Charles Sumner's Kindness

"Do I remember Andrew J. Roberts?" quoth an old State Politician. "Yes. He had a checkered career, poor man. But with all his shortcomings he was a bright, indeed a brilliant man. He was a great politician years ago and not only took extraordinary interest in the questions of the day, but knew intimately all the prominent public men. He was well read, intelligent, and a good talker, but he had a failing. He could not be depended upon, and at times was helpless.

"He used to hang around the State Republican headquarters from morning until night throughout the campaign, and campaigns lasted in those days nearly five months. It was during the anti-slavery days, when everybody was at the highest pitch of excitement. I remember one day in particular, when a number of prominent politicians were assembled at headquarters, among them Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson. Sumner was in the rear room, Wilson in the front. In walked Roberts. He talked in a loud voice and disturbed the whole assembly. Stopping into the rear room, he spied Sumner in earnest conversation with a friend. Giving him a tremendous slap on the shoulder, he shouted: 'D——n you, Sumner, how are you? Why don't you be as hearty and genial as your friend Wilson?'

"The effect of this rough message of Sumner can readily be imagined by those who remember or have read of the dignified and scholarly man. It was not only a shock but an insult. Sumner turned as white as a sheet but said nothing. He realized Roberts's condition and wisely kept the peace. Roberts was severely reprimanded and turned out of the room.

"It was not long after this that Roberts came to want and grief. He was actually destitute. He looked hungry and was nearly shot. To despair he came to me one day for work or advice. The big tears rolled down his cheeks as he told me how destitute and degraded he was, and how he longed to reform. I told him I had no work, and advised him to go to Sumner.

"'Go to Sumner,' he said. 'Oh, no, I insulted Sumner a short time ago. I can't go.'

"'Yes, you can,'" I said. "'Go to him just as you have come to me. Tell him frankly the whole story and he will help you.'

"Roberts did as I advised. About 10 o'clock the next morning he buttoned his shabby coat around his neck, to hide his flannel shirt, and made his way to the man he had grossly insulted but a short time before. Sumner, it is well known, was a late riser, and seldom breakfasted before 11 o'clock. He received the unfortunate man kindly, and, inviting him to breakfast, listened patiently to his story. Roberts told me afterwards that it was the first square meal he had eaten for long time. In less than two days Roberts was given a position in the navy yard, and henceforth he was a different man. When he told me later his experience with Sumner that morning his eyes filled with tears and his voice trembled with emotion. It was a magnanimous act on the part of Sumner, and an outward expression of his true character.

"It was the turning point in Roberts's life. Once a week or oftener he delivered one of the best temperance speeches I ever heard to my flock. To the day of his death, which occurred quite recently, he had a profound veneration for the memory of Sumner, the man who was so kind and kind to him in adversity."

A Florida lady writes: "As I have been able to find any [illegible] I am an alligator [illegible] child."

A lady who had not [illegible] joke was standing [illegible] "Do you think I look like [illegible]" asked. "Yes," he said after a [illegible] examination, "it looks like you [illegible] it came very quick."

A Missouri girl wrote her mother a stranger, and in three days they were married. They came after [illegible] young man was a fashion at [illegible] and the most everything [illegible] Wont [illegible] will come [illegible]

[illegible] for them. She overcame the factory [illegible] Coal Catalog. He made one of the newspaper business. Today he collects an income from property valued at between $[illegible]

Mark Twain, speaking of [illegible] is coming when we all shall [illegible] our nets on church, and [illegible] personality which the discomforter [illegible] will sit together and take it easy [illegible] the minister.

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