that, my dear. I am willing that he should continue to love you; but although a cat can look at a king, it isn't to be supposed that the said king would allow any of his kin to marry grimekin."

"O father, I can't give him up!" sobbed Maria Jane.

"Then thou dost not love the author of thy being, girl. Ask yourself if you owe me nothing. Ah, that it should come to this," I groaned. "O my daughter, may you never feel how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

"I will make any other sacrifice, father."

"I will accept none but this—Kung or nothing."

For a moment the silence was unbroken, save by the yells of the "infant phenomenon," and the shouts of P. Walter who was seated upon the piano, playing that he was foreman of "Tiger No. 2," and was madly rushing to a fire.

"Violet," said I, "we shall be pleased to hear from you."

By a mighty effort she calmed her emotions and spoke.

"Father, I will see Kingsley—"

"Never again, Violet."

"But I must, I will see him, and tell him I can never, never, no, never be his wife."

Then she burst into tears and burst out of the room. As the door closed behind her a scrap of paper fell to the floor. P. Walter picked it up and gave it to me.

"What's that?" inquired Lucinda.

"A piece of torn paper that Violet dropped."

"But it has been written upon?"

"Yes," I looked at it carefully, but could make nothing out of it at first, but a name caught my eye. "Ha! here is a fragment of a letter, and by heavens, 'tis from Kingsley Kung!" I cried turning to Lucinda.

"Read it," said she, for you must know she has a great fondness for love letters, since she was disappointed.

"'Tis torn so that I can make nothing out of it. But hold—what's this?" and I read, "I have just come into possession of half a million of money!"

"Half a million of money!" screamed Lucinda.

"Half a million of money!" yelled P. Walter.

"It can't be true," said my wife.

"There it is in black and white. But who could have left him so much property?" I asked.

"Violet said that he had a rich uncle in the East Indies," Lucinda observed.

"Lately deceased, no doubt," I suggested.

"Leaving his entire property to Mr. Kung. Is it possible, Puffingham, that you can be so cruel to Violet? Will you persist in breaking her heart?" asked my wife.

"Lucinda, don't talk to me so. You know what a tender-hearted creature I am—half a million of money! You know I am thinking only of Violet's happiness."

"From what I have seen of Mr. Kung, I take him to be a very fine young man," said my wife.

"I dare say Mr. Kung has some excellent qualities," I returned.

"If I am a judge of character, he will make a good husband."

"Quite likely, my dear."

"And perhaps Violet could not do better."

"Perhaps she couldn't."

"If you were too hasty, Puffingham."

"I fear I was, Lucinda. Upon more mature deliberation, I am sure of it. I—half a million of money! Upon my word, Lucinda, the more I think about Mr. Kung, the better I like him."

"And so do I," rejoined my wife.

"And I think he's just the man to make Violet happy."

"I always thought so," cried Lucinda. "Shall I call her?"

"I think you had better—half a million of money—yes call Violet."

In tears she came; sorrow had already begun its work, and her nose was now red and swollen with grief. I folded her in my arms, and dried her tears with my handkerchief.

"No more tears," I whispered.

"But father, I love him so."

"That's right, my dear girl. You must continue to love him with all your might," said I.

She raised her eyes to mine in mute astonishment.

"Continue to love him—I command you to love him."

"But, father,"

"It's all right, my dear girl. I only wished to test the strength of your affections," said I.

"And may I marry Kingsley?" cried Violet, throwing her arms around my neck.

"If he asks you to, but he must not be coerced."

"He has asked me."

"Then marry him, by all means. I will never stand between two such loving hearts."

"O, thank you, father."

"Not at all, my dear, I have only done my duty. Go, my daughter, be a Kung and be happy."

Violet retired.

I turned to Lucinda, who still reclined on the lounge.

"It seems like a dream," she murmured. "Can it be possible?"

"It is a happy reality, my love. Madame Levingdel's prediction is to be verified. You remember that she told me while in a state of clairvoyance, that I should become very wealthy, sometime between the forty second and forty third year of my life. The veil is lifted—the year is clear. It is through Kung that this wealth is to come. Let the wedding take place as soon as possible, and in the meantime 'O lady fortune, stand you auspicious!'"

"That evening Mr. Kung called."

"Father," said Violet, "this is my heart's elected."

I took him by the hand, I could have embraced him—I could have kissed him—for by his uncle, but I didn't. I took his hand and smiled, and then I spoke:

"Mr. Kung," said I, "lovest thou my daughter?" He blushed, but answered not—his feelings overcame him.

"Violet," said I, "come hither, my daughter, I placed her hand in his, 'take her for she is thine.'"

"My Kingsley, O my Kung!" murmured Violet, while tears of joy rolled down her cheeks.

"Now all the blessings of a glad father compass thee about, my children."

"O, that I had words to thank you for this," said Kingsley.

"Never mind the thanks, my boy. Love her—be kind to her, buy her a new dress every fortnight and a new bonnet every month and all will be well."

Kingsley having promised to do all in his power to make his wife happy, we left the lovers alone, and Lucinda and I retired to think upon the glorious future in store for the Allgax family.

Preparations for the wedding were made as rapidly as possible. All the dressmakers and cooks at Forest Hill were engaged. Silks, satins, muslins, lace and linen filled the house, and Lucinda omitted her regular headache for three weeks in succession.

Meantime I had made inquiries about Kung and learned that he had left his late employer without giving any reason for so doing.

"He may have obtained a situation more agreeable to him," explained the man of leather.

"And possibly a large fortune has fallen to him, from an uncle in the East," I remarked.

"I never thought of that," returned the gentleman. "Yes, he had an uncle in the East."

"To be sure," said I.

"And Kingsley was sole heir."

"Nothing more certain, sir."

"Good, you're right," exclaimed he of the boots and shoes.

"Of course I am," and of course I was, I returned home perfectly satisfied with my inquiries.

At last the happy day arrived. The sun never shone brighter. Everything was lovely, and all was joy and gladness within the house of Allgax. The birds sang until they were hoarse, and yet they continued to sing; and the bees hummed and wagged their little tails with delight, as they roved from flower to flower—and still the sun shone brightly.

Everything was in readiness. The drawing rooms were decorated with the flags of all nations, and our little son P. Walter, dressed in flesh-colored tights, with a pair of pasteboard wings fastened to his shoulders, was placed upon a pedestal in one corner of the room, armed with a bow and arrow, to represent Cupid. At a preconcerted signal, he was to draw his bow, holding the arrow pointed at the happy pair.

The guests began to arrive. First came the Allgaxes, then the Pasters, then the Spongers, and then the Forest Hill brass band, which was stationed in the front yard, under the drawing room windows. Then came the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker and the minister, the latter arriving just as the clock struck ten, which was the hour appointed for the commencement of the marriage ceremony.

Suddenly there is an ominous silence through the room, and with a great crash of cymbals and rattle of drums, the band strikes up "Haste to the Wedding," and Kingsley Kung with Violet leaning upon his arm, marches into the room, followed by the bridesmaids and groomsmen. They take their places, the signal is given, and Cupid alias Puffy draws his bow. 'Tis a scene never to be forgotten. I gazed enraptured. All is hushed. The eyes of the guests are fixed upon the bride. She is perfectly dazzling in her proud beauty. Her beautiful eyes shine with unworldly brilliancy, and her long, cream-colored hair is coiled around her organ of self-esteem, in imitation of the old-fashioned straw bee hive, while from behind her star-board ear depends a long tress of tangled hair, which she has forgotten to comb or curl because it's the fashion.

The ceremony proceeds. I give away the bride, the ring is placed upon her finger, and then, just as the minister pronounced "Continue to love him—I command you to love him."

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## The Bells of Moscow.

The foreign correspondent of the New York Observer has the following article on "The Bells of Moscow."

At the foot of the Ivan Tower, in the Kremlin of Moscow, supported by the pedestal of stone, is the largest bell in the world, and probably the largest that ever was in the world. A piece is broken out of its side, and the tract is lying near. The breadth of bell is so great—it is twenty feet across—that the cavity underneath has been used as a chapel, where as many people can stand as in a circle sixty feet around.

In Russia the bell is an instrument of music for the worship of God as truly and really as the organ in any other country. This fact is not mentioned in the accounts we have of the wonderful, enormous and almost incredibly heavy bells that have been cast in Moscow, but it is the key to what would otherwise be difficult to explain. It appears to be stupid to cast bells so large as to be next to impossible for convenient use, in danger always of falling and dragging others to ruin in their fall. But when the bell is a medium of communication with the Infinite, and the worship of a people and an empire finds expression in the majestic tones of a bell, it ceases to be a wonder that a bell should have a tongue which requires twenty-four men to move, and whose music sends a thrill of praise into every home in the city and flows away beyond the river into the plains afar.

Moscow is the holy city of the Greek church. Pilgrims come hither from thousands of miles off, and on foot, and sometimes without shoes. I have seen them with staves in their hands, and their travel worn feet wound up in cloths, wending their way to the sacred hill. And when they draw near to the city, and on the evening air the music of these holy bells is first borne to their ears, they fall upon their faces, prostrate, and worship God. If they could go no further, they would be content to die there, for they have heard the bells of Moscow, and on their majestic tones their souls have been taken up to heaven! This is the sentiment of the superstitious peasant, and it is a beautiful sentiment, ideal indeed, but all the more delicate and exalted.

As long as five hundred years ago this casting of bells was an art in Russia. It is one of the fine arts now. Perhaps our great bell founders the Menocels, will not admit that the founders there have any more skill in their manufacture than we have, and I am not sure that their bells have any tones more exquisite than ours would have if we would put as much silver and gold into our bell metal as they do. But so long as these precious metals are at the present premium little or none of them will find its way into our church bells. We have not the mistaken idea of the Russians as to the use of a bell. We use it to call the people to the house of worship. Our bells speak to us. Their bells praise God. They cast their silver and their gold into the molten mass, and it becomes an offering, as on an altar, to Him who is worshipped with every silvery note and golden tone of the holy bell.

This one great bell is the growth of centuries. In 1533 it was cast and weighed only 36,000 pounds. It fell in a fire, and was recast in 1654, being increased to the astonishing weight of 288,000 pounds. This was too vast a weight to be taken up the top of the tower, and it was sustained by a frame at the foot of it. In 1706 it fell in another fire, and was broken into fragments, which lay there on the ground about thirty years. It was recast in 1733, four years afterward a piece was knocked out of the side of it, and it has been standing here on the ground more than a century. It weighs 441,000 pounds! In the thickest part it is two feet through. It has relief pictures on it of the Emperor and Empress, of the Saviour and the Virgin Mary, and the Evangelists.

Ascending the Ivan tower we find on three successive stories bells to the number of thirty-four. Some of these are of a size to fill one with astonishment had he not seen the giant below. The largest is on the first story above the chapel, and weighs more than sixty tons. It swings freely and is easily rung. I snote it with the palms of my hand, supposing that such a blow could not produce the slightest vibration in such a mighty mass of iron, but it rang out as clear and startling as if a spirit within had responded to my knock without. Two bells are of solid silver, and their tones are exquisitely soft, liquid and pure. It was exciting to go from one to another and strike them with their tongues, or with your hand and catch the variety and richness of their several melodies.

The chapel below is dedicated to the patron saint of all ladies about to married, and it may be readily believed that the bell that gives expression to their prayers will have, at least to their ears, the sweetest tone of all the bells in Moscow.

I had come down from the Kremlin to my lodgings at Blot's, and, wearied with the wanderings of the day, was lying on the bed and looking out on the city. It is just before sunset, and the day has been oppressively warm. A delicious glow from the gorgeous west is bathing all the domes and roofs with splendid colors, and silence is stealing in with the setting sun upon the crowded town. It is the eve of one of their most holy festivals of the church. One vast church edifice is directly in view of my window, and but a short way off.

I lie musing, from this church at hand comes the softest, sweetest tone of an evening bell. Another tone responds. A third is heard. The Ivan tower on the height of the Kremlin utters his tremendous voice,

like the voice of many waters. And all the churches and towers over the whole city, four hundred bells and more, in concert, in harmony, "with notes almost divine," lift up their voices in an anthem of praise, such as I never thought to hear with mortal ears, waves of melody, an ocean of music, deep, rolling, heaving, changing, swelling, sinking, rising, sounding, overwhelming, exalting.

I heard the great organs of Europe, but they were tame and trifling compared with this. The anthem of nature at Niagara is familiar to my ear, but its thunder is one great monotone. The music of Moscow's bells is above and beyond them all. It is the voice of the people. It utters the emotions of millions of loving, heaving, longing hearts, not enlightened, perhaps, like yours, but all crying out to the Great Father, in these solemn and inspiring tones, as if these tongues had voices to cry: "Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory!"

Ups and Downs in the World.

Sir, being me a good plain dinner, said a melancholy looking person to a waiter at one of the principal hotels in a Western State.

"Yes, sir."

"The dinner was brought and devoured, and the enter called the landlord aside, and thus addressed him:

"You are the landlord?"

"Yes, sir."

"You do good business here?"

"Yes," (in astonishment.)

"You make probably ten dollars a day clear?"

"Then I am safe. I cannot pay for what I have consumed. I have been out of employment for several months but have engaged to work to-morrow. I have been without food four and twenty hours when I entered your place. I will pay you in a week."

"I cannot pay my bills with these promises, blustered the landlord; and I do not keep a poor house. You should address proper authorities. Leave me something for security."

"I have nothing."

"I will take your coat."

"If I go out in the street without that I will get my death, such weather as this."

"You should have thought of that before you came here."

"You are serious. Well I solemnly swear that in a week from now I'll pay you."

"I will take your coat."

The coat was left and a week after redemption.

Seven years after that a wealthy man entered the political arena, and was presented to the caucus as an applicant for a Congressional nomination. The Chairman of the caucus held his peace. He heard the name and history of the applicant, who was a member of the church, and one of the most respected citizens. The vote was a tie, and he cast a negative thereby defeating the wealthy applicant, whom he met an hour afterward, and to whom he said:

"You don't remember me?"

"No."

"I once ate dinner at your hotel, and although I told you I was famishing and pledged you my word and honor to pay you in a week, you took my coat and saw me go out in the inclement air, at the risk of my life, without it."

"Well, sir, what then?"

"Not much. You call yourself a Christian. To-night you were a candidate for nomination, and but for me you would have been elected to Congress."

Three years later the rich hotel keeper became bankrupt. The dinner-wretch that was, is now a high functionary