

THE HIDDEN MONEY.

It was the third of May, a brilliant spring day, with the jonquills and daffodils all in blossom, the great white peonies, bursting like balls of snow through their green calyces, and the grass on the upland pastures as soft and delicately-tinted as velvet; and even poor Mrs. Crofton, wearied and over-worked though she was, felt something of the sweet spring influences pass into her soul, as she stood on the door sill, buttering a bake-pan for the Saturday loaf of raisin-cake.

"It's a lovely day!" said Mrs. Crofton. "And somehow the smell o' them daffy-down-dillies reminds me of when I was a girl. Dear, dear! how time flies, to be sure! But there's a touch of chill in the air, all the same; and I doubt if it's safe for Uncle Malachi to sit out much longer.

And she went, bake-pan and all, around the corner of the house, to the paved space in front of the south wing, where, in a wooden arm-chair, sat a little old man, yellow-faced and wrinkled, with one-sided wig pulled over his left eye, a patch-work covered pillow at his back, and a woolen blanket wrapped around him.

"You'd better let me wheel you in, Uncle Malachi, said she listlessly. It's getting sort o' chilly, as the sun shifts around to the other side of the house; and you've been out here a good hour."

"I won't go in!" said Uncle Malachi, peevishly. "It's pleasant here, and I'm peaceable and content. It's the strangest thing I ever saw that people can't be satisfied to let me alone. Miles Larkins' son was by here not ten minutes ago, chattering and crackling about the weather. What business of his is the weather? And why the old cat can't he let me alone? Does he s'pose I don't know he's after the little bit of money I may leave? Bah! with a movement of disgust. "I can tell 'em all they won't get a cent of it!"

Mrs. Crofton's dim eyes lighted up with a gleam of excitement.

"Uncle Malachi," said she, "how much money have you got, anyhow?" The old man screwed up his withered features, like an attenuated monkey.

"Ah-h-h!" said he; "don't you wish you knew? But you don't know. No, nor you won't! P'raps it's fifty cents—p'raps it's fifty dollars. Anyhow it's nobody's business but mine. Nettie will have it. I shall tell Nettie where it is, some day. But not yet—no, no, not yet!"

"Won't you let me wheel your chair in, Uncle Malachi?" persisted Mrs. Crofton.

"No," snarled the old man. "I won't!" Mrs. Crofton was quite used to this sort of rebuff, and took no notice of it; she only went back to her kitchen, with a sigh.

Ten years ago, she and her husband had given up their homestead to come and take care of Uncle Malachi Miller, who was supposed then to be dying of old age.

"Whatever I have will be yours when I'm gone," said the old man; "and it won't be long—it won't be long!"

But Uncle Malachi's words proved incorrect. The years passed by. Mrs. Crofton wore herself out in taking care of him; Mr. Crofton grew bent and old trying to grind a living out of the stony fields and melancholy swamps of the Miller farm; and Nettie, the tall, blooming daughter, attempted to eke out the family funds by her slender salary as a school teacher; and Uncle Malachi sat on the old stone pavement in the sunshine, muttering to himself, and seeming to take no heed of the outer world.

When Mr. Crofton came in to get his dinner he went for Ueale Malachi.

"He's been settin' out there long enough," said he; "he's a dreadful trial, but we musn't let him get the rheumatiz."

But when they went together to the sunny stone-paved yard, the old man sat there, quite dead, with his glazed eyes staring straight before him and his jaw dropped on his breast.

"Dead, eh?" the neighbors commented in chorus. "Well, I s'pose you'll come into the property now, Mrs. Crofton?"

"I suppose we should," said Mrs. Crofton feebly; "only, nobody knows where it is."

It was true. The wrinkle, little, old human magpie had kept his secret to the last, and his niece and her daughter were as poor as ever.

"Never mind, mother," said Nettie, bravely. "We've done our duty, and that's all that can be expected of any of us."

In Uncle Malachi's old leather strapped memorandum-book there was only a yellow bit of paper, on which was marked the figure "3."

"Couldn't we make some sort of a clue out of that?" said young Doctor Drew, the village of Esculapius, who was to marry pretty Nettie, when they

had scraped together money enough to keep them out of the poor-house.

"No," said Mrs. Crofton, shaking her head. "Three was always Uncle Malachi's favorite number. He put off all business until the third day of the month if he wanted special good luck; he was born on the 3d of January, and—"

"And he died on the 3d of May," said Doctor Drew. "Well, it is rather a curious coincidence. However you had better keep this old memorandum, Mrs. Crofton; it can do no harm; and now we'll go to business."

It was the day after Uncle Malachi's funeral, and Doctor Drew had come to prescribe for Mrs. Crofton's periodical attack of ague.

"It's very strange," said the young medical man. "There must be bad drainage somewhere. We can't attribute it all to the old swamp in the meadow."

"There's no fault about the drainage that I know of," said Mrs. Crofton, in the drawing, listless tone that had become habitual to her of late.

"Mother," said Nettie, "perhaps it's the sunken well."

Doctor Drew pricked up his ears.

"What sunken well?" said he.

"There was an old well close to the house," said Mrs. Crofton. "It never was much used, and it was dry most of the year. So, when they built on the south wing, they just paved it over and dug a new one by the garden wall.—That's the very stone pavement where Uncle Malachi used to take so much comfort in the sunshine, poor old man!"

"Ah!" said the doctor. "It's very possible, then, that we may be able to account for this malarial affection.—Have you a crowbar about the premises?"

"You ain't going to uncover the old well?" said Zebedee Crofton, who wrapped in blankets, was enduring his regular "chill."

"Yes, I am," said Doctor Drew.

Out they all three went—Doctor Drew, Mrs. Crofton and Nettie. Neighbor Larkens was summoned to assist with the crowbar.

"I declare!" said Mrs. Crofton; it does 'most seem as if Uncle Malachi would rise out of his grave to prevent us. He was dreadful partial to this spot!"

"Well, it can't be of any more use to him now," said Nettie.

"Hello!" said Doctor Drew; "there are nine paving-stones, aren't there?"

"Three each way," said neighbor Larkens; "and the old well was directly under the center stun. Land o' Goshen!—I recollect coverin' it up as well as if it were yesterday!"

"Three times three," said Doctor Drew. "Perhaps that accounts for the old gentleman's partiality to it."

Nettie started.

"I never thought of that!" she said.

"Heave yo!" sang Neighbor Larkens who had sailed on a Greenland whaler once; and impelled by the strong arms of the two men, the central stone came up, revealing the black and hollow mouth of the disused well.

"Pah!" said Doctor Drew; there's enough bad air and foul gas here to infect a regiment!"

"There's something else here," quietly added Nettie, who had stooped to look down. "A leather bag, suspended from a spike driven in between the stones."

Neighbor Larkens who was long in the arms made a dive at it.

"Land o' liberty!" cried he; it's full o' gold pieces—eagles, by George! Miss Nettie, I declare for't you've come into your fortune!"

It was only five thousand dollars; but to Nettie Crofton it presented a fortune indeed. Here, upon the central stone of the diverging *threes*, old Uncle Malachi had kept guard until it was too late to give any one the clue to his secret.

The old well was filled up and properly drained. Farmer Crofton got rid of his ague, Nettie and her lover were married, and although Doctor Drew was not a superstitious man, he has ever since owned to a partiality for the figure "3."

An Extraordinary Occurrence.

THE Louisville Courier-Journal tells this wonderful story:

A most extraordinary natural accident and one for the discussion of physicians, came to light a few days ago, in which a needle taken into the foot of a lady nine years ago worked out of the thigh of her third child, a baby of one year.—The lady in question is the wife of Mr. Harry Isaacs, the cigarmaker, who lives on Market street, near Wenzel. At the time of the accident Mrs. Isaacs was unmarried and was then Miss Pauline Coblen. The needle was encountered in a carpet, penetrating her foot at full length. A physician was called in immediately, but the needle could not be found, although it was known to be in the foot. She suffered great pain, and for four months was unable to leave her bed. During that period three phys-

icians made frequent attempts to extract the needle, and the knife was used extensively; however without success.—Miss Coblen was quite fleshy before the accident, but fell off greatly from her long confinement. At length she was able to get about with the aid of crutches, but she continued to suffer from the needle. The pain decreased gradually from the time she was able to get about and she regained her former fleshiness. Finally she felt the needle only at periods when there was a change in the weather. The movement of the needle seemed to be upwards, and the pain was not stationary, but moved with the needle. About five years ago she was married to Mr. Harry Isaacs.—Three children are the fruit of that union, the youngest of which is a boy named Arthur, who is about a year old. The pain which troubled the mother left her even before the birth of her child, and the total disappearance of the pain she was wont to feel was a subject of remark and pleasure to her. On Monday a week ago her baby, who had since its birth manifested a kindly disposition, was very restless and cried uneasily all night. The cause of the child's ailment was not learned until the following morning, when in giving it a bath the mother discovered something black protruding through the skin of the child's thigh.—She caught hold of it, and was frightened when she found the thing of resisting substance. She, however, used a little force, and soon extracted the dark object. Imagine her surprise when she found it was a needle, black and corroded. The eye broke off in her hand while examining it. The recollection of the needle which has given her much pain came vividly before the mother and she felt keenly for the child. The remembrance of her relief from the pain forced itself upon the mother, and the connection of the two served as a clue as to how the needle came to get in the child's thigh. The mother says it would be almost impossible for the child to have taken up the needle without her finding it out, as the child would have made it known in piteous cries, as he did when the needle worked out.

Queer Titles for Books.

Some of the old books, in the time of Oliver Cromwell, had queer titles. The authors verily believed that there was something in a name. For instance: "A Most Delectable, Sweet Nosegay for God's Saints to Smell at," "A Pair of Bellows to Blow Off the Dust upon John Fry," "The Soufflers of Divine Love," "Hooks and Eyes for Believers Breeches," "High-heeled Shoes for Dwarfs in Holiness," "Crumbs of Comfort for the Chickens of the Covenant," "A Sigh of Sorrow for the Sinners of Sion, Breathed Out of a Hole in the Wall of an Earthen Vessel Known Among Men by the Name of Samuel Fish," "The Spiritual Mustard Pot, to Make the Soul Sneeze with Devotion," "Salvation's Vantage Ground, or a Louping Stand for Heavy Believers," "A Shot Aimed at the Devil's Headquarters, Through the Tube of the Cannon of the Covenant," "A Reaping Hook Well-tempered for the Stubborn Ears of the Coming Crop, or Biscuits Baked in the Oven of Charity. Carefully Conserved for the Chickens of the Church, Sparrows the Spirit and Sweet Swallows of Salvation," "Seven Sobs of a Soul Sorrowing for Sin, or Seven Penitential Psalms of the Princely Prophet David."

An Old-Time Estimate of the Passenger Business.

About 1823 the Legislature of Pennsylvania began to rouse to a sense of her rare facilities. Always slow, it decided the activity of Maryland and New York to rouse her. At last Philadelphia began to move, and, after much discussion and many doubts, a small appropriation was secured from the Legislature to defray the expenses of a preliminary survey, and to organize a Board of Commissioners of Internal Improvement. The three gentlemen appointed to begin this work, in 1823, made a report next year, I believe, and among other things stated, so runs the recollection of my informant, that they had selected competent agents to count the number of persons passing from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, west and east, and east and west, and also the number of wagons and teams hauling the freight over the same turnpike between the same points, and that these agents had now performed their duty at certain prominent places, and the commissioners felt sure that a canal between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh would be a success if it was boldly pushed. The time would come, they predicted, from the data they had gathered, when sixty persons a day would pass to and from Pittsburgh, and when sixty thousand tons of merchandise a year would be carried between the cities, one on the Delaware and the other on the Ohio. Reports of those early days show more amusing prophecies and details, and the historian or novelist would be started at the ridiculous contrast between the hope and the fruition, and between the seed and the harvest. We have lived, not only to see sixty passengers a day passing east and west, but all the routes at least as many hundreds, while the tonnage is simply beyond calculation.

SUNDAY READING.

Importance of a Right Faith.

The popular adage is, "Oh, it makes no difference what a man believes, so he is sincere."

Let us see. A family was poisoned in Montgomery county last year by eating toad-stools, which they sincerely believed to be mushrooms. Three of them died.

Did it make no difference? A man endorses a note for a friend, whom he sincerely believed to be an honest man. He was a scoundrel, and left him to pay the note. Did it make no difference?

A traveler takes the train going North sincerely believing it is the Southern train. Will he bring up at the South all the same?

If a man believes a certain thing, while the truth about it is entirely different, will his belief make it all right?

The truth is, the popular adage is a lie—and a very transparent one at that! If a man is sincere he will take pains to know the truth. For, where facts are concerned, all the thinking in the world will not change them. A toad-stool remains a toad-stool whatever we may think about it.

A Cheerful Giver.

"I was once attending a missionary meeting in Scotland," said a minister in making an address. "There it is the custom to take up the collection at the door as the people go out. A poor woman, in going out, dropped a sovereign into the basket. The deacon who held the basket said 'I'm sure you cannot afford to give as much as that.'" "Oh yes, I can," she said. "Do take it back," said the deacon. She replied, "I must give it. I love to give for Jesus, sake. Then the deacon said, "Take it home to night, and if, after thinking it over, you still wish to give it, you can send it in the morning."

"In the morning I was sitting at breakfast with the deacon, when a little note came from this woman; but the note contained two sovereigns. "You won't take them?" I said to the deacon. "Of course I shall," said he. "I know that good woman well. If I send them back, she will send four next time."

"This was indeed 'loving to give.'"

What "Wife" Means.

Says Ruskin: "What do you think the beautiful word 'wife' comes from? It is the great word in which the English and Latin languages conquered the French and Greek. I hope the French will some day get a word for it instead of *femme*. But what do you think it comes from? The great value of the Saxon words is that they mean something. Wife means 'weaver!' You must either be house-wives or house-moths, remember that. In the sense, you must either weave men's fortunes and embroider them, or feed upon and bring them to decay. Wherever a true wife comes, home is always around her. The stars may be over her head the glow worm in the night's cold grass may be the fire at her feet, but home is where she is, and for a noble woman it stretches far around her, better than houses celled with cedar or painted with vermillion shedding its quiet light for those who else are homeless. This, I believe, is the woman's true place and power.

A Little Sermon.

Sometimes I compare the trouble we have to undergo in the course of a year to a great bundle of fagots, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once. He mercifully unties the bundles, and gives us one stick, which we are able to carry to-day and then another which we are able to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but chose to increase our trouble by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load before we are required to bear it.

A religion which does not suffice to govern and control a man will never suffice to save him. That which does not distinguish him from a wicked world will never distinguish him from a perishing world.

Occasions of greater adversity best show how great virtue each one hath. For occasions make not a man frail, but show what he is.

Humbugged Again.

I saw so much said about the merits of Hop Bitters, and my wife who was always doctoring and never well, teased me so urgently to get her some, I concluded to be humbugged again; and I am glad I did, for in less than two months use of the Bitters my wife was cured and she has remained so for eighteen months since. I like such humbugging.—H. T. St. Paul.—Pioneer Press.

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