

THE NEWS' SUPPLEMENT.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 1865.

[CONTINUED.]

UNCLE GODFREY.

When Mrs. Latimer, not waiting to change her dress, but just adjusting her cap, and making herself neat, gilded into the room, half pleased, half frightened, Uncle Godfrey was standing with his back to the door, examining a print of "Bolton Abbey, in the olden time" with a malicious contempt.

He turned round as his niece entered, and without greeting her, and just as if he had been an inmate of the house for twenty years, said with a sort of grunt: "This is the sort of rubbish people in the country hang on their walls, instead of having one or two good pictures. Ugh! It is only fit for a poulterer's parlor."

"But dear uncle, Frederick and I cannot afford pictures. But how are you? How long it is since we have seen you! Why don't you come oftener? What a happy Christmas we shall spend!" And all the time she kept saying to herself: "Only to think of his coming!"

Uncle Godfrey watched her from under his terrier eyebrows for a moment or two in suspicious silence; then he took her hand, and looking her searchingly in the face, he said: "Jane you are a sensible girl; you did not keep me waiting while you put on a lot of finery. Don't thank me for coming down to see you, for I only did it because I thought you didn't mean it, and I thought it would teach you a lesson; and as to pictures, I suppose you can't afford them. I know I can't. I sell mine as fast as I buy them—ugh! and at a good profit too. Where are the children? Plenty of them, I suppose; the poorer a man is, the more children Providence always sends him. Ugh! Where's Latimer?"

"Gone out, dear uncle, to see the poor, and how to distribute the Christmas charities; and I ought to be out with him; but, you see, we poor people have to wash at home, and do many things."

"There; no ostentation of poverty and economy. Stuff about Christmas! Why give away more than usual at Christmas? Is a man more hungry at Christmas, or colder, or poorer? Aren't there other times to give! I hate Christmas—all one's bills come in then."

"Oh, there's Frederick coming—I'm so glad!" said Mrs. Latimer, looking out of the window. "Oh, how glad he will be to see you, uncle!"

"Not so sure of that, though I am rich—Now, mind, I'll have no fuss made about me—no extras. As for wine, I've brought down some of my own. Don't like port that's half cutsup, and the other half logwood.—No, don't go; I'll open the door"

Away stumped the strange man to open the door. Mr. Latimer started, horror-struck at the wooden-legged apparition.

"I thought it would knock you down," said Uncle Godfrey. "Never ask a man again you don't want to see."

"But I'm delighted. My dear sir—There; no flummery. Here I am, and you must make the best of me for a week. You're quite right to ask me. The Fitzsimmons asked me too, and I generally go there.—Confound Christmas! I wish it was abolished. Festivity, indeed! Why I'd rather be eating my chop alone at the Rainbow or Cock in Fleet Street, than share the best Christmas dinner in England."

Mr. Latimer did not know whether to be offended or not, but as he had expectations from Uncle Godfrey, he thought, on the whole he had better bear it; so he smiled, and took him by the hand.

In rushed the children, but when they saw the stranger they drew back. Dora seated herself in shy state on the sofa; George came coaxingly up to his father,

and took his hand, while Willy the "tot" nestled up to his mother; and half hid himself in her gown.

"George used to be your favorite, uncle," said Mrs. Latimer.

Uncle Godfrey looked at him and growled; "Time he went to sea. Ugh!—Do you send that girl to school? Why don't you cut her hair shorter? She'll be bald at thirty."

Mrs. Latimer was indignant, but nothing made an impression on the rich uncle, who turning his back on her, proceeded to question her husband.

"Well, Latimer," said he, "still grubbing on as a curate, I suppose. Nice profession; its prizes so easy to get, and so evenly distributed. Bishops so humble and active—no pride. Ugh! Sixty years' work for a curate, and a hundred a year the end of it. Every one on you for alms, and obliged to give more than the squires with ten thousand a year. Better be a laborer. Ugh! Any head clerk in a merchant's office could buy up three curates. Ugh!"

Mr. Latimer deprecated Uncle Godfrey's severity. "Our life," he said, "is humble, but it is happy, and free from temptations. There is time for study, and quiet for domestic happiness. Grand people are too busy for domestic happiness; houses always too full to enjoy the society of their wives and children. Your clerk might buy me up, but he could not buy my happiness."

"Good—something in that. But suppose you live above your income, and debts press. Responsibilities of the rich without their means; too proud to put your children into trade. Strange pride. Ugh! I thought Christianity taught humility. You clergy preach it enough, but where's the practicing?"

"My dear sir, you do me wrong, I would willingly get George into a banker's office when he is old enough, but even city situations are hard to get."

"Take you at your word. I'll get the boy into a house in Mincing Lane. Aim low—that's the way to get on; better than your beggerly profession, and bring up your family paupers."

Mr. Latimer overflowed with thanks.

"There; no trying to please the rich old uncle, just because he is rich.—And so you have been arranging the Christmas charities. All jolly; makes the poor people mendicants. Who'll work, when he can get more begging? Got a school in your parish?"

"We have—a flourishing one."

"There again—puffing up the poor. Teaching servants to read one's letters, and forge and swindle. Stuff!—When do you dine? I'm hungry. Shouldn't object to a glass of wine, my own; though. The porter's brought it up from the station by this to me.—Where's my bedroom? I like a fire at night, I'll just wash my hands, and take my spencer off, while you get me a crust and a glass of my own port-wine. Ugh! how cold this place is. Get out of the way children!"

"What a horrid old creature!" thought Dora. George was secretly examining his wooden leg, and wondering whether it moved by clock-work.

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