A Provoking Mistake.

BY A DETECTIVE.

IT WAS a dull rainy day, toward the end of August—one of those days when earth and sky alike are gray and dreary, and the raindrops pattering against the window sound like human sobs. The clock that hung against the wall pointed to the hour of three in the afternoon, and I was sitting by myself in our little inner office, looking out at the expanse of dull, gray wall that formed my only prospect from the not clean window, and thinking. I had read every square inch of type in the newspapers; I had made out all the necessary papers and documents, and now with literally "nothing to do," I was musing about Kitty Elton, and wondering how long it would be before I should be able to marry her.

Dear little Kitty! she was as sweet and as patient as it was in the nature of a woman to be, but I knew it was a hard life for her day after day and month after month, and I longed to set her free from the monotonous captivity.—She was a pretty blue-eyed girl of twenty, with a dimple in her chin, and the sweetest roses on her cheek that ever inspired the pen of a poet. I was no poet, yet I think I understood and appreciated all her womanly grace and delicate beauty as fully as if my heart's thoughts could shape themselves into verse. And it was of them I was thinking when the door opened and Mr. Clenner came in.

Mr. Clenner was our "chief"—a dark, silent little man, with square stern mouth, and clouded eyes, which appeared almost expressionless when they were turned full upon you, and yet which seemed to see everything at a glance. He sat down beside me.

"Meredith," he said in a quite, subdued tone that was natural to him, "didn't you say you were getting tired doing nothing?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I have something for you to do."

"What is it, sir?"

"Something that will bring you both credit and friends, if you manage it skillfully. I had intended to go myself, but circumstances happened untowardly, and I shall send you in stead."

Bending his head towards me and speaking scarcely above a whisper, he told me the special business on which I was to be sent. There had been, it seems, a series of very heavy forgeries lately committed, with a boldness and audacity that fairly seemed to set the authorities at defiance. For some time he had been in doubt as to the exact perpetrator of the crime, but after much quiet investigation and casting hither and thither, he had detected the hidden spring—one Perley Matterson—who had skillfully eluded all pursuit and was now somewhere hiding in the northeastern portion of the State. His whereabouts had been ascertained as nearly as possible, and it was for me to go quietly up and apprehend him, before he should become aware of our knowledge of all his movements.

I sat listening to all the various details of our plan as they were sketched out by Mr. Clenner. The reward that had been privately offered was high—my heart leaped as I reflected how much nearer it would bring me to Kitty Elton, nor did the enterprise seem particularly difficult to accomplish.

"Do you think you can do it?" Mr. Clenner asked, after the whole thing had been laid before me.

"Yes, sir. When shall I start?"

"Now—within half an hour."

"What! So soon?"

"Yes; why not?"

I could think of no sufficient reason except one, which I did not care to communicate to my superior—the longing wish to see Kitty once more before I started.

"Just as you decide, Mr. Clenner, of course," I said, rising. "If I take the four o'clock express, I shall be there tomorrow morning."

"Yes, and that is altogether the best plan. He will not remain long in any one place just at present, depend upon it, and what you have to do must be done at once."

All through that long night journey I mused upon the task that lay before me. The house to which I was directed was in the midst of woods, about half a mile beyond the village of Drownville—the residence of Mrs. Matteson, the mother of the audacious forger. If help was needed I was fully authorized to call for it upon the constabulary authorities of Drownville, but I expected to need none.

The rosy dawn was just flushing the eastern sky when I alighted, stiff, weary and jaded from the train, at the little way station of Drownville.

"Can you direct me to Mrs. Matteson's place?" I asked of the sleepy station master, who was yawning behind the little aperture of the ticket office.

"Matteson—Mrs. Matteson; I don't know her, but I guess likely I can tell you where she lives. Just you follow the main street of the village out about half a mile and you will come to a patch of woods, with bars at the fence. Go through them bars a little way further on, and ye'll see a little yaller house, just the last place in the world where you'd expect to see a house.—That's where Mrs. Matteson lives."

I thanked my informant and set out on a brisk walk carrying my traveling bag. It was quite a distance 'ere I emerged from the suburbs of the main street, into a quiet and secluded road, or rather lane. The "patch o' woods" with the bars, and the "little yaller house"—a cream colored cottage, literally overgrown with honey suckles—rewarded my search, and as I knocked at the door, a clock somewhere inside struck seven.

A decent looking, elderly woman in widows weeds came to the door.

"Is Mr. Matteson in? Mr. Perley?"

"No," she answered quickly, with, as I imagined, rather a confused look.—I did not believe her, and asked quietly:

"When do you expect him home?"

"Not at present."

Apparently she expected me to go away, but instead I stepped in.

"Mother," asked a soft voice at the head of the stairs, "who is it?"

And then for the first time I became aware that some one had been watching our colloquy from the head of the stairs—a young girl, dressed like the mother in deep black, with very brilliant eyes, and a profusion of jet black ringlets.

"Some one to see your brother."

She came half way down the stairs, pushing back her curls with one hand, and looking at me with wonderful eyes. Even then her beauty struck me as I stood gazing at her.

"Pearly is not at home," she said hurriedly. "He has gone away. We do not know when he will return."

Evidently this mother and daughter were in the secret of Matteson's villainy and doing their best to screen him from its consequences. My heart bled for them both; but it was no time to indulge in sentimental pity. Speaking as briefly as I could, I told them that it was my duty to compel them to remain where they were while I searched the house.

Mrs. Matteson sat down, pale and trembling; her daughter colored high.

"Mother," she said, "why do you stand by and listen to such slanders? It is false! Let this man search the house if he will; my brother is as innocent as I am!

No opposition was offered to my search. It was entirely fruitless, however—there was no trace of the flown bird. Nevertheless, I concluded to remain there quietly for a day or two, to see what a little waiting might bring forth.

The same afternoon Clara Matteson came in, as I sat by the piazza window, keeping a quiet watch on all the surroundings.

"Mr. Meredith," she said, softly, "mother thinks I have been rude to you. She says it was not your fault personally, that you were sent here—on such a mistake, and perhaps she is right. I am very sorry if I hurt your feelings."

The pretty penitent way in which she spoke quite won my heart, and a few questions on my part seemed to unlock the hidden recesses of her confidence.—She talked at first shyly, and afterwards with more assurance of herself, her absent brother, and her mother, giving me a thousand artless little family details which I almost dreaded to hear.—The twilight talk was one of the pleasantest episodes of my by no means universally pleasant life, and I was considerably annoyed when it was broken in upon by the arrival of the Drownville constables who were to watch through the night. At the sound of their footsteps on the piazza floor, Clara rose up and sat down again, confused and frightened.

"Oh, Mr. Meredith—those men—"

"Be easy, Miss Matteson," I said; "you shall not be annoyed by them.—Your privacy shall not be broken in upon, believe me."

"I know I am silly," faltered Clara, "but oh! it seems so dreadful!"

My orders to the men were brief and succinct. I stationed them as seemed best to me, and then returned to spend the evening with Miss Matteson. And when I was at length left alone I could not help thinking—God forgive me—how much more winning and graceful she was than poor Kitty Elton.

At length an answer came to my report to Mr. Clenner—it was short and to the purpose:

"Come back. You are only losing time. If the bird has flown we must look elsewhere for him.

I read the missive with a pang.—Clara Matteson's cheek deepened in color as I announced my departure to her.

"You have been far kinder than we dared to hope, Mr. Meredith," she said, as I held her hand in mine.

"You will think of me sometimes, Clara?"

The reader will easily see how our intimacy had progressed. She smiled, hung her head, and taking a pair of scissors from the table, severed one bright black curl from the abundant tresses that hung over her forehead.

"Keep this, Mr. Meredith, in memory of me."

Was I foolish to press the jetty ringlet to my lips ere I laid it closely against my heart? Clara evidently thought I was—for she had laughed, but did not seem displeased.

Mr. Clenner seemed annoyed when I got back to the Bureau—rather an unusual proceeding on his part, for I certainly did all that man could do under the circumstances.

"We have been mistaken all the way through, it seems," he said, biting his lip. "Strange—very strange—I was never mistaken before in my calculations. Well, we must try again."

I went to Kitty Elton's that night.—She received me with a sweet, shy gladness of welcome that should have made me the happiest man in the world; but it did not. Clara Matteson's dark beauty seemed to stand between me and her like a visible barrier. When I took my leave, there were tears in her eyes.

"Kitty, you are crying!"

"Because you are changed. Edward, you do not love me as well as you did!"

"Kitty, what nonsense!"

I was vexed with her, simply because I knew her accusation was true. But I kissed her once more, and took my leave, moody and dissatisfied.

When I reached the office the next morning Mr. Clenner was not there.

"He has gone to Drownville," said my fellow detective; "he went last night."

"To Drownville?"

I was seriously annoyed. Did Mr. Clenner distrust the accuracy of my reports? Or did he imagine that I was unable to institute a thorough and complete investigation of the premises?

"It's very strange," I mused aloud.

Jones laughed.

"Well," he said, "you know Clenner has a way of doing strange things. Depend upon it, he has good reasons for his conduct."

I was sitting at my desk two days subsequently when the door glided noiselessly open and Clenner himself entered.

"You are back again sir, and what luck?"

"The best."

"You don't mean to say you've got him?"

"I do mean to say it. Edward Meredith, I knew I could not be entirely mistaken. Pearley Matteson is in the next room—half an hour from now he will be in prison."

"Where did you apprehend him?"

"At home in his mother's house."

"But——"

"He was there all the time you remained there. Ned, my boy you've made a blunder for once, but don't let happen again."

"What do you mean, sir?"

For reply he opened the door of the private inner apartment, his own special sanctum. A slight boyish figure leaned against the window smoking a cigarette, with black curls tossed back from a marble white brow, and brilliant eyes. He mockingly inclined his head as I stared at him, with a motion not unfamiliar to me.

"Clara Matteson!"

"Yes," he said, in a soft, sarcastic voice. "Clara Matteson, or Pearley Matteson, or whatever you choose to call me. Many thanks for your politeness, Detective Meredith; and if you would like another lock of hair——"

I turned away burning scarlet, while Mr. Clenner closed the door.

"Never mind, my boy, it will be a lesson to you," he said, laughing. "He makes a very pretty girl, but I am not at all susceptible."

What a double-dyed fool I had been! I had lost the reward—failed in the estimation of my fellow officers—and behaved like a brute to poor Kitty—and all for what?"

I went to Kitty, and told her the whole story and to my surprise the dear, faithful little creature loved me just as well as ever.

"I won't be jealous of Pearley Matteson, Edward," she said, smiling, whatever I might be of his sister. And, dearest, don't be discouraged. I'll wait as long as you please, and you will be a second Mr. Clenner yet."

She was determined to look on the bright side of things, this little Kitty of mine, but I felt the mortification none the less keenly, although, as Mr. Clenner said, it would undoubtedly prove a good lesson to me.

Pearley Matteson's girlish beauty is eclipsed in the State's prison—nor do I pity him. The stake for which he played was high—and he lost.

☞ A Christian is like a locomotive. A fire must be kindled in the heart of it before it will go.

A CAMPAIGN INCIDENT.

A CRAZY-LOOKING huckster wagon, filled with the products of the farm and garden, and drawn by a dilapidated horse attracted considerable attention in Titusville the other day. The occupant of the vehicle was a little old man in homespun, who rode with one foot on the outside of the wagon-box.—Interest in the odd-looking turnout was greatly increased when the driver reined up in front of the *Petroleum World* office, and raised a small sign-board in his wagon upon which was inscribed in an uncouth hand:

COUNTRY PRODUCE
ALSO THE
POLITICAL ISSUES DISCUSSED.

This legend soon attracted a large crown, when the little old man stood up in the crazy wagon and made a formal announcement that he had for sale a nice lot of garden produce such as pumpkins, turnips, cabbages, some chestnuts, etc. "I also have," said he, as he lifted a faded bed-quilt from a keg, "a few gallons of hard cider, which I think is the best ever brought to yer town.

"What about the political issues?" yelled a man from the curbstone.

"We'll come to that by-and-by—jes' as soon as I sell some ov this truck out ov the wagon so as I kin have a place to stand."

The crowd realized that they had at last struck something in the way of a political orator, and it was plain that they meant to encourage him, even before he had made the suggestion regarding business.

The cider was the first thing they tackled. As many men as could gather around the wagon and the cider was closed out in short order at five cents per cup.

"Drink hearty, gents," the little old man would say, "this reminds me uv the hard-cider campaign uv '40, when I tuk the stump for Old Tippecanoe; an' besides, it's made uv as fine fruit as ever growed on a tree."

"See here! tell us about Maine!" yelled a political man, whose thirst was for political information.

"Don't fret the cattle," was the old man's response.

One man bought all the chestnuts he had, in order, as he said, to reduce the stock, and get around to the political issues.

Pumpkins, squashes, parsnips, etc., were purchased rapidly, the old man remarking that the drudgery of farm-life was distasteful to him, and he was only truly happy when on the stump discussing the great issues before the people.

Scraping under the seat with his feet he unearthed a gourd, and holding it up, said:

"Gents, this is the last shot in the locker, who is the lucky man?"

Twenty-five or thirty men, apparently, offered to purchase it. The man who succeeded bowled it down street with an oath, and said what he wanted was chin music.

The crowd was breathless with anxiety, or would have been had it not been yelling "speech!" "speech!"

The little old man stood up in the wagon, took off his hat, and said:

"No occasion for a speech now, gents. Goods are all sold without it. If ye'd hung fire like I expected ye would, I'd harangued ye till sundown. But ye kem right up like little men, and bought my last parsnip. That's the way I like to do biz. Thanks, gents,"

The party who had been the heaviest purchaser ran to take the horse by the bits; but that animal laid his ears back on his neck, and showed his teeth in the most vicious fashion.

"I forgot to tell ye," said the old man, quietly, "not to go near Romeo, fer he's liable ter swallow some one."

He then dropped down into his seat and drove off, remarking that when he went actively into politics, business in garden truck would be a darn sight duller than it appeared to be now.

Praying to Chance.

A lady who had forsaken her God and the Bible for the gloom and darkness of infidelity, was crossing the Atlantic, and asked a sailor, one morning, how long they should be out.

"In fourteen days, if it is God's will, we shall be in Liverpool," answered the sailor.

"If it is God's will!" said the lady; "what a senseless expression! don't you know that all comes by chance?"

In a few days a terrible storm arose, and the lady stood clinging on the side of the cabin door in agony of terror, when the sailor passed her.

"What do you think," said she, "will the storm soon be over?"

"It seems likely to last for some time, madam."

"Oh!" she cried, "pray that we may not be lost."

His reply was, "Madam, shall I pray to chance?"

ST JACOBS OIL
TRADE MARK.

THE GREAT
GERMAN REMEDY.
FOR
RHEUMATISM,
Neuralgia, Sciatica, Lumbago,
Backache, Soreness of the Chest, Gout, Quinsy, Sore Throat, Swellings and Sprains, Burns and Scalds, General Bodily Pains,
Tooth, Ear and Headache, Frosted Feet and Ears, and all other Pains and Aches.

No Preparation on earth equals ST. JACOBS OIL as a *safe, sure, simple* and *cheap* External Remedy. A trial entails but the comparatively trifling outlay of **50 Cents**, and every one suffering with pain can have cheap and positive proof of its claims.

Directions in Eleven Languages.

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS AND DEALERS IN MEDICINE.

A. VOGELER & CO.,
Baltimore, Md., U. S. A.

May 3, 1881—1y

MUSSER & ALLEN
CENTRAL STORE
NEWPORT, PENN'A.

Now offer the public

A RARE AND ELEGANT ASSORTMENT OF
DRESS GOODS
Consisting of all shades suitable for the season
BLACK ALPACCAS
AND
Mourning Goods
A SPECIALITY.
BLEACHED AND UNBLEACHED
MUSLINS,
AT VARIOUS PRICES.
AN ENDLESS SELECTION OF PRINTS'
We sell and do keep a good quality of
SUGARS, COFFEES & SYRUPS
And everything under the head of
GROCERIES!
Machine needles and oil for all makes of Machines.
To be convinced that our goods are
CHEAP AS THE CHEAPEST,
IS TO CALL AND EXAMINE STOCK.
☞ No trouble to show goods.
Don't forget the
CENTRAL STORE,
Newport, Perry County, Pa.

HELP Yourselves by making money when a golden chance is offered, thereby always keeping poverty from your door. Those who always take advantage of the good chances for making money that are offered, generally become wealthy, while those who do not improve such chances remain in poverty. We want many men, women, boys and girls to work for us right in their own localities. The business will pay more than ten times ordinary wages. We furnish an expensive outfit and all that you need, free. No one who engages fails to make money very rapidly. You can devote your whole time to the work, or only your spare moments. Full information and all that is needed sent free. Address STINSON & CO., Portland, Maine 1y.

ESTATE NOTICE.—Notice is hereby given, that letters of administration on the estate of Rev. S. S. Richmond late of Torone township, Perry County, Pa., deceased, have been granted to the undersigned. P. O. Address—Landisburg, Perry County, Pa.

All persons indebted to said estate are requested to make immediate payment and those having claims will present them duly authenticated for settlement to

ALBERT E. RICHMOND,
Administrator

CHAS. H. SMILEY, Att'y.
May10, 1881.

Permanent Employment.

WANTED.—D. H. Patty & Co., nursery men, want a few good reliable men to sell trees, vines and shrubs, through this State. They promise steady employment to good salesmen.—For full particulars address D. H. PATTY & CO., Geneva, N. Y. 37—49

GRAND BOULEVARD HOTEL,
Corner 59th St. and Broadway,
NEW YORK.
On Both American & European Plans.

Fronting on Central Park, the Grand Boulevard, Broadway and Fifty-Ninth Street, this Hotel occupies the entire square, and was built and furnished at an expense of over $400,000. It is one of the most elegant as well as finest located in the city; has a passenger Elevator and all modern improvements, and is within one square of the depots of the Sixth and Eighth Avenue Elevated R. R. Cars and still nearer to the Broadway cars—convenient and accessible from all parts of the city. Rooms with board, $2 per day. Special rates for families and permanent guests.

Aug. 24, '80 1y] [E. HASKELL, Proprietor.

Estate of Samuel Miller, Deceased.

LETTERS of Administration on the above estate having been granted to the undersigned, all persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment, and those having claims to present the same without delay to

WALLACE DEWITT, Administrator.

Sept. 20, 1881.] [Harrisburg, Pa.