

MA'S OLD BEAU.

Clara and Mary Merwin, sisters and orphans, were in the drawing room of their pleasant home on the edge of a beautiful village near the Missouri. Their mother had been dead several years. Their father had lately died, leaving them an estate, as they supposed, of the value of some forty thousand dollars, but they had learned quite recently that the property was encumbered to such an extent that they were very likely to be deprived of it all. This discovery, as may be supposed, filled them with sadness and anxiety, and they were seated in silence, unable to read, to converse, to work, to do anything but brood over their great misfortune.

While they were thus occupied with their thoughts a buggy drove up in front of the house, a man alighted, and the buggy drove away. The man must have been on the shady side of fifty, to judge from his gray hairs, although his face was indeed fresh and unlined. He was dressed with remarkable neatness, and his manner indicated briskness as well as precision. In one hand he carried a small valise and in the other an umbrella, and he stepped quickly to the door and rang the bell. In a few minutes he was ushered into the presence of the young ladies.

"I'm obliged to introduce myself," he said, smiling and bowing in a courtly manner. "Abner Pierce. Here is my card—professional card. You will perceive that I am a lawyer in St. Louis, and presumably a respectable man. Don't be afraid; I'm not here to hurt you, but to help you. I have the honor to call myself a friend of the family—that is to say, although it is many years since I have seen any member of your family, I have always had the highest regard for your now sainted mother, and nothing would please me better than to be of some service to her children."

"We are happy to meet you," murmured Clara. "Thank you. I happened to hear—no matter how—that you are in trouble, and have come up here in the belief that I can assist you. I hope that you will feel that you can trust me. I am actually an honest man, although a lawyer, and I mean well, though I express myself clumsily."

"I am free to admit," said Clara, "that we need assistance and advice, and that we have not known to whom to look for it."

"Very well. It is a good thing, no doubt, that I have come. Now sit down and tell me all about it."

Clara Merwin, who, as the elder of the orphans was leader in everything, told how she and her sister had taken out letters of administration upon her father's estate, when a man of whom they had never before heard put in an appearance, and presented a mortgage, with bond included, executed by the late Mr. Merwin, upon all his real estate, for the sum of \$40,000. Not content with prohibiting them from attempting to sell everything, he had tied up their money in bank, leaving them absolutely penniless. They had used their credit, but tradesmen were becoming impatient, and some had refused to supply them any further without pay.

"That's a bad case," said Mr. Pierce. "You need money—that is the first thing to be attended to. You must let me act as your banker until I get you out of this scrape, and that won't be long, I hope. How much do you owe?"

"More than one hundred dollars," answered Clara.

The old gentleman counted out two hundred dollars from a well-filled pocket-book, and handed it to her.

"For your mother's sake," he said, when she refused to receive it, and he forced it on her in such a way that she could not help taking it. He then accepted the young lady's invitation to make their house his home during his stay, and he went into dinner with them.

"Is there any place where I can smoke?" he asked, when they returned to the sitting-room.

"You can smoke here," said the impulsive Mary. "Pa always smoked here, and we are used to it."

So he took a meerschaum and some tobacco from his valise, and was soon puffing away with an air of great content.

"I can think better when I smoke," he said. "Did you ever have any legal advice in the matter of that mortgage, Miss Merwin?"

"Yes, sir," replied Clara. "Our lawyer said it was a plain case against us, although it was strange that we never heard of the mortgage before."

"Very strange. What is the name of the man who holds it?"

"Alexander Campbell."

"Hum. A good name, but a bad man, I am afraid. When and where can I see this man?"

"He will be here this afternoon," answered Clara. "He proposes, if we will make him a deed of the real estate, to give up the bond and mortgage, leaving our money in banks and the rest of the personal property."

conversed with the girls concerning their mother, as he had known her in her youth—a subject upon which he grew quite eloquent—Mr. Alexander Campbell came in, bringing the deed and the mortgage, both of which he handed to Mr. Pierce for examination.

"I have made inquiries concerning the property," said the old gentleman, "and am satisfied that it is not worth more than the amount of the mortgage, and would probably bring much less if sold at foreclosure. Your offer is a liberal one; but I must first look at the mortgage. This appears to be correct," he continued, when he examined the instrument. "It is all properly acknowledged and the signature is undoubtedly that of Philip Merwin. I suppose the young ladies will go to the county seat to execute the deed."

The girls' countenances fell at this sudden surrender to execute the deed. "This reminds me," said the lawyer, picking up the mortgage again, "of an occurrence that fell under my observation in Tennessee, where a friend of mine died suddenly, leaving a widow and one daughter. The widow was about to administer upon his estate, when a man unknown came forward and presented a mortgage similar to this, and for exactly the same amount. It was examined by lawyers who were familiar with the signature of the deceased and pronounced it correct. Although there was something strange about the affair, they could find no flaw in the instrument. It was particularly puzzling to one of them who thought he had transacted all the law business of the deceased. He got hold of the mortgage and brought it to me when I was in Nashville. I happened to have in my possession a very powerful magnifying glass that had been presented to me—the most powerful single lens I had ever seen. With this I examined the mortgage, and soon discovered that 'forty' had been raised from 'four.' There was no mistake about it. I could easily see the marks of chemical erasure, and the difference in the pen and ink, between the 'raised' and the rest of the instrument. How the rascal got into the Recorder's office I don't know; but the record there had been altered in the same manner. He ran away, and it was not considered worth while to follow him. Very strange circumstance, wasn't it, Mr. Campbell?"

Mr. Campbell was fidgeting uneasily in his chair, and made no reply.

"Here is the glass," continued the old gentleman, taking it from his pocket; "you can see yourself how well it magnifies. Now, as I look at this 'forty,' why, bless me, the same signs are visible that I saw in the Tennessee mortgage! I think you will be obliged to drop this, Mr. Campbell. My Tennessee man's name was Alexander Bell, and he has added a Camp to it since he came to Missouri."

Campbell, his face red as flame, reached out to take the document.

"I believe I will take this, Mr. Campbell, for fear of accident. What do you think you can take it by force? Here is something that shoots five times. Going, are you? Very well, I don't think you will be molested, if you will leave this part of the country and never return to it. It is barely possible that the estate of Philip Merwin may really owe you four thousand dollars. If so, I advise you not to try to collect the debt, as such an attempt would land you in the penitentiary. Good-night, Mr. Campbell, and farewell."

"What is it? What does this mean?" asked Clara, as Mr. Pierce, rubbing his hands and smiling, bustled to fill his pipe.

"Are you dull, my child? The fellow is a swindler, and has been found out. I guessed as much when I first heard of the affair, and was sure of it when you told me his name. You will then be able to pay me my \$200, and then we will straighten up matters. Thank you, Mary, you are very kind to give me a light."

"Don't you mean to punish him?" asked Mary.

"It wouldn't pay. We could put him in the penitentiary, but you might lose \$4000 by the job. By trying for forty thousand he lost the four that may have been justly his due. He will be far from here by morning, I have no doubt, and good riddance to him. Ah! this is comfortable. I know that I feel better, and I hope that you do."

The girls were sure that a great weight had been lifted from their minds and hearts. Alexander Campbell, alias Bell, decamped, and Abner Pierce stayed a week with the orphans, during which time he arranged all their affairs satisfactorily, and won their lasting gratitude and love.

"How can we ever thank you for all you have done for us," said Clara, when he was about to leave.

"It was for your mother's sake, my child. And for her sake, if I can ever help you, all I have is at your service."

Abner Pierce has made visits to the orphans frequently since the event above narrated, and they have always had a cordial welcome for "ma's old beau."

Don't Boys.—Don't be impatient, no matter if things do go wrong sometimes. Don't give the ball a kick and send it into a mud-puddle, because it would not go straight where you threw it. Do not send the marble against the fence, and thus break your best ally, because your clumsy fingers could not hit the center. Do not break your kite string all to pieces because it will not come down from the tree at the first jerk. It will take you three times as long to get it down afterward. Do not give your little brother an angry push and a sharp word if he cannot see into the mysteries of marble playing or hoop rolling at the first lesson. You were once as stupid as he is, although you have forgotten it. What in the world would become of you if your mother had no more patience than you? If, every time you come near her when she was busy she thrust you off with a cross word? Dear, kind, loving mother, who never ceases to think of you, to care for you, who keeps you so nicely clothed, and makes such nice things for you to eat. What if she were so impatient that you would be half the time afraid to speak to her, to tell her of your own troubles at school or at play? Ah, do not grieve your mother by your impatience and your crossness.

Miss Alice Isabel Hooper, step daughter of the late Charles Sumner, was recently married to Edward Balfour, formerly of Scotland.

ANNE BOLEYN AND HENRY VIII.—I wrote lately to your Majesty that if the lady (Anne) could only be kept away from Court for a little while the Queen might still regain her influence over the King, for she does not seem to bear any ill-will toward her. Quite lately he sent her some cloth, begging her to have it made into shirts for him. The lady, hearing of this, sent for the person who had taken the cloth—one of the principal gentlemen of the bed-chamber—and although the King himself confessed that the cloth had been taken to the Queen by his order, she abused the bearer in the King's presence, threatening that she would have him punished, severely. Indeed, there is talk, as I am told, of dismissing, to please the lady, some of the officers of the royal household, and if so, the said gentlemen will not be the last, for some time back, the wife of the young Marquis (of Dorset) and two other ladies, most devoted to the queen, and in whom she found more comfort and consolation than in any others, were at her request dismissed from Court and sent home.—[Simancas Archives.]

Once upon an evening dismal, I gave her a kiss paroxysmal, and called her name baptismal, precious name I love of yore. Ah! She was a darling creature, pert of speech and fair of feather; but, egad, you couldn't teach her, for she had been there before, and only murmured, "buss me more."

Mme. Nilsson will receive \$18,000 for twelve performances in Spain during the wedding festivities of King Alfonso.

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FINANCE AND COMMERCE.

Financial. MONDAY EVENING, November 17, 1878. SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 17.—Currency, 95 1/2 buying; par selling. NEW YORK, Nov. 17.—Silver Bullion—1000 fine, per fine ounce, 15 3/4. U. S. Bonds—of '81 2 1/2; 4 1/2; 6 1/2; 7 1/2; 8 1/2. Closed—same. LONDON, Nov. 17.—Consols, 97 1/2; 100, money; 97 1/2 account. U. S. Bonds—6 1/2; 4 1/2; 5 1/2; 6 1/2; 7 1/2. Monetary matters in the local market are not so numerous as a few months ago, there is a good class of commercial paper in the market which is somewhat sought after and rates of discount are reasonably low. While the demand for parties engaged in the wheat trade has been quite large in the aggregate, it has been met with rather more readiness than in former years, owing to the anxiety with which capitalists whose money has long been idle seek such investment.

General trade matters are quite active, and some signs of the era of prosperity noted in other parts of the country are manifest here. Among them is the enterprise of rebuilding and putting in operation again the woolen mill at Salem. This factory was the first built in the state, and was a leading establishment in Oregon. If the present project of rebuilding succeed in establishing a reputation for the fabrics of their factory equal to that formerly possessed by the Salem woolen mills they will be fortunate, and their well known energy and enterprise are assurances of such a result.

The wheat market locally is very quiet to-day as holders are very much confirmed in their hopes for a recuperation of prices by the news from abroad. At the same time shippers are not just now generally pressed, as far as we can learn, for cargoes, and are therefore not inclined to make much of an advance in bids. Altogether the pressure to sell is about as great as to buy, and hence transactions are by no means frequent, \$1 9/16 being about the highest quotable rate.

Tonnage is not abundant, and the few vessels in sight are firm in their demands for full rates.

GOLD AND STOCK COMPANY'S REPORTS. SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 15. Receipts past 24 hours: 12,000 of the flour, 12,000 of the wheat, 2000 of the oats, 2000 of the potatoes, 30,000 of the eggs, includes 2 cars western eggs; Cal fresh choice firm at \$7 1/2; good eastern, 5 1/2; good choice firm at \$7 1/2; good eastern, 5 1/2; good choice firm at \$7 1/2; good eastern, 5 1/2.

PHILADELPHIA WOOL MARKET. PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 15. Wool—Firm and buoyant; prices tending upward; stocks light. Oregon fine, 28 1/2; medium, 26 1/2; coarse, 24 1/2; California fine, 26 1/2; medium, 24 1/2; coarse, 22 1/2; New Mexican and Colorado fine, 28 1/2; medium, 26 1/2; coarse, 24 1/2; extra Merino, 46 1/2; super, 48 1/2; lambs' super, 45 1/2.

CHICAGO MARKET. CHICAGO, Nov. 15. Short ribs—\$5 75. Wheat—\$1 1/4 per bu, paid for December. Pork—\$11 25 per lb for January. Lard—\$7 per lb for January.

NEW YORK MARKET. NEW YORK, Nov. 15. Wheat—in good demand and prices have advanced to \$1 3/8 1/4. Flour—Active and tending up.

SAN FRANCISCO PRODUCE MARKET. (SPECIAL REPORT FOR THE GREGORIAN.) SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 17. Wheat—Firm; shipping, \$1 9/16; 9/16; 9/16. Flour—Firm. Oats—Dull. Potatoes—Faster, 50 cents. Wool—Strong.

LIVERPOOL WHEAT MARKET. LIVERPOOL, Nov. 17.—Wheat spot, strong.

Beerholm English Wheat Report. LONDON, Nov. 17. Steady. Cargoes of wheat, start dearer. Mails, upward tendency. Good cargoes No. 2 spring of coast per 49 pounds, 5s; red winter, 5s; California wheat of coast, 49 pounds, 5s 4d; London quotations for No. 2 Chicago spring for shipment present or next month, 5s; California just shipped, 5s; nearly due, 5s. For spot wheat at Liverpool there is a good demand. No. 1 is a quotation at 5s 1/2; No. 2, 5s 1/4; red winter, 5s 1/4; white Michigan, 5s 1/4.

Shipping Intelligence. (SPECIAL TO MERCHANTS EXCHANGE.) SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 16.—Arrived—Baris Northern Light and Francis Palmer, Whaling. Sailed—Shipa Charger, Great Admiral and Gov. Goodwin and Br ship LaBocoma, Cons. for City of Hongkong, schr Excelsior, Seattle, Bk Bona Vista, Pot Gamble, brig Josephine, Port Hakoley; schr Drednought and Terminus, Mexico; schr Trades, Portland; schr Gotsama and H. L. Tiersan, Coos Bay; schr Hayes, Umpqua.

PORT BLAKELY, Nov. 15.—Arrived—Be Adelaide Cooper, San Francisco; schr W. L. Seese, Fort Townsend. Sailed—Schr Alice, Hilo. BURGOS AVAS, Oct. 18.—Arrived—Blaine Mignoo, Victoria.

LIVERPOOL, Nov. 15.—Sailed—Br ship Golden Gate, San Francisco. Sailed—Br ship Golden Gate, San Francisco. Sailed—Br ship Golden Gate, San Francisco.

QUEENSTOWN, Nov. 15.—Arrived—Shipa Carrie Clark and Bohemia, San Francisco. Sailed—Br ship Golden Gate, San Francisco. Sailed—Br ship Golden Gate, San Francisco.

VICTORIA, Nov. 15.—Passed—Schr Empire and ship Edmond, San Francisco. Sailed—Ship Sovereign of the Seas, San Francisco.

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