

AN ANECDOTE.

It was during the panic of 1826, that a gentleman, whom we shall call Mr. Thompson, was seated, with something of a melancholy look, in his dreary back room, watching his clerks paying away thousands of pounds hourly. Thompson was a banker of excellent credit; there existed, perhaps, in the City of London no safer concern than that of Messrs. Thompson & Co.; but at a moment such as I speak of, no rational reflection was admitted, no former stability was looked to; a general distrust was felt, and every one rushed to his banker's to withdraw his hoard, fearful that the next instant would be too late, forgetting entirely that this step was that of all others the most likely to insure the ruin he sought to avoid.

But to return. The wealthy citizen sat gloomily watching the outpouring of his gold, and with a grim smile listened to the clamorous demands on his cashier; for although he felt perfectly easy and secure as to the ultimate strength of his resources, yet he could not repress a feeling of bitterness as he saw constituent after constituent rush in, and those whom he fondly imagined to be his dearest friends eagerly assisting in the run upon his strong box.

Finally the door opened, and a stranger was ushered in, who after gazing for a moment at the bewildered banker, coolly drew a chair, and abruptly addressed him:

"You will pardon me, sir, for asking a strange question; but I am a plain man, and like to come straight to the point."

"Well, sir?" impatiently interrupted the other.

"I have heard that you have a run on your bank, sir. Is it true?"

"Really, sir, I must decline replying to your very extraordinary query. If, however, you have any money in the bank, you had better at once draw it out, and so satisfy yourself; our cashier will instantly pay you; and the banker rose—as a hint for the stranger to withdraw.

"Far from it, sir; I have not one sixpence in your bank."

"Then, may I ask, what is your business here?"

"I wished to know if a small sum would aid you at this moment?"

"Why do you ask the question?"

"Because, if it would, I should gladly pay in a small deposit."

"The money dealer started.

"You seem surprised, you don't know my person or my motive. I'll at once explain. Do you recollect some twenty years ago when you resided in Essex?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, then, sir, perhaps you have not forgotten the turnpike gate through which you passed daily? My father kept that gate, and was often honored with a few minutes' chat with you. One Christmas morning my father was sick, and I attended the toll-bar. On that day you passed through, and I opened the gate for you. Do you recollect it, sir?"

"Not I, my friend."

"No, sir; few such men remember kind deeds, but those who are benefited by them seldom forget them. I am perhaps prolix; listen, however, only a few moments, and I have done."

The banker who began to feel interested, at once assented.

"Well, sir, as I said before, I threw open the gate for you, and as I considered myself in duty bound, I wished you a happy Christmas. 'Thank you my lad,' replied you—'thank you and the same to you; here is a shilling to make it so,' and you threw me a seven shilling piece. It was the first money I ever possessed, and never shall I forget my joy on receiving it, or your kind smile in bestowing it. I long treasured it and as I grew up added a little to it, till I was able to rent a toll myself. You left that part of the country and I lost sight of you. Yearly, however, I have been getting on; your present brought good fortune with it; I am now comparatively rich, and to you I consider I owe all. So, this morning, hearing accidentally that there was a run on your bank, I collected all my capital, and have brought it to lodge with you, in case it can be of any use; and here it is, sir—here it is," and he handed a bundle of bank notes to the agitated Thompson. "In a few days I'll call again," and, snatching up his hat, the stranger, throwing down his card, walked out of the room.

Thompson undid the roll; it contained £30,000! The stern hearted banker for all bankers must be stern—burst into tears. The firm did not require this prop; but the motive was so noble that even the millionaire sobbed—he could not help it. The firm is still one of the first in London.

The £30,000 of the turnpike boy is now grown into some £200,000. Fortune has well disposed of her gifts.

HEEDLESSNESS

Alas! I have walked through life,
Too heedless where I trod.
Nay, helping to trample my fellow-worm,
And fill the burial sod;
Forgetting that even the sparrow falls
Not unmarked of God.

The wounds I might have healed!
The human sorrow and smart!
And yet it never was in my soul
To play so ill apart;
But evil is wrought for want of thought
As well as want of heart.

Thomas Hood.

WALKING ON WATER.—Some interesting and very successful experiments, with an air-tight dress intended for the saving of life at sea, were made lately in the presence of thousands of spectators, at Holyhead in Wales. Mr. Rees, of Merionethshire, the patentee, attired in his single air-tight dress, went through three evolutions. In the first he threw himself on the water, and was buoyed up by the air-tight dress, and amid great plaudits, paddled himself along at the rate of three miles an hour. This would, according to experienced seamen, be of immense service in the case of shipwreck, or, indeed, whenever life is endangered on water. His second evolution was somewhat, and the third walking upright on the sea.

Jones, in a dilemma, said that he was at his wife's, and Smith sarcastically remarked that he would not take him long to return—he had not gone far.

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