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From the Model American Courier.

That John Mason.

"What kind of people have you here?" I asked of my acquaintance, after becoming a resident of the beautiful little village of Moorfield.

"Very clever people, with one or two exceptions," he replied. "I am sure you will like us very well."

"Who are the exceptions?" I asked:—"For I wish to keep all such exceptions at a distance. Being a stranger, I will take a hint in time. It's an easy matter to shun acquaintanceship, but by no means so easy to break it off after it is once formed."

"Very truly said. And I will warn you in time, of one in particular. His name is John Mason. Keep clear of him, if you wish to keep clear of trouble. He's smooth and oily as a whetstone, and like a whetstone brade every thing he touches. He's a bad man, that John Mason!"

"Who or what is he?" I asked.

"He's a lawyer, and one of the principal holders of property in the township. But money can't gild him over. He's a bad man, that John Mason, and my advice to you and to every one is to keep clear of him. I know him like a book."

"I'm very much obliged to you," said I; "for your timely caution, and will take care to profit by it."

My next acquaintance bore pretty much the same testimony, and so did the next. It was, that John Mason was not the right kind of a man, and rather a blemish upon the village of Moorfield, notwithstanding he was one of the property holders in the township.

"If it wasn't for John Mason," I heard on this hand, and "if it were not for that John Mason," I heard on the other hand, as my acquaintance-ship among the people extended. Particularly against him, was the first individual who had whispered in my ears a friendly caution; and I hardly ever met with him, but he had something to say about that John Mason."

About six months after my arrival in Moorfield, I attended a public meeting, at which the leading men of the township were present. Most of them were strangers to me. At this meeting I fell in company with a very pleasant man, who had several times addressed those present, and always in such a clear, forcible and common sense way as to carry conviction to all but a few, who carped and quibbled at everything he said, and in a very churlish manner. Several of those quibblers I happened to know. He represented one set of views, and they another. He has regard to the public good; theirs looked, it was plain, to sectional and private interests.

"How do you like our little town?" said this individual to me, after the meeting had adjourned, and little knots of individuals were gathered here and there for conversation.

"Very well," I replied.

"And the people?" he added.

"The people," I added appears to be a fair sample of what are found everywhere; good and bad mixed up together."

"Yes. That I suppose is a good general estimate."

"Of course," I added, we find in all communities, certain individuals who stand more prominent than the rest—distinguished for good or evil. This appears to be the case here as well elsewhere."

"You have already discovered, then, that even in Moorfield there are some bad men?"

"O, yes! there's that John Mason, for instance."

"The man looked a little surprised, but remarked without any change of tone—

"So you have heard of him, have you?"

"Oh, yes."

"As a very bad man!"

"Of course. You know him, I suppose?"

"Yes, very well. Have you ever met him?"

"No, and never wish to."

"You've seen him, I suppose?"

"Never. Is he here?"

"The man glanced round the room and said:—

"I don't see him."

"He was here, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes; and addressed the meeting several times."

"In one of those sneering, ill-tempered answers to your remarks, no doubt."

"The man slightly bowed his head, as if acknowledging a compliment.

"It's a pity that such men as this John Mason often have wealth and shrewdness of mind, to give them power in the community," said I.

"Perhaps," said my auditor, "your prejudices against this man are too strong. He's not perfect, I know; but even the devil is often painted blacker than he is. If you knew him—I rather think you would estimate him differently."

"I don't wish to know him. Opportunities have offered, but I have always avoided an introduction."

"Who first gave you the character of this man?"

"Mr. Laxton," I replied. "Do you know him?"

"Oh, yes; very well. He speaks ill of Mason, does he?"

"He has cause, I believe."

"Has he ever explained to you what it was?"

"Not very fully. But he gives him a general bad character, and says he has done more to injure the best interests of the village than any ten of its worst enemies that exist."

"Indeed! That is a sweeping declaration. But I will frankly own that I cannot join in so broad a condemnation of the man, although he has his faults—and no one knows him, I think, better than I do."

This made no impression on me. The name of John Mason was associated, in my mind, with everything that was bad, and I replied by saying that I was well satisfied in regard to his character, and didn't mean to have any thing to do with him, while I lived in Moorfield.

Some one interrupted our conversation at this point, and I was soon separated from my very agreeable companion. I met him frequently afterwards, and he was always particularly polite to me, and asked me if I had fallen in with John Mason yet; to which I always replied in the negative, and expressed myself freely in regard to the personage mentioned.

Careful as we may be to keep out of trouble, we are not always successful in our efforts.—

When I removed to Moorfield, I supposed my affairs to be in a good way; but things proved to be otherwise. I was disappointed, not only in the amount I expected to receive from the business I followed in the village, but in the receipt of money, I felt sure of getting by a certain time.

When I first came to Moorfield, I bought a piece of property from Laxton—(this business transaction made us acquainted)—and paid cash down one third of the purchase money; the property remaining as security for two thirds, which I was under contract to settle at a certain time. My first payment was two thousand dollars. Unfortunately, when the final payment became due, I was not in funds, and the prospect of receiving money within five or six months was anything but good. In this dilemma I waited upon Laxton and informed him of my disappointment. His face became grave.

"I hope it will not put you to any serious inconvenience," I said.

"What?" he asked.

"My failure to meet this payment of this property. You are fully secured, and within six months I will be able to do what I had hoped to do at this time."

"I am sorry, Mr. Jones," he returned, "but I have made my calculation to receive the sum due at this time, and cannot do without it."

"But I haven't the money, Mr. Laxton, and have fully explained to you the reason why."

"That is your affair not mine, Mr. Jones.—

If you have been disappointed at one point, it is your business to look at another. A contract is a contract."

"Will you not extend the time of this payment?" said I.

"No sir. I cannot."

"What will you do?"

"Do? You ask a strange question!"

"Well, what will you do?"

"Why, raise the money on the property."

"How will you do that?"

"Sell it, of course."

I asked no farther question, but left him and went away. Before reaching home, to which place I was retiring in order to think over the position in which I was placed, and determine what steps to take, if any were left to me, I met the pleasant acquaintance I had met at the town meeting.

"You look grave, Mr. Jones," said he, as we paused, facing each other. "What's the matter?"

"I frankly told him my difficulty."

"So Laxton has got you in his clutches, has he?"

"Yes, he has. I perceived meaning reply that he made."

"I am in his clutches, certainly," said I.

"And will not get out of them readily, I apprehended."

"What will he do?"

"He will sell the property at auction."

"I won't bring his claim under the hammer."

"No, I suppose not, for that is really more than the property is worth."

"Do you think so?"

"Certainly I do. I know the value of every lot of ground in the township, and I know that you have been taken in, in your purchase."

"What do you suppose it will bring at a forced sale?"

"Few men will bid over twenty-five hundred dollars."

"You cannot be serious."

"I assure you I am. He, however, will overbid all, to four thousand. He will probably have it knocked down to him at three thousand, and thus come into the unincumbered possession of a piece of property upon which he has received two thousand dollars."

"But three thousand dollars will not satisfy his claim against me."

"No. You will still owe him a thousand dollars."

"Will he prosecute his claim?"

"He?" and the man smiled. "Yes to the last extremity, if there be hope of getting any thing."

"Then I am certainly in a bad way."

"I'm afraid you are, unless you can find some one here who will befriend you in the matter."

"There is no one here who will lend me four thousand dollars upon the piece of property."

"I don't know of but one man who is likely to do it," he answered.

"Who is that?" I asked eagerly.

"John Mason."

"John Mason! I'll never go to him."

"Why not?"

"I might as well remain where I am, as to get into his hands. A sharper and a lawyer to boot! No, no. Better to bear the evils that we have, than to fly to others that we know not of."

"You may get assistance somewhere else but I am doubtful," said the man; and bowing politely, passed on, and left me to my own unpleasant reflections.

Laxton made as quick work of the business as the nature of the case would admit; and in a short time the property was advertised at public sale. As the time for sale approached, the great desire to prevent the sacrifice suggested the "denier resoit" of calling upon Mason. But my prejudice against the man was so strong, that I could not get my own consent to do so.

"Have you been to see Mason?" he asked.

"I shook my head."

"Then you have made up your mind to let that scoundrel, Laxton, fleece you out of your property."

"I see no way of preventing it."

"Why don't you try Mason?"

"I don't believe it would do no good."

"I think differently."

"If he did help me out of this difficulty," I replied, "it would only be to get me into a more narrow corner."

"You don't know any such thing," said the man, in a different tone from any in which he had yet spoken when Mason was the subject of our remark. "Think, for a moment, upon the basis of your prejudice. It has mainly upon the assertion of Laxton, whom your own experience has proved to be a scoundrel. The fact is, your estimate of Mason's character is entirely erroneous. Laxton hates him, because he has circumvented him more than a dozen times in his schemes of iniquity, and will circumvent him again, if I do not greatly err, provided you apply to him."

There was force in this view. True enough. What confidence was there to be placed in Laxton's words? And if Mason had circumvented him as was alleged, of course there was a very good reason for desistance.

"At what hour do you think I can see him?" said I.

"I believe he is usually in about twelve o'clock."

"I will see him," said I, with emphasis.

"Do so," said the man; "and may your interview be as satisfactory as you can desire."

At twelve precisely, I called upon Mason, not without many misgivings, I must own. I found my prejudices still strong as to the good result. I could not help feeling serious doubts. On entering his office, I found no one present but the individual under whose advice I had called.

"Mr. Mason is not in?" said I, feeling a little disappointed.

"Oh, yes, he is in," was replied.

I looked around, and then turned my eyes upon the man's face. I did not exactly comprehend his expression.

"My name is John Mason," said he, bowing politely. "So be seated, and let us talk over the business upon which you called to see me."

I needed no invitation to sit down, for I could not have kept my feet if I had tried, so suddenly and completely did his words astonish and confound me.

I will not repeat the confused blundering apologies I attempted to make, nor give his

gentlemanly replies. Enough, that an hour before the time at which the sale was advertised to take place on the next day, I waited upon Laxton.

"Be kind enough said I, to let me have that obligation upon which your present stringent measures are founded."

"The man looked perfectly blank."

"Mr. John Mason," said I, "has generously furnished me with funds necessary to save my property from sacrifice, and will take the securities you hold."

"Curse that John Mason!" ejaculated Laxton, with excessive bitterness, turning away abruptly, and leaving me where I stood. A suspicion that he meant to let the sale go on, if possible, crossed my mind, and I returned to Mason, who saw the sheriff, and had the whole matter arranged."

Laxton has never spoken to me since. As for "that John Mason," I have proved him to be a fast friend and a man of strict honor in everything. So much for SLANDER.

Heavy Hearts and Light Hearts.

What's the use of it? Trouble, trouble, trouble—what a world of it we have! "Man is born to trouble," and "all is vanity and vexation of spirit"—thus and thus it is written. There are the troubles of infancy, of youth, of manhood, of old age! The troubles of poverty, and the troubles of riches! The trouble of living, and trouble of dying! Who has not his troubles! who claims exemption from them? who sees the end of them! And yet, after all, *what's the use of it?* This fretting and repining;—this sorrowing and sighing; this moping and mourning, making misery more miserable—in the name of common sense, I say, *what's the use of it?* Does it soothe, pain, soften affliction, or ward off misfortune! Will it call back deceased friends, or prevent others from dying, or deliver us from poverty, or make us healthy, or meliorate in one particular our condition! Then do say, for the very sake of sadness, *what's the use of it?*

Suppose the times are tight and pinching—that trade is dull; that you cannot make money enough to live as you would wish, and are obliged to labor harder even for the little you obtain than is agreeable; do you grieve about it! are you sad and disheartened? do you abandon hope, and wish yourself dead! Pshaw! *what's the use of it?* You get along; you will always get along, if you are industrious and frugal; and the most fortunate do no more. Besides a light heart will not break your fortune, nor a heavy one make.

It is your misfortune to have one of those pests of society, a slanderous neighbor, who speaks ill of you, and delights to do you every secret, back-handed injury he can; who never fails secretly to traduce your character, misrepresent your conduct and motives and even tries to excite prejudices against you! And does this discompose and trouble you!—*what's the use of it?* Keep the widow of the fellow—let your actions give the lie to his accusations, and you need not employ words for the purpose. Wait the issue, and you will see maxim verified in his case, that "he who spitteth against the wind, spitteth in his own face." And here too it may be remembered that a heavy heart is no answer to an accusation, though it be a false one, and that a light heart is not the heart that pleads guilty before men; you had better, therefore, have the last than the first, on all accounts.

Are men dishonest! will a long face and a sad heart reform them? Are you sometimes deceived, wronged, cheated? will being discouraged mend the matter, or melancholy make you sharper in your future dealings! Not a whit. Losses are lessons, all men buy their experience at the same market, though all may not pay the same price for the commodity. The only way is to make much of what comes dear; and you can do this with a light heart better than with a heavy one. A heavy heart—*what's the use of it?* Will it make your fortune! No: it will mar it.—*That's the use of it.*

Ultratism.—The following anecdote is related by the New Orleans Delta. It is a capital joke, and has the advantage of hitting both sides of the political canvass at once.

"Are you a drunkard?" said the Recorder, yesterday, to a hard case who was brought before him for being as blue as indigo the night before.

"Why, I'm a drunkard," said the prisoner, "but not an ultra-drunkard."

"What do you mean," said the Recorder—"I don't understand the distinction."

"Then I suppose you would understand me," said the prisoner, "if you had asked me what my politics were, and that I should reply—I'm a whig, but not an ultra whig." The Recorder remarked that the noise and confusion were so great, he could not be heard.

"Charles Augustus, take the sugar tongs, my dear and blow your nose."

"Please, marm, I would rather take the bellows—I can blow with both hands then." It is needless to add that Augustus had his way—smart children always do.

Good Poetry we admire greatly, particularly when it conveys a sound moral. The following is a perfect gem in its way. Our readers will doubtless appreciate it.

"The man that doth no paper take,

Grudging two dollars once a year,

Will never a good husband make,

Because his wife can never know what is

going on in the world, and his children will very ignorant appear."

The last line is rather too long for good jingle, but the moral is sublime.

A Strange Visitor.

I had been sitting in the verandah reading, and went away for a few minutes to speak to my wife. When I came back my chair was occupied.—

There, sitting as quietly as possible, was an enormous orang-outang, or monkey of some sort.—

When I first caught sight of him he had my book in his hands, and was to all appearance reading. It happened, however, to be rather a stupid book, and he threw it down. He then placed his hands upon his knees, and sat perfectly still, just as if he had been meditating on what he had been reading. I should say, as nearly as I could judge, that he must have been above five feet in height, supposing him to stand erect. He sat as upright as a man. After watching him for a minute or two, and observing that the calves of his legs were thicker, and more like those of a man than monkeys legs usually are, I stepped quietly back and called my wife. All this time I had not seen his face. However, as she came, one of the parrots screamed, and the old gentleman turned his head. His face was very dark, with large whiskers and beard, and hair all perfectly white; his body a light brown, and his face and hands peculiarly large. As soon as he saw me he half arose, laid both hands on the elbow of the chair, and began to grin and show his teeth and spit at me. I did not quite like it, as I was afraid he might make a spring in my direction; yet I knew my voice would at once frighten him away, if I raised the horrid unearthly yell used by the natives to scare wild beasts, and which even the tiger will hardly resist unless much pressed by hunger. Still I felt more inclined to watch him. Once I thought of going round the other way, and getting my gun; but really he looked so much like a man, that I could not have shot him. He continued to grin and spit until I turned away hoping he would resume his former sedate position. As soon however, as he thought my eye was off him, he rose leisurely from his chair, stepped slowly out of the verandah, caught hold of a branch of the banyan tree, and swung himself up into it. As he did this I saw he had a long tail, so that he could not, I believe, have been an orang-outang. Indeed I never heard of them coming into this little island, nor, I think into this district. I went into my study, and immediately afterwards heard him scuttling away over the roof of the house. I have not seen him since, but if he comes back I shall try to make friends with him, by giving him food, though I believe he belongs to rather a treacherous family. [Manners and Customs of India.

Life in Mississippi.

Married, on Monday, the 11th ultimo, in the court house, by the Rev. Jo. Bell, Mr. William Peery, to Miss Caroline Hudspeth, all of this county.

The minister had just been elected brigadier general of this brigade, and, when called upon to officiate at the marriage ceremony, was busily engaged in calculating his majority, which was large, having, no opponents. In another corner of the house was a group of men calculating the loss of Cass and gain of Taylor; and in the door of the house stood the Deputy sheriff, selling a poor fellow's corn for a small suspicion of debt; while the probate clerk, at his table, was busily engaged in calling off the land assessment book; and in another corner of the house stood a group of boys swapping marbles. The minister commenced the ceremony, while the Taylor man called out 104 gain for Taylor there, and the Cass man said "d—n the luck."

The sheriff shouted "how much for the corn—

who'll give more for the corn; the clerk called out the "N. E. quarter of the west half of section 12, township 13, range 12 east; and Billy in the corner cried out, "I won't give you two blacks for a white alley." But under all the disadvantageous circumstances, the reverend gentleman, with his maiden laurels fresh upon his brow, retained his gravity and performed the ceremony; and as he finished the benediction, he remarked to the happy couple that "Edmonds only received one vote in this county."—Natchez Free Trader.

THE BEST HOAX OF THE SEASON.—Bill Jones promised to pay us yesterday what he owed us, but he didn't. This is the first time we have been hoodwinked this season. Bill is entitled to the hat.

A young physician asking permission of a lady to kiss her, "No, sir—I never like to have a doctor's bill thrust in my face!"