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Only a Song.

It was only a simple ballad,
Sung to a careless throng;
There were none that knew the singer,
And few that heeded the song:
Yet the singer's voice was tender
And sowed as with love untold;
Surely those hearts were hardened
That it left so proud and cold.

She sang of the wondrous glory
That touches the woods in spring,
Of the strange, soul-stirring voices
When "the hills break forth and sing,"
Of the happy birds low warbling
The requiem of the day,
And the quiet hush of the valleys
In the dusk o' the gleaming gray.

And one in a distant corner—
A woman worn with strife—
Heard in that song a message
From the spring-time of her life.
Fair forms rose up before her
From the mist of vanished years;
She sat in a happy blindness,
Her eyes were veiled in tears.

Then when the song was ended,
And hushed the last sweet tone,
The listner rose up softly
And went on her way alone,
Once more to her life of labor
She passed; but her heart was strong,
And she prayed, "God bless the singer!
And oh thank God for the song!"

A CALCULATED REVENGE.

CHAPTER I.

It was 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning. I had already been at the office a couple of hours, hard at work over ledgers and day books. They had been my constant companions for many days past. I was beginning to tire of their company. But at last I had discovered that of which I was in search.

I whistled down my speaking-tube for Mr. Jenkin, the head clerk of the firm.

"Is Mr. Macfarlane come yet?"

"No, sir," was the reply.

I felt annoyed. He ought to have arrived half an hour ago. Was it possible he had taken fright?

I gave orders that he should be sent to me directly when he came.

I had been engaged on an important affair but I believed I had carried it through successfully. So far as I knew my examination of the books had been made without exciting suspicion, but it was difficult to be quite sure.

Half an hour passed before Macfarlane made his appearance. When he entered the room it was evident that he thought he was about to be reprimanded for his tardy arrival, for he began to apologize.

I listened to his excuses which I happened to know were pure inventions, and then turned to the matter in hand.

"Can you explain these figures?" I asked him quietly, opening the ledger at a certain page.

He gave a slight start and then moved slowly forward to inspect the entry.

"What is it that requires explanation?" he asked

"According to the returns which I have received from Frodsham and Walker," I replied, "the amount of alloy in their last consignment does not tally with that stated in your entry. Moreover, they do not seem to have been allowed the usual discount, though you have deducted it from the sums which you have accounted."

The evidence was as clear as day. He could give no explanation.

"It must have been a mistake," he said. "We used not to allow the discount, and I suppose I must have overlooked the recent change in my instructions."

"It's a curious mistake" I observed, "It has occurred in the only case in which, in the ordinary course of business, we should have no check on your transactions. Pure accident rendered me suspicious, and I resolved to see if there was any ground for my suspicions,"

He made no reply.

"Have you anything to say?" I demanded.

"Only that it was a mistake," he reiterated.

"I am afraid that excuse will scarcely be sufficient. A mistake which results in a loss of 175 pounds is not one that can be passed over."

"What do you mean to do?" he asked.

"Naturally, I shall put the whole affair before my partners. In the meantime you will remain here till they decide what steps to take."

He moved a step toward the door, but I had my hand on the bell, and he stopped.

"I have told you it was a mistake," he repeated; "but I am ready to suffer the consequences of it. It will ruin me to replace the money, but I can give you half of it, and you can retain the balance by degrees from my salary."

"That is not the usual method in which embezzlement is treated," I replied coldly.

"Do you mean that you will prosecute me?"

"I have no doubt whatever that the firm will."

"It's no good putting it on the firm," he said angrily. "It is you who have discovered it all. No one will know a word of it if you do not speak."

"You confess it, then?" I asked.

"I confess to nothing except a mistake. It is for you to undertake the responsibility of treating it as anything more. Are you going to ruin me? Don't you know that if I am arrested my life is wrecked?"

I hesitated. It is a serious thing to blast a man's prospect forever, however he may deserve punishment. He saw my hesitation, and took advantage of it.

"Why do you want to injure me? What good will it do you? You know I am the best man in the whole place Is it wise to lose me? I will work as hard as a dozen of them if you will let me off. You will always have a hold over me in the future, and if you see me shirking, you will always be able to keep me up to my work. If only you will keep silent! No one else knows?"

His argument was the worst he could have used; it determined me finally. I saw that if I consented to hold my tongue I should be as much at his mercy as he is at mine—we should be accomplices.

"It is too late," I said. "You should have thought of all this before. I have no choice."

"You will send me to prison, then?"

"I shall report what I have discovered."

"Very well, then," he said in a whisper, "if you do, I swear I'll have my revenge! Another couple of years and I should make my fortune, now you are destroying everything. Take care!"

"I am not to be hindered from doing my duty by idle threats," I retorted as I rose.

"You will find they are not idle," he returned. "I'll make you repent this day, if I have to wait half my life for it."

I disdained to hear more. I left the room, locking the door behind me. Macfarlane attempted no resistance; he knew escape was impossible. To reach the street he would have to traverse a room full of men, even supposing I could not have prevented him from leaving the room.

An hour afterwards he was given into custody. When the trial came on there was no difficulty in proving his guilt; it also came out that he had squandered the money he had appropriated in dissipation, and that he was even a more worthless character than I had believed. I felt no compunction for the part I had played. I had only fulfilled my duty. Nor did I anticipate that his threats were anything more than the expressions of the hate which he naturally felt towards me.

He was condemned to two years' imprisonment with hard labor.

CHAPTER II.

The two years passed swiftly by. I had nearly forgotten Macfarlane. The only result of the affair as regards me had been that my partners conceived an exaggerated notion of my ability and tact, and reposed greater confidence in me than before.

The firm of which I was a junior partner was an old fashioned one. Our business was that of manufacturing goldsmiths, and was a profitable one. However, trade was by no means so prosperous as it had been; in spite of unremitting efforts the income of the firm gradually sank. Our only consolation was the knowledge that our rivals suffered even more than we did.

Personally I spared no pains. I was not by nature a business man, preferring the professions to manufacturers, but circumstances having led me to embark in business, I determined to make the best of it at all events.

Naturally I was dissatisfied with the recent course of things, and cast my eyes round in every direction for a fresh field for activity. At the same time it behooves us to be careful; more than one firm had recently come to grief, driven into dangerous speculations by the necessity of doing something.

I was in the refreshment room at Euston one day, taking a hasty lunch on my return from Birmingham, when I was conscious of some one looking at me.

I turned round and faced a man who seemed familiar to me. A moment's reflection and I recognized him—Macfarlane.

He hesitated a moment and then lifted his hat to me. Almost unconsciously I gave him a sign of recognition. He at once came forward.

"How do you do, sir?" he asked. "I was afraid you would not care to recognize me."

"I am scarcely sure I do," was my reply. I wanted to let him see that I was not anxious to renew our acquaintance. At the same time the meeting had taken me so by surprise that I had not made up my mind to cut him dead.

"You've every excuse for not recognizing me," he said. "My face is a little altered, isn't it?"

It certainly was. He wore a beard and moustache instead of being clean-shaved. His hair was differently arranged, his whole dress and appearance were quieter and more gentlemanly than formerly. He had immensely improved in every respect.

"It is some time since we met," he continued.

"Yes, I suppose it is," I replied wishing he had avoided the topic, for I felt very uncomfortable,

"It is nearly four years," he said. "Four years make a good deal of difference to a man, especially when two of them have been spent in prison."

What could I say? It would have been insulting even cruel, to say that I was sorry.

"You don't mind talking to a jail bird I hope?" he said with a smile. "You need not be afraid of my being recognized; no one but you has recognized me, yet I don't think you would have done so if I hadn't fixed my eyes on you."

"I should have thought that it would have been you who would have been the first to object to our meeting," I said. "The sight of me can't be very pleasant to you, I'm afraid.

He almost laughed.

"You're mistaken, I am glad to say," he replied. "My one hope lately has been to meet you. We can't talk quietly here," he added; "there is such a crew. Could you spare me half an hour? I think I can promise you you won't regret it."

I wanted to get back to my work, but Macfarlane interested me. I had been severe perhaps with him in old. I might at all events grant him the small favor of an interview now.

We took a cab to his hotel—a quiet one in a street off the Strand. He had a private room, and he ordered up some coffee. Evidently he was in different circumstances than when a junior clerk and travelor in our firm.

"Try one of these," he said.

He produced some cigars. I took one; it was in the green condition that Americans love.

"Not dry enough for you," he asked.

"It will suit me admirably," I replied. "Didn't you get these in America?"

"Yes; I only crossed a week ago. I've been there for the past two years or—ever since—you know what."

"I am glad to see that you are not so utterly ruined as you anticipated," I said conscious that the remark was in bad taste. But I was in a false position, and everything I said must be either stupid or awkward.

"Do you remember," he asked, "the day when you had me up in your room?"

I remembered it as well as he probably.

"Do you remember what I said when you wouldn't let me off?"

I nodded. Was he going to spring some mine on me? Was all this a preparation for a deadly revenge? Impossible! He was as harmless looking a companion as one could wish for.

"I said that I'd be revenged on you if I had to wait years. Well, I have waited years and here is my revenge. I'm treating you to coffee and cigars, and talking away to you as if I was the senior partner and you a clerk. That's a better revenge than trying to put a bullet into you and then getting hanged for it; isn't it? Upon my word, though, sir, when I made that threat I meant doing you a mischief if I ever got the chance."

"I am very glad you have thought better of it," I remarked, truthfully enough.

"So am I," he said. "So far from wanting to serve you out for the part you took in the wretched business, I am thankful to the last degree for what you did. I was on the way to ruin when you stopped me; you cut me adrift from my old temptations and companions, and when I left prison I was free in more sense than one. I went to America and there I got on. You know I have a certain sort of talent—even you must acknowledge that?"

"I know, you were the best man in the place," I said; "and we were sorry to lose your services."

"I think it was fortunate for you that you did," he said with a laugh, "or in a few years I should have appropriated a good proportion of your profits. I saw where the chances lay. However I've lately been turning my energies into a more legitimate channel and find it pays better, as well as being more comfortable to my conscience. I've no longer a constant dread of a policeman, and can look every man in the face."

We continued talking some time longer; he was an amusing companion, and regaled me with the most entertaining stories of his life in America. At last my business compelled me to leave him, so I rose and excused my unwilling departure.

He held out his hand as I went, and I shook it. I did so with considerable satisfaction. I felt an immense relief in finding that the man whom I feared I had irreparably injured had become a changed character and had actually profited through the very experience that might have been expected to ruin him.

"I'm glad you'll shake hands with me," he said warmly; "it shows that you, at all events, no longer despise me."

"Every one must respect a man who has done as you have," I said.

"I'm afraid not—at all events, I don't mean to risk it. If you should happen ever to talk of me to any one at your place I wish you would not mention that you have seen me.

"I am sure no one would wish to rake up the past," I said

"Perhaps not; but I don't want any one to be reminded of it. I don't object to your speaking about it, but no one else shall. I've even changed my name; here is my card."

I took it—Mr. Charles Farebrother.

"If I can be of any assistance to you I hope you'll say so." I remarked as I put on my hat. "I should be glad of an opportunity of making you forget, as far as possible, that we were once on bad terms."

"You are very good; I should scarcely have ventured to ask you to do me a favor. You are in a hurry, now, I see, will you honor me by dining with me some night this week? I should very much like a talk with you; perhaps it might result in advantage to both of us."

I consented partly through curiosity. A few minutes afterwards I was on my way to the office.

I was careful not to mention that I had seen Macfarlane; his wishes were entitled to respect.

At the appointed hour I met him at his hotel. He gave me an admirable little dinner and supplemented it with some of his choice cigars. Not a word did he say which could have reference to our past connection; he was simply an agreeable host.

I was curious to learn how it was he had changed so marvellously in his circumstances, but he seemed in no hurry to enlighten me. However, as we sat chatting after desert, he gradually led the talk up to the reason of his invitation.

To condense his story, it appeared that on leaving the prison he managed to scrape together £50, which took him to America. He obtained employment in a small jeweller's store or shop, but soon managed to find a better situation. Instrumental in saving the place from a burglary, he was handsomely rewarded—a timely investment of his gift turned out successfully, and he found himself in possession of $10,000.

All this time he had been on the lookout, and he thought he saw an opening for making money. The knowledge which he had acquired as traveller for our firm showed him that the goldsmith's art was not in a high state of perfection in America, especially in the western states. He conceived the idea of buying the raw material and sending it across to England for manufacture—the smaller cost and greater finish of workmanship in this country amply repaying the comparatively small charges for freight and duty.

The business prospered; he took two partners, who brought considerable capital into the firm, and he was now the head of a flourishing concern.

Of course this was intensely interesting to me. There was evidently a field for further enterprise, of which I knew but little. I once had made inquiries about the American market, but had failed to secure an opening.

"I'm over about it now," said Macfarlane, "and one of my partners—Richardson—will be over next week. Now what we want to find is a firm who will do the manufacturing for us at fixed and moderate rates—a firm we can trust for good workmanship, and so save the cost of a London agent and place of business. Richardson recommended Jackson's, but they have served us rather badly, and we have come over to make fresh arrangements."

My mouth watered. If only our firm could get hold of such a job, it would go far to revive our sinking prosperity. My business energy got the upper hand of me, and I dropped a hint that possibly we might come to some arrangement.

"I confess it is just what I should like," he said, "but I was afraid to propose it. You are not likely to want to do business with me, considering what has happened in the past."

I did not know what to say so I kept silent.

"However, you will keep your eyes open this time, no doubt,' he continued with a laugh. "Seriously, though, nothing would please me more than to have you as our manufacturers; I know your style of work and am sure you would treat us generously. Only I must insist on one thing, should we come to any understanding. There are to be no running accounts between us. We may pay on the nail for all work done, not in bills or checks, but in cash. Unless you consent to that proviso, I decline to carry the matter a step further.

I protested against his want of belief in my change of conviction regarding him. But he was firm; he would not feel comfortable unless he put all possibility of doubt on our part out of the question.

The upshot of it was, that it appeared there was an immediate demand for certain work—a demand so pressing that there was no time to manufacture to meet it—it must be supplied from stock. This, of course, was agreed to. Raw gold was to be supplied at varying intervals, to be made up as directed, and when the metal was not forthcoming, orders were to be executed in the usual manner from metal in stock.

The only provisio of importance was that neither firm was to deal with another as regarded the American agency To this I had no objection. About 11 o'clock we sallied forth together; he offered to walk with me part of the way. Happening to pass an American bar, he said he would show me what American drinks were like. We had two or three for which he paid.

We then had a cab to Paddington, from which station I had to start for home. He wanted some fresh air so came with me to walk back by the park. He insisted on paying for everything that evening, so produced a five pound note for the fare, having no change left.

Naturally the cabman had none. Macfarlane would not hear of my paying, but consented to my changing his note for him.

I made an appointment with him for next day, and returned home immensely pleased with my evening's work. If things went well, it meant a clear profit of many hundreds a year to the firm.

When I was in bed, however, an unpleasant idea came into my head. Was it possible? But no! I dismissed the thought, which, however, would not be dismissed finally. Was the note I had changed for Macfarlane a good one?

I had heard of tricks of a similar kind often enough. Macfarlane had not made a bad thing out of me if he had palmed off a bogus note in exchange for my five sovereigns.

I got out of bed and examined it carefully. It appeared all right. I was ashamed of myself for doubting him.

Nevertheless, I went to the bank of England next morning and had it examined. It was pronounced genuine.

Judge how ashamed I felt! What, then, were my feelings when I caught sight of Macfarlane standing at the counter not two yards from me, filling a stout pocketbook with notes?

I tried to slip out unobserved, fearful lest he had seen the transaction I had been engaged in. But he happened to look up and caught sight of me. My only consolation was the hope that he had not seen the business on which I had been engaged. I responded to his greeting and we walked away together.

He had received a telegram that morning from America to the effect that his partner had started for England. So it was too late to instruct him to bring the gold with him; for the present Macfarlane would be obliged to give his orders to us to be executed from our own stock. Fortunately, he observed, his capital was large enough to enable him to do so.

One point on which he insisted, which I thought unnecessary, if not foolish, was that no mention of his former name should be made to my partners. It was a mooted point with me for some time whether I had any right to embark in transactions with him without informing the members of my firm of all I knew, but the security was so good, and the transactions so profitable that I yielded to his condition.

CHAPTER III.

In the course of the next few weeks we executed a valuable series of orders for him. He always paid me himself on the delivery of the goods. The payment was invariably in notes or gold. Only once did he offer me a check. I took it, and it was honored without question.

His partner arrived in the course of ten days or so, and Macfarlane introduced me, apologizing first for the want of refinement observable in him.

"He's a rough diamond, a self-made man. But he has money and honesty, and knows his business.

As I had scarcely any transactions with him personally, I could not object to his appearance and manners; but I should have put him down as a villain of considerable deep dye had not Macfarlane given him so good a character.

Business became even more brisk between Macfarlane and our firm. At the end of a fortnight the former showed me a large consignment of metal which he had just received. He promised to send it to us next morning. The same day we took for the second time a check from him. The reason of his offering it was that he had been obliged to pay on the spot for duties, etc., of the gold. I received it without a misgiving.

"I wish you'd come and spend a quiet evening with me and a few others," he said, as he handed me the check. "I have been making some arrangements which I think may open up a new field for both of us. Will you come?"

I assented. He gave me an address—a new one. He warned me that it was not a swell affair, that the men I should meet were the type of Richardson.

Having plenty of time on my hands, I walked to their rendezvous at the time appointed, but was overtaken by Macfarlane a few yards from the door.

"I'm rather late," he said. "I've had a little business to see to. Come along."

He took my arm, and led the way "by a short cut," as he said, to a house in a street not far from Soho Square. A latch key gave him admittance to a passage at the end of which were stairs up which we clambered,

"Brutal hole this is," he explained "but it holds more money than you would believe. Here we are."

He pushed open a door, and ushered me into a large room, almost bare of furniture, and half filled with tobacco smoke. Macfarlane was greeted with words from most of the men, some of whom did not appear to me to be very well disposed towards him.

"You're late," said one, with an oath.

"Yes, I know," was the answer. "Richardson, you know this gentleman I believe; will you introduce him?"

"Why don't you do it yourself?" was his reply.

"I want to look at some samples from the next room," said Macfarlane. "I shall be back in half a minute."

He slid out of the room, leaving me rather uneasy. The company was an ill-looking one. Even making allowance for the fact that they were miners perhaps, and self-made men, their appearance was unprepossessing.

"This is the gentleman that helps to distribute," said Richardson to the company generally.

"I wonder how much sticks to him," said one speaker.

"Not so much as to that fellow in the next room," muttered another with a glance towards the door out of which Macfarlane had departed.

A vague fear fell on me. What did these strange remarks mean?

"I don't quite understand you," I said to Richardson. "Mr. Farebrother asked me to meet you to-night on a matter of business."

"Exactly and the sooner we get to work the better. How much have you to account for?"

One thing was plain by this time—that I had been deceived. I was in a nest of hornets and I doubted if I could escape without being stung.

"If you will wait till Mr. Farebrother comes back, he will, no doubt, explain why I have come here," I said as quietly as I could. "I am at a loss to understand to what you refer."

"No, no," said a tall, cadaverous man, eyeing me suspiciously. "We should like a settlement of this job without Farebrother's putting his foot on it. The less we see of him the better till we have done with you. How much did you get for that last packet of thimbles?"

The word was a revelation. I knew it was used to denote forged notes. Like a flash the whole thing became clear. I had been skillfully trapped into being an accomplice of note-forgers My friend Macfarlane instead of being a reformed character, was the villain he always had been. He had kept his word. This had been his revenge.

Fortunately I did not lose my head. I could see that I was among a desperate set of men. If countenances told anything they were an unmitigated set of scoundrels. Should I cross them I would repent it.

I resolved that the safest thing to do was to pretend that I was the accomplice they supposed me; then, when I was safely out of their hands, the police should soon be on their track.

I temporized; I said that Macfarlane known to them as Farebrother—had the accounts of what I had received. I would step into the next room and ask him for them.

This was prevented by a man locking the door and swearing that I should not leave the room till their demands were satisfied.

I listened patiently to the confused uproar of voices. As far as I could gather, Macfarlane, who seemed the chief of the coiners had taken a considerable quantity of notes, stating that friend of his was passing them very successfully. After some time had elapsed, and he had produced very small amounts for distribution, pressure was put on him, and he promised that his agent should come and himself clear up the balance due.

I was the agent, and now they demanded, in no measured terms, sums amounting to several hundred pounds.

I explained that Macfarlane had deceived them; that I had never received the sums. I was rudely searched, and several notes and Macfarlane's check were found on me. The threats became more violent. I began to fear for my safety, when there was a sudden hush.

Steps were heard on the stairs; the door was rudely shaken and then burst in, and a file of police marched into the room.

Never had I seen policemen with such gratitude. I leaped towards them for protection. I was only just in time; there was a loud report, and I felt a bullitt whizz past my ear. I almost suffered the reward of a traitor for the gang evidently thought I had betrayed them.

So agitated and overcome was I that it was some time before I realized that I, too, was a prisoner. However, it was so, but I had no anxiety on that score; explanation would be sufficient to restore me to liberty. I yielded without a protest; thankful enough to find myself under the careful guard of the stern policemen.

Little did I think then of what was about to happen to me. I had not reckoned on the calculating villainy of my old enemy. He had so entangled me in his transactions, so carefully put on me personally the responsibilitiy of his nefarious transactions, that when I heard my solicitor unfold the evidence against me as an accomplice, I was horror-struck. I was a known companion of Macfarlane. I had concealed his identity with an embezzler. I had passed numerous false notes, taking advantage of my secure business reputation. I even acknowledged to the gang that I had been a partner in their swindling transactions.

Worst of all. Macfarlane was free. He had given information to the authorites of the meeting of the forgers, and then quietly absconded, whither no one knew. I furnished every particular about him, but all attempts to track him failed.

Now that his scheme of revenge and profit had succeeded it was easy for me to see how it had been accomplished, and to wonder at my own blindness in never suspecting that I was being made a victim. Having once put me off my guard by professing his gratitude for my prosecution of him, he gave me the note to change with the idea of my making it a test of his honesty. He was waiting for me at the bank next morning with his pocketbook open to display the magnitude of his transactions. He came to my firm because we could supply him with easily convertible goods, which, when melted could not be traced. The gold he showed me was bogus. The check he gave me on the morning of my arrest was dishonored. Everything was managed to get as much as possible out of me first, and then involvk me in ruin.

I hap almost resigned myself to being found guilty. Judge then of my joy when my solicitor brought me the news one morning of the capture of Macfarlane.

It had been affected in the most unexpected way. So far as we know, all the members of the gang had assembled on that memorable night. There was, however, one exception—a man named Barker was delayed. He arrived at the house an hour or two late, thought that things looked strange, and found the police in posession.

He naturally withdrew. He heard full details of the capture, and then went to find Macfarlane, who owed him personally a considerable sum. Macfarlane was not to be found. But Barker persevered; tracked him at last, and demanded his money. Macfarlane refused it; Barker went the same day to inform the authorities of Macfarlane's whereabouts, offering to turn Queen's evidence, an offer that was accepted.

The result of the evidence that he produced was that the jury inclined to the belief that I had been a victim, and I was adjudged not guilty. But though I left the court proclaimed to be an innocent man, none the less was I aware that Macfarlane had kept to the letter the vow he had made to be revenged on me.—[All the Year Round.

If a passion, like love, grows by what it feeds upon, there is no doubt the wish is fodder of the thought.

Little Things.

The late Daniel Drew, better known in New York as "Uncle Daniel," the renowned Methodist and great manager of finance, was always much interested in the young and keenly observant of their habits. Like all self-made men, he believed in small beginnings, and considered that a bootblack's chair or a peanut stand, if faithfully managed, might be the stepping stone to a future business and a fortune. He was always looking for evidences of financial genius among this class, and nothing escaped his eagle eye.

Among other peculiar theories was the one that a boy who had sense enough to leave a door as he found it, whether open or shut, must necessarily have something in him that was worth developing. On one occasion a newsboy ran into Mr. Drew's office, and on going out found that the door did not close easily. After making several ineffectual attempts to latch it he stepped back, put down his load, and carefully scrutinized the lock. Mr. Drew sat watching him intently.

"Say Uncle Daniel," the boy yelled out at last, giving the knob a few professional turns, "I can't shut your old door. It needs taking off and cleaning. Here you are, *Times, Herald, Sun Tribune!* Here you are!"

The next day when the lad left again with the papers, the gentleman called him to his desk.

"Say my son," he began, "don't you think a new lock would be better for that door than cleaning the old one?"

"Certainly "Uncle Daniel," the gamin responded, "if you can afford it."

This bit of facetiae touched Mr. Drew's keen sense of humor, and practically settled the business.

"Is there anything," he asked, "that you'd like better than selling papers?"

"Is there?" said the boy. "Anybody must be funy to ask that question."

"Well, what would you rather do?" Mr. Drew persisted.

"Why, I had rather learn how to fix clocks when they won't go, and locks when they won't latch, and engines when they get cranky, and such things, I'll bet I could make that old latch o' yourn work like a daisy now, and I ain't never learned anything so far."

"Go to work at the lock, Johnny," said the gentleman, "and we'll see."

And he did see. Johnny fixed the lock, and after that was apprenticed to a tinker and turned out well.

On another occasion a petty theft had been committed in one of the offices contiguous to Mr. Drew's. A ragged but clean faced boy about eleven years old who attended to the fires in one or two of the offices was accused of being the guilty party. A mob of clerks and officials had pressed about the lad as a policeman searched his clothes for the missing articles. Mr. Drew stood near, and as the officer brought out two little packages from the tattered pockets—one wrapped in the corner of a newspaper, the other in a piece of tin foil—the crowd sent up a shout.

"Sure's I'm born I ain't got nothin'," the lad protested. But the heartless spectators only laughed the louder at this trembling asseveration of innocence. When the wrapping was torn away a part of a horn comb was revealed. The foil covered a piece of hard soap about three inches square.

The voice of Uncle Daniel was heard at this point.

"I'll go security for any lad who carries a comb in one pocket and a piece of soap in the other," he said. "Young fellow, don't you be afraid. Shake every rag he's got on," he told the officer, "and then pass him over to me."

What Mr. Drew said to the lad, who was proved innocent of the crime imputed to him, does not transpire, but this bit of soap had more power for good in it than many bars. A boy in his poverty-stricken condition, who would keep himself clean and his hair tidy was bound to make his mark, and Uncle Daniel was ready and willing to help him.

A bright American boy started a peanut stand on the corner of Wall and Broad streets. It became at once immensely popular. One day Mr. Drew stood on the corner talking to some friends, when a drunken loafer reeled up to the stand, and after making a few insulting remarks, lifted his foot and sent peanuts and roaster, apples and oranges, tumbling into the street.

Now this was a misfortune to the vender, and Mr. Drew turned to see what the lad would do. To his surprise he found him laughing heartily, as every passer-by, whether well-dressed man or ragged boy, stopped to pick up and walk away with the displaced goodies. The lad rescued his roasting machine, but made no attempt to save anything else.

"Why don't you scurry round and pick up some of your stuff?" Uncle Daniel asked impatiently. "And what in creation are you laughing at?"

"What chance would I have with all those Wall street sharpers?" the lad asked. "I'm laughing to think how everybody goes down sooner or later who does business here. I never realzed before that I was a broker like the rest of 'em."

Uncle Daniel saw the point and joined in the laugh.

Fullers.

These workers who formed a very important body of tradesmen in Rome, were extensively employed in the same capacity as our washerwomen, for cleansing and whitening garments after they had become worn, an operation which was effected by treading the clothes in large vats of water mixed with urine collected from vessels exposed on corners of the street for the purpose. The cloth was then dried and bleached in a semi-circular frame placed over a pot of sulphur, after which it was hung up and had the nap loosened and laid with brushes or with a thistle, from which it was removed to the press, where it was finally smoothed and condensed by the action of a screw.

Why wonder at the convivial habits of the printer? It is perfectly natural that he should like to set 'em up.

A School examiner lately asked the following questions of a little girl: "What is the plural of man?" "Men." "Very well; and what is the plural of child?" "Twins," immediately replied the little girl.

"Mamma," said a little girl, "what is that man doing over there on Mr. Thompson's porch; he has been sitting on the steps for two hours and hasn't moved?" "That, my child, is a house painter. He is painting Mr. Thompson's house by the day."

SOME RARE ETCHINGS.

Facts about these Treasures of Art and Those Who Make Them.

"The word etch is from the Greek and means to eat," "Etching in the modern acceptation of the term signifies an impression from a metal plate, the lines in which have been eaten out by aquafortis or nitric acid. The etcher first has a perfectly smooth copper plate. This he covers evenly and carefully with paraffine or other soft wax. A needle or sharp pointed instrument, sometimes called a stylus, is then used by the artist to draw the lines constituting the picture he wishes to produce. The wax is thus scraped away in lines of varying magnitude, each stroke of the needle laying bare the metal under the wax. After the details of the drawing have been attended to with just as much mathematical and artistical exactitude as is devoted to a valuable painting or water color, the plate as prepared is placed in a bath of nitric acid. In about half an hour it is taken out and the sections where but light lines and colors are desired are recovered with wax. Then the plate is put back in the acid, which has no chemical power over the wax. In a short time it is taken out again and those portions where deeper lines than the first and less deep than the second are desired are covered with wax. So the process goes on until the acid has eaten its way into the copper to the desired depth in every part of the plate. The wax covering the plate is then scraped and washed off with the acid of turpentine; the entire plate is carefully cleaned and examined. If satisfactory the etcher has a plate from which numerous finished works may be produced. The plate is inked with the finest engraver's ink and fine Japanese paper is placed upon the plate and by pressure reproduces for the public the results of the labor of the artist. Such is the process of etching as universally followed to-day."

"Who are the greatest of modern etchers?"

"My dear sir; that would be hard to answer. There are many notable etchers, both in Europe and America, but on the whole, I think American etchers are leading the world, just as American wood engravers are acknowled to carry off the palm for perfect work. The New York Etching Club has enrolled on its membership list most of the notable living etchers. Among them I may mention: W. M. Chase, F. S. Church, Frederick Dielman, Henry Farrer, R. J. Gifford, the Morans (Peter, Thomas and Mrs.), J. E. Nicoll, C. A. Platt, K. Van Elton, T. W. Wood and Dr. L. M. Yale. In addition to these Stephen Parish, Pennell and Swayne Gifford occupy a high place. Parish, Pennell and Platt are known among artists as the three strong men, but Henry Farrer and several of the others I have mentioned are little, if any, inferior to them. As to the value of their etchings, their selling price ranges from $3 for a rough sketch to as many thousands for the production of a famous artist. This collection comprises the famous New York exhibitions of the last three years."

Becky Jones Remembers Him.

A lady mounted the steps leading to Ludlow street Jail in New York, recently, and rang the bell. She carried in her arm a large parcel, and in reply to the query of the keeper who answered the summons she said that she wanted to see Warden Kiernan personally. The visitor was ushered into the office, and when the warden made his appearance she handed him the package that she had in her possession. On it was written in a lady's hand: "From Becky Jones for Mr. and Mrs. Kiernan."

"This—this must be a mistake," stammered the Warden.

"Is your name Mr. Kiernan, and are you the Warden here?" asked the lady.

"Yes," he answered,

"Well, then, there is no mistake," was her response. "Miss Jones told me to give it to you personally;" and she left the jail official in a bewildred state.

Warden Kiernan has not deserted the army of bachelors, as yet, and as his eyes glanced over the writing on the package he was inclined to believe that he was the victim of a joke. But he mustered up courage enough to open the package, and to his surprise he found that it contained a handsome silver teaset. On each piece the initials "M. & M. K," were engraved. During her forty-five weeks sojourn in Ludlow street Miss Jones often told the Warden that she would make him and his wife a nice present. Mr. Kiernan thought her promises were worthless, like thousands of others made him by prisoners, and he never regarded it necessary to inform Becky that Mrs. Kiernan was a matter of the future. While the Warden was showing some friends his gift he received the following letter. It was postmarked Ballston, N. Y., where Becky has a comfortable home:

November 14, 1885.

Mr. Kiernan:

Yours of the 24th was received. I at once ordered the package to be delivered at 70 Ludlow street, not hearing I have written to my friend, Miss Linn, to see the cause of delay and see it delivered herself that I can depend upon it reachen 70. Please do not let the reporters put it in the papers, excuse those hasty lines. Remember me to Mrs. Kiernan. I saw a few days ago, it has made me feel sad that you have lost my friend Mr. Murphy by death. How can it be possible, if true, that he could go so very sudden. He appeared very well when I left dear old Ludlow-street Jail. I forgive Lawyer Scoot for taking me to court for standing up and fighting for all their. As ever obstinate,

Becky Jones.

P. S.—Poor Ward, I feel very sorry for him. If I could of went instead of him I would of went willingly. B. J.

The scruples against matrimony maintained by the Warden have vanished within the past two days, and he is determined to find a Mrs. Kiernan in order to make appropriate use of the gift from the only woman who was ever known to hold her tongue.

"Less bibles and better beds" is what a Boston drummer wrote in a hotel bible in Grand Rapids.

"John is very kind to the poor," said Mary, "but, after all, it may be more for the sake of praise than doing good." "Look here, Mary," said her husband, "when you see the hands of our clock always right you may be sure that there isn't much wrong with the inside works."

NEWS IN BRIEF.

—Prince Leopold has written a waltz.

—Nearly 21,000 public lamps in Paris.

—The Empress of Russia is a consumptive.

—The Pennsylvania railroads employ 70,000 men.

—Coal has been discovered near Eagle Pass, Texas.

—Fall River will have a $30,000 Masonic building.

—South Africa has 1562 miles of railroad in working order.

—Louisville, Ky., has had twenty-two murders in 1885.

—Some 30,000 children are living on canal boats in England.

—Sixteen members of the French Senate have died this year.

—Ouida's English publishers gives her $7,000 for every book she writes.

—It is estimated that 7,000,000 envelopes a day are made in the United States.

—The piano is the most moral of instruments, being grand, upright and square.

—Fifty-cents for the round trip of 60 miles is the pay of an Augusta, Me., stage driver.

—Over eight million females are reported as employed in industrial occupations in India.

—The Helmstedt Museum contains the rings with which Luther betrothed and wed his wife.

—A bag containing $1000 in dimes will be about the size of a medium-sized ham, it is stated.

—A single copy of the first edition of "Pickwick" was sold in London the other day for $140.

—Rochester, N. Y. has added "pumpkin pie socials," with literary exercises to her society events.

—A former citizen of this country named Garate has taken out naturalization papers in Mexico.

—The price of a young giraffe is from $2,500 to $5,000, and of an old one from $15,000 to $25,000.

—The estimated population of China is 405,213,152, or 203 souls per square mile throughout China proper.

—San Jacinto, Cal., has fifty flowing artesian wells. The first well was put down a little over a year ago.

—Cable lines are all the rage in Kansas City. The Council has seven applications for franchises under consideration.

—A Buffalo man who has spent $3000 in boring for water hasn't got a drop yet out of his deep hole in the ground.

—Mr. F. Marion Crawford is about to publish a new novel—his fifth or sixth—which is entitled "A Scholar's Romance."

—At the Leipsig University the first prize in natural history has been awarded to a Japanese student for a zoological treatise.

—An international exhibition, both agricultural and industrial, will be held this winter at Nice. There will be an art exhibition also.

—Brooklyn public schools, as shown by official reports, are attended by over 3000 more pupils than can be fairly accommodated in them.

—Penny cups of coffee, three-cent stews and five-cent steaks and chops are features of New York Italian restaurant bills of fare.

—An inventor in Paris, it is stated, has succeeded in producing a paper so incombustible that fire will not even alter its appearance.

—A lady who was introduced to the Grand Duke Alexis at a ball in Louisville has been crazy ever since, imagining herself the Duke's wife.

—Eighteen hundred and twenty persons have committed suicide at Monte Carlo within the past eight years. They were all victims of gambling.

—Four sons of one of Ohio's ablest lawyers, who were marked out by him for great careers in law and literature, are all on the road as minstrels.

—Baron v. Schoeler, of Corpus Christi has for a pet an immense snake of the anaconda species. It is perfectly docile so far as the Baron has yet learned.

—Over 10,000 women are engaged in the shirt and collar manufactories at Troy, N. Y., and the pay-roll of one concern alone averages over $1000 per day.

—Patrick Shea, of Holyoke, Mass., drank a wineglassful of undertaker's embalming fluid a day or two ago supposing it to be whisky, and died shortly after.

—The Delaware and Hudson Canal Company have not been killed off by railroads. They have just built forty new boats and are improving their property.

—To a ten-column report of the previous day's proceedings of the Buffalo City Council, the *Courier* the other day tacked the satisfying line: "Concluded to-morrow."

—The total quantity of meat brought into the London markets in November was 20,121 tons, of which 13 tons were seized as unfit for human food, or at the rate of .065 per cent.

—A 13-year-old girl, who is perfect in other ways, but who has simply little blue spots that puff out slightly where her eyes should be, is said to be living at Amherst, Portage county, Wisconsin.

—After a wedding ceremony performed at his residence recently by Rev. Frederick Baylis Allen, of Trinity Church, Boston, the groom slipped into his hand a coin that proved to be a nickel five-cent piece.

—The seasonable announcement is made by the Hemphill (Texas) *Reporter*, that it will take turkeys, chickens, eggs, butter or a nice, juicy venison ham in payment of a year's subscription.

—A three-pound child, born a month ago, is interesting Grand Rapids, Mich.

—Sixty bushels of pamphlets, advertising a patent medicine, were received in the Boston Post-office last week, and were found, on examination, to contain also a circular advertising a Kansas lottery.

—Miss Ellen H. Arthur, the President's daughter, is President of the Children's Christmas Club, of Washington, an organization whose object is to provide poor children with food, clothes and toys at the holiday season.

—The German Army Horse-buying Commission have this year bought in 449 markets 7054 horses, at an average of $170. The highest price paid was $350; the lowest $75. Six thousand six hundred and thirteen are three-year-olds; the rest older.