

A CURIOUS LOVE STORY.

It is our taste to have things of this kind done something in this way.

Annie had arrived at the mature age of (do not start, reader) of twenty-seven, and yet in a state of single blessedness. Somehow or other, she had not even fallen in love as yet. 'Had she no offers?' What a simple question! Did you ever know half a million of dollars to go begging? Offers? Yes, scores of them. It may be accounted as one of her oddities, perhaps, but when ever the subject happened to be touched upon by her father, Annie would say that she wanted some one who could love her for herself, and she must have assurance of this, and how could she in her present position? Thus matters stood when Annie was led to form and execute what will appear a very strange resolution; but she was a resolute girl. We must now go back six years.

One dark, rainy morning in November, as our old friend was looking composedly at the cheerful fire in the grate of his counting-room, really indulging in some serious reflections on the past and future, the far future, too, a gentleman presented himself and enquired for Mr. Bremen. The old gentleman uttered not a word but merely bowed. There was that in his looks which said, 'I am he.'

The stranger might have been some thirty years of age. He was dressed in black, a mourning weed was on his hat, and there was something in his appearance which seemed to indicate that his friend whose loss he deplored had recently departed.

The letter of introduction which he presented to Mr. Bremen was quickly, yet carefully perused, and as it was somewhat unique, we shall take the liberty of submitting it to the inspection of the reader.

—11 mo, 18—.

Friend Paul—This will introduce to thee Charles Copeland. He has come to thy city in pursuit of business. I have known him from a youth up. Thou mayest depend upon him for aught that he can do, and shall not lean on a broken reed. If thou canst do anything for him thou mayest peradventure benefit thyself, and cause to rejoice,

Thy former and present friend.

MICAH LOONIS.

'It is not every one who can get old Micah Loonis' endorsement on his character,' said Paul Bremen to himself, as he folded up the letters of a well known associate of former days. 'Old Micah is good for a quarter of a million, or for anything else—it will do—I want him—getting up, business increasing—must have more help—now as well as any time.'

The old gentleman looked all this as he stood gazing in perfect silence on the man before him. At length he opened his lips.

'Mr. Copeland, you know all about books?'

'I have had some few years' experience.'

'Any objections to a place here—pretty close work—a thousand a year.'

'None in the world.'

'When can you begin?'

'Now!'

A real smile shone on the old man's face. It lingered there like the rays of the setting sun among the clouds of evening, lighting up those seemingly hard, dark features.

A stool was pushed to the new comer, books were opened, and matters explained, directions given, the pen was dipped in the ink, and in short, before an hour had passed away, you would have thought the old man and the young man had known each other for years.

In reference to our new friend, it will be sufficient to remark that he had been liberally educated, as the phrase goes, and though he had entered early into business, he had not neglected the cultivation of his mind and heart. He had found time to cherish a general acquaintance with the most noteworthy authors of the day, both literary and religious, and with many of past times.

After a few years of success in the pursuits to which he had devoted himself, misfortunes came thick and fast upon him. He found himself left with scarcely any property, and alone in the world, save his two lovely daughters.

As year after year passed away he grew steadily in the confidence of his employer, who felt, though he said it not, that in him he possessed a treasure.

Very little, indeed was said by either of them not connected with the routine of business, and there had been no intercourse whatever between them, save in the counting room. Thus six years went by, towards the close of which period old Mr. Bremen was found looking with much frequency and earnestness at the young man before him.

Something was evidently brewing in that old head. What could it be? And then, too, at home he looked so curiously. The Irish servant was puzzled. 'Sure' said James 'some thing's coming.' Annie, too, was somewhat perplexed, for those looks dwelt much on her.

'What is it, father?' she said to him one morning at the breakfast table, as he sat gazing steadfastly in her face. 'What is it? Do tell me.'

'I wish you'd have him!' burst forth like an avalanche. 'Known him for six years—true as a ledger—a gentleman—real sensible man—don't talk much—regular as a clock—prime for business—worth his weight in gold.'

'Have who, father? What are you talking about?'

'My head clerk, Copeland—you don't know him—I do—haven't seen any body else worth an old quill.'

Annie was puzzled. She laughed, however, and said—

'Marry my father's clerk! What would the world say?'

'Humbog, child, all humbug—worth forty of your whiskered, lounging, lazy gentry—say what they please—what do I care?—what do you care?—what's money after all?—got enough of it—want a sensible man—want some body to take care of it—all humbug.'

'What's all humbug, father?'

'Why, people's notions on these matters—Copeland is poor—so was I once—may be again—world's full of changes—seen a great many of them in my day—can't stay here long—got to leave you, Annie—wish you'd like him.'

'Father, are you serious?'

'Serious, child! And he looked so.'

Annie was a chip of the old block—a strong minded, resolute girl. A new idea seemed to strike her.

'Father, if you are really serious in this matter, I'll see this Copeland; I'll get acquainted with him. If he likes me, and I like him, I'll have him. But he shall love me for myself alone; I must know it. Will you leave the matter to me?'

'Go ahead, my child, and do as you like.—Good morning.'

'Stop a moment, father. I shall alter my name a little; I shall appear to be a poor girl, a companion of our friend, Mrs. Richards, in H—street; she shall know the whole affair; you shall call me by my middle name, Peyton; I shall be a relative of yours; you shall suggest the business to Mr. Copeland, as you call him, and arrange for the first interview. The rest will take care of itself.'

'I see, I see,' and one of those rare smiles illuminated his whole face. It actually got between his lips, parted them asunder, glanced upon a set of teeth but little the worse for wear, and was resting there when he left the house for his counting-room.

The twilight of that smile was not yet gone when he reached the well-known spot, and bowed and looked 'good morning' to those in his employ, for old Paul was, after his fashion, a polite man. On the morning of that day what looks were directed to our friend Charles! so many, so peculiar, so full of something, that the head clerk could not but notice them, and that too with some alarm. What was coming? At last the volcano burst forth.

'Copeland, my good fellow, why don't you get a wife?'

Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet he could not have been more astounded. Did Mr. Bremen say that, and in the counting room, too? The very ledger seemed to blush at the introduction of such a subject. He, for the first time, made a blot on the fair page before him.

'I say—why don't you get a wife—know just the thing for you—prime article—poor enough to be sure—what of that—a fortune in a wife, you know—a sort of relation of mine—don't want to meddle with other people's affairs—know your own business best—can't help thinking you'll be happier—must see her.'

Now the fact is that Charles had for some time past thought so himself; but how the old man should completely divine his feelings was quite a puzzle to him. In the course of the day a note was put into Mr. Bremen's hands by James, his Irish servant, the contents of which produced another grim sort of smile. When the moment for his return home arrived, Mr. B. handed a sealed document of rather imposing form to Charles, saying:—

'Copeland, you'll oblige me by leaving that at No. 68, H—street. Place it only in the hands of the person to whom it is directed—don't want to trust it to any one else.'

The clerk saw on the outside, 'Mrs. Richards, No. 67 H—street.' The door bell was rung.

The servant ushered Copeland into a small, neat parlor, where sat a lady apparently twenty-five or thirty years of age, plainly dressed, engaged in knitting a stocking. Our friend bowed and inquired for Mrs. Richards.

'She is not in, but is expected presently; will you be seated?'

There was a ease and quietness, and an air of self-command about this person which seemed to Copeland peculiar. He felt at ease at once, (you always do with such people) made some common-place remark, which was immediately responded to; then another; and soon the conversation grew so interesting that Mrs. Richards was nearly forgotten. Her absence was strangely protracted, but at length she made her appearance. The document was presented. A glance at the outside.

'Mr. Copeland,' Charles bowed.

'Miss Peyton.' The young lady bowed;—and thus they were introduced. There was no particular reason for remaining any longer, and our friend took his departure.

That night Annie said to Mr. B., 'I like his appearance, father.'

'Forward—march,' said old Paul, and he looked at his daughter with vast satisfaction.

The old man's as swate to night as a new potato,' said James to the cook.

The next day Charles Copeland came very near writing several times, 'To Miss Peyton, Dr.' as he was making out some bills of merchandise sold.

'Delivered the paper last evening?'

Copeland bowed.

Mrs. Richards is an old friend—humble in circumstances—the young lady, Peyton, worth her weight in gold any day—have her myself if I could.'

'How much you remind me of Mr. Bremen,' said Charles one evening to Annie; 'I think you said you were a relation of his?'

'I am related to him through my mother,' was the grave reply.

Mrs. Richards turned away to conceal a smile. Somewhat later than usual on that day Annie reached her father's house. There was no mistaking the expression of her countenance. Happiness was plainly written there.

'I see, I see,' said the old man; 'the account is closed—books balanced—have it all through now in short order. You are a sensible girl—no foolish puss—just what I want—bless you, child, bless you.'

The next day Paul came, for almost the first time in his life, rather late to his counting-room. Casks and boxes seemed to be startling with wonder.

'Copeland, heard from Mrs. Richards—proposals to my relation, Peyton, all right, done up well. Come to my house this evening—never been there yet, eh? eight o'clock precisely, want to see you, got something to say.'

'How much interest he seems to take in this matter,' said Charles. 'He's a kind old fellow in his way; a little rough, but good at heart.'

Yes, Mr. Charles Copeland, even kinder than you think for.

At eight o'clock precisely the door bell of Mr. Bremen's mansion rung. Mr. Charles Copeland was ushered in by friend James. Old Paul took him kindly by the hand, and turning round abruptly, introduced him to 'My daughter, Miss Annie Peyton Bremen,' and immediately withdrew.

'Charles, you will forgive me this? He was too much astonished to make any reply. 'If you knew all my motives and feelings I am sure you would.'

That the motives and feelings were soon explained to his entire satisfaction no one will doubt.

'Copeland, my dear fellow,' shouted old Paul, as he entered the room, 'no use in a long engagement!'

'O, Father!'

'No use, I say; marry now; get ready afterwards; next Monday evening; who cares? want it over; feel settled. Shan't part with Annie, though; must bring your wife here; house rather lonesome; he still; no words; must have it so; partner in business; Bremen & Copeland; got the papers all drawn up to day; can't alter it.—Be quiet, will you? won't stay in the room!'

I have now finished my story, reader; I have given you the facts. I cannot say, however, that I approve of the deception practiced upon our friend Charles. As, however, our Lord commended the 'unjust steward because he acted wisely,' so I suppose the good sense shown by the young lady in choosing a husband for the sake of what he was, and not for the sake of what he might have possessed, merits our approbation. It is not every one who has moral courage enough to step out of the circle which surrounds the wealthy, and seek for those qualities of mind and heart which the purse can neither give nor take away.

A Timely Bit of Satire.

A man in the town of—committed murder—a black diabolical murder. There was not a single feature in the case that Mercy could render available. It was 'red murder,' in the truest acceptance of the term. A lawyer of some considerable eminence was called on by the prisoner, but after hearing his own statement he would give him no other advice than the following:—

'My friend, if you are not hanged, it will be because you have broken jail, cut your throat, or—or—shammed mad!'

The murderer took the hint. He was not able to accomplish the first; he was unwilling to do the second; so he attempted the third. He came into court on the day of his trial with one glove and one boot on; listened with apparent delight to his arraignment; and when asked at the conclusion, if he was guilty or not guilty, answered with a horse-laugh, such as I never heard before or since,

'Yes—I thank you, sir, and no mistake!'

In this philanthropic age, this was quite sufficient to arrest the torrent of indignation which had been rightfully setting against the offender, and to substitute in place thereof a feeling of intense sympathy.

'He is mad,' said one.

'Poor fellow,' muttered another.

'What a mercy we have discovered it before he was tried,' ejaculated a third.

'Why don't they take him out of the box?'

demanded a fourth.

By this time, the prisoner, in great glee, had put his glove upon his foot, and thrust his hand into his boot. Of course, this was too much for the feelings of the crowd. It was the last hair that broke the camel's back.

'Shame! shame!' was muttered by a dozen philanthropic souls.

'Take him out of the box!' uttered the mob in general.

'Certainly,' said the Judge, 'take him out by all means. Mr. District Attorney, you can have no objection?'

'Not the slightest, may it please your Honor, provided you let two or three of the bailiffs stand betwixt him and me.'

The bystanders made a rush to execute the mandate of the Court, but the prisoner checked their zeal, though not their sympathy, by knocking down half a dozen of them with his boot.

The Court briefly addressed the jury:

'I was unnecessary to enter into the evidence. The unhappy prisoner had certainly destroyed the life of a man—a husband and a father, leaving his widow and helpless children to misery and want. At the same time, it seemed evident

that this was the result rather of misfortune than of crime. We have the evidence of our own senses that the prisoner is mad—mad, gentlemen of the jury, as a March hare. Would any man, gentlemen, conduct himself so strangely in a court-room—wear his boots and his gloves in so eccentric a manner—if he was not mad?'

'Gentlemen: I have studied the anatomy of the human mind with much industry, and I think I may say with considerable success; and I flatter myself I am particularly conversant with the subject of insanity. The brain is a delicate organ. Its membranes are of still more delicate organization. There are the dura mater and the pia mater. These intertwining with and intersecting, as it were the porous substance of the brain, contributed largely to the exercise of its transcendent powers.

'Our Judge knows something, don't he?' said one of the sympathizers.

'Know!' said his interlocutor; 'Know? I should think I did. All I have got to say, is, that I never knew a man as knows as much as what he knows!'

'But,' continued the Judge, 'these membranes become impaired, and even Reason, Gentlemen, Reason reels, and totters on her throne. The most prevalent species of intellectual wandering, however, is denominated "Homocidal Insanity," the prominent symptom of which is a desire to take away human life. Such, I doubt not is the case with the prisoner.'

'May it please your Honor,' interposed the District Attorney, 'don't you think that the jury might pronounce this a case of malicious prosecution?'

'Perhaps not, Mr. District Attorney,' responded the Judge. 'I honor you humanity, Sir; I am rejoiced to see that you can rise superior to the feelings which, I am compelled to say, too often prompt public prosecutors. But, Sir, I think, as a man has really been killed, it might be considered a bad precedent to declare this prosecution a malicious one!'

[Knickerbocker Magazine.]

A FABLE FOR STRONG-MINDED WOMEN.—

A vine was growing beside a thrifty oak, and had reached that height to which it required support.

'Oak,' said the vine, 'bend your trunk so that you may be a support to me.'

'My support,' replied the oak, 'is naturally yours, and you may depend on my strength to bear you up, but I am too large and too solid to bend. Put your arms around me, my pretty vine and I will manfully support and cherish you, if you have ambition to climb so high as the clouds. While I thus hold you up, you will ornament my rough trunk with your pretty green leaves and scarlet berries. They will be as frontlets to my head, as I stand in the forest, like a glorious warrior, with all his plumes.—We were made by the great Master to grow together, and that by our union the weak may be made strong, and the strong render aid to the weak.'

'But I wish to grow independently,' said the vine, 'why cannot you twine around me and let me grow up straight, and not be a mere dependent upon you?'

'Nature,' answered the oak, 'did not design it. It is impossible that you should grow up to any height alone, and if you try it the winds and rains, if not your own weight, will bring you to the ground. Neither is it proper for you to run your arms hither and thither among the trees.—The trees will begin to say it is not my vine, it is a stranger, get thee gone; I will not cherish thee.' By this time thou wilt be so entangled, among the different branches that thou canst not get back to the oak; and nobody will admire thee or pity thee.'

'Ah, me!' said the vine, 'let me escape from such a destiny; and with this she twined herself around the oak, and both grew and flourished happily together.—[Ex.]

GOOD WIVES.—That young lady will make a good wife who does not apologize when you find her in the kitchen, but continues at her task until the work is finished. When I hear a lady say, 'I shall attend church and wear my everyday gown, for I fear we shall have a rain storm,' depend upon it, she will be sure to make a good wife. When a daughter remarks, 'I would not hire help, for I can assist you in the kitchen,' set it down she will make somebody a good wife.—When you overhear a young woman saying to her father, 'Don't purchase a very expensive or showy dress for me, but one that will wear best,' you may always be certain she will make a good wife. When you see a female rise early, get breakfast and do up her mother's work in season, and then sit down and knit, depend upon it she will make a good wife. When you see a female anxious to learn a trade, so as to earn something to support herself, and perhaps aged parents, you may be sure she will make one of the best of wives. The best qualities to look after in a wife are industry, humanity, neatness, gentleness, benevolence and piety. When you find these there is no danger: you will obtain a treasure, and not regret your choice to the last period.—[Ex.]

USEFUL STYPTIC.—Referring to the case of a young man named Barnes, who bled to death in Buffalo from the effects of a tooth which had been pulled the previous day, the Tribune says his life might easily have been saved by the application of a styptic, and one of the best and most easily obtained is gunpowder. Let it be pulverized and laid upon lint so as to get as much as possible in the cavity of the tooth, held in by the wad of lint or cotton. By renewing the application two or three times relief is rendered almost certain.