

SELECTIONS

THE MAN WHO WAITED.

And Now, If He Could Only Know, His Fate Would Be Sweet.

The night old man Blackpool died all the boys went up to the house to offer what little services they might be to the dead.

But it would have been far better had they been able to help old man Blackpool in those other days when he really needed aid.

We all used to say that the old man was as hard as flint, and that he was a great hand at the grindstone.

But in spite of his outward air of gruffness old man Blackpool had in reality for years past been dying by inches. It was that oldest son of his who broke the old man's heart.

How could the boy be saved?

For years the old man had studied the problem, but whiskey had the boy tight and fast. He was always waiting for some one to come and offer the advice that was to let the boy begin anew.

Years passed, and it never came. But it came the night old man Blackpool died.

I never knew who proposed it. It was one of the most ghastly, inhuman wrongs ever done.

"Boys," said Sandy McBride, "suppose we take old man Blackpool out of the icebox?"

"What then?" asked one of the gang who had indulged a good deal in the wine.

"We'll stand him up in bed."

"Yes."

"And give him his last drink on earth. You know the old man never drank any of the poison. He left that all to his son. Where is that boy, anyway? Now, I propose that the old man taste the stuff before he is placed."

Sandy McBride opened the icebox and proceeded to unroll the rubber blanket that was wrapped around the old man. McBride poured out a stiff glass and offered it to the corpse.

Just then there was a loud noise in the hall. The son reeled into the room.

Oh, my God, it all came to him, drunk as he was, in a moment. He had come to see his father die, but he had never dreamed of more. The weird sight made him instantly as sober as a judge. The manhood that had so long been slumbering suddenly leaped like a flash. His gun came into play. Sandy McBride, the gambler, dropped dead in his tracks. The rest of the gang leaped for windows and doors.

It had come at last.

That night's experience the boy never forgot. He never touched liquor again as long as he lived.

And I fancy somehow tonight that if old man Blackpool could only know he would sleep well out there under the Colorado hills.—New York Recorder.

A Worthy Idea.

An idea that first originated in the fertile brain of Alexandre Dumas is likely to come into fashion. "For," he said, "why should those who are invited to a luxurious banquet, which they get for nothing, pay a tribute for such as are without food and provide these poor people with a meal?" And he proposes that each guest shall pay the lady of the house the sum of one franc, a suggestion that will no doubt commend itself to those who are not in a position to reciprocate in the matter of hospitality, and who are thereby relieved in part of the sense of obligation for a gratuitous feed. He limits the amount to one franc in order to avoid an inviolable comparison between the parade of generosity on the part of the wealthy and the smaller contributions of those less happily circumstanced.

Moreover, as the rattling of coin and the giving of change at the dinner table are objectionable features, he suggests the introduction of "bons," or notes of hand, to be obtained at various centers on payment of the required sum. We have seen a sample of these notes, which he styles "bons de digestion," and which are signed, "Qui dine donne" (who dines gives). This "fashion," launched by Dumas on the charitable world, is worthy of imitation.—Figaro.

A Strange Story About a Schooner.

The two masted schooner, James A. Fisher, which struck on the Jersey coast near Cape May inlet, forty-nine years ago and sunk in the quicksands, will soon be afloat again, a perfect vessel as of yore. She was buried so deeply in the sand that not even her masts or rigging have been visible, but the recent storm unearthed her.

The vessel is in a remarkably perfect condition, not even a bulwark being crushed in. The cargo of corn was dug out of her hold a few days ago, black, but in perfect shape. Watches, shoes and the clothing of the crew were brought to light. A watch showed the exact hour at which it had stopped ticking, and the pipes and tobacco were just as left by the ill fated crew.

The cargo consisted of a full load of corn shipped at Duck River, Delaware bay, for New York. She sunk so soon in the sand that the crew's clothing and paraphernalia, as well as the entire cargo, went down. Captain Andrews and several of the crew were frozen to death, and the steward drowned in attempting to reach the mainland.—Philadelphia Record.

Queer Fish.

Two strange fish were taken in a trawl off the coast of Maine recently. One, the lampfish, is the only specimen of the kind ever taken in eastern waters. In shape it was like a very large sunfish, and its weight was about 300 pounds. Its back was of a beautiful sky blue, the sides were snowy white and the fins scarlet. The other fish, the eel of the Canary islands, is common in warm latitudes, but has never before been taken so far north as in this case. Both were taken at a depth of 1,000 feet.—Belfast Age.

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Old horses worn out in faithful service are driven into the marshes and are soon covered with the hungry leeches, which fasten to lips, eyelids, nose or any other tender part, and hang on until glutted with the life blood of their victim, or until the wretched horse weakens under the drain and falls to suffocate in the slime of the leech morms.

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