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A Blessing in Disguise. "But you are rich enough, Lauson, let us leave this great city, and seek some more quiet home."

"No, no, Lydia. Business is my very life, I must make a little more money before I give it up."

"Will you tell me, my husband, how much you would have now, if you were to settle your business all up?"

"O, perhaps two hundred thousand dollars."

"And think, Lauson, only think, how sumptuously we could live upon the interest of that and have much, too, to bestow upon those who need our charity. Come, tell me that you will leave your business at once. I can see that you do not see. You are undermining your constitution, and your health is fast leaving you."

"Pshaw, Lydia, you croak like a raven. I should lose my health were I to leave my business. Don't say any more now, for you see I am busy."

As the husband spoke, he turned to the little ebony escrutoire which he kept in his parlor, and commenced overhauling and studying the various papers which lay there.

Lauson Watkins had seen his 30th year, and, as young as he was, he had become what the world called rich. At an early age he had entered the mercantile business and fortune had smiled upon him. He had already amassed an abundant competency; but while he had been doing this he had been losing his health.

His organization was one of those which will not stand the strain of excitement. His brain was large and active, his excitability intense, and his mind easy worried and tortured, and on the other hand, his physical constitution was slight, and of a highly nervous temperament.

For years he had applied himself to business without taking any respite, and the faster money came in upon him the more anxious and nervous did he become in his labors. Night and day he labored over his shipments and invoices and gradually, but surely, the joy of health was departing from him.

Poor Lydia Watkins saw all this. She saw the fearful disease marks that were growing upon her husband's countenance, but she could not persuade him to feel as she did. He laughed at her fears, and yet, while he laughed, he felt disease gnawing at his vitals.

The merchant sat there at his work, his anxious wife pale in the extreme, and the blue veins stood starting upon his brow and temples. His eyes were large and brilliant, and his brilliant light that gleamed there. As he pored over a complicated invoice, reducing to his own currency large amounts of foreign money, his long white fingers worked nervously through his hair and his wife heard him breathe hard. O she knew he could not live long so.

When at a late hour Watkins arose from his task, he complained of a head-ache, but he had cleared ten thousand dollars by a cargo he had been disposing of, and he was pleased. That ten thousand dollars did not help to give him content—it only served to spur him on to renewed exertions.

Lydia said Mr. Watkins, after he had closed his escrutoire, "have you seen your uncle Langrave to-day?"

"I did not."

"I'm afraid he is going rather deeply into a dangerous speculation. For a week past he has been endorsing paper for him for a considerable amount. He helped me without stint when I commenced business, and I suppose I must help him now but I hope he will be careful."

"Adam Langrave is a careful man," returned Lydia, "and I am sure he would not do that which would cause you to suffer."

"O, no, I don't think he would," said Mr. Watkins, and here the conversation dropped, for the young man's mind became again buried in his business.

Adam Langrave was now an old man and had been the foster-father of Lydia.

The girl had been left an orphan at an early age, and her husband had expressed his earnest and Langrave's clerk, and this had become acquainted with the fair, virtuous girl whom he had made his wife. Langrave had lately entertained a great project for making money, and it was in pursuance of this that he had called on Watkins for assistance.

On the day following the scene above described Mr. Langrave called at Watkins' store, and opened to the young merchant more fully his project. It was a vast one, but it promised a golden harvest, and after much deliberation, Lauson entered into it. It looked feasible to him, and he promised himself a rich return for his venture.

"Lydia, I am a ruined man."

This was the exclamation of Lauson Watkins, as he entered his parlor one evening about a fortnight after his interview with Langrave. He was paler than usual, and every nerve was shaken with agitation.

"Ruined!" repeated his wife.

"Yes, Langrave has failed—he was entirely, completely sunk. Every cent is gone!"

"But you are not yet lost. Something can be saved."

"Not a dollar. Fool that I was, I went in with him to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars. I trusted to his honor—"

The young man did not finish the word. He was excited but he had judgment enough not to hurt the feelings of his wife by speaking harshly of her uncle. The blow had come upon him with a crushing weight, and he felt keenly.

The gentle wife moved to her husband's side and placed her arm about his neck. She trembled violently, and it was with difficulty that she could speak.

"Do not blame my uncle too much," she murmured. "Everything is not lost. I am left you and I will do all I can to help you now, but in your life trials you shall find that I am not useless. Do not despair, dear Lauson—something may turn up to assist you."

Lydia said her ready jewels, and thus she realized enough to purchase a choice stock of the farm, besides having enough left to hire a trusty man to take charge of the grounds.

White Watkins was taking this step, Adam Langrave went off south, but where no one saw himself knew.

It was in early spring when the fallen merchant moved upon the quiet farm, and the work must soon begin. He was not a man who could remain idle, and he took hold to help his man to do the work. It was new to him, but he found it by no means disagreeable. His appetite grew sharp, and he began to have a keen relish for his food. The milk which came from his cows tasted sweet to him. And then to see his little wife making butter and mixing bread, but with her own hands—it was a novel to him, but he saw his children—a girl and a boy, playing upon the green-sward in the garden, and he knew they were growing healthier. By and by he set the children to studying, and he himself heard them recite their lessons.

Before winter set in, the ex-merchant had become a real farmer. His crops had been good and he experienced a strange pleasure in realizing that he had gathered to his garner more provisions than enough for the year to come.

But who shall paint the happiness of the devoted wife, when she saw her husband thus returning to himself. The bloom of health was again upon his cheek, his step was firm and elastic, his spirits were buoyant and free, and his soul had become centered in his home.

Three years passed away, and the pale, trembling, feverish merchant had become a stout, healthy, rugged man. His home was the abode of every joy—a heaven upon earth.

It was in the evening Mr. Watkins had heard his children recite their lessons and say their little prayers, and their mother had blessed them and attended them to their beds. They had just set down alone—the husband and wife when some one rapped at the door. Lauson arose and opened it and Adam Langrave entered the apartment. Lydia sprang to the old man's embrace, and she wept tears of joy to see her kind old uncle once more.

Langrave looked about him with something like surprise depicted upon his countenance, and as he shook hands warmly with Lauson, he seemed almost doubtful of trusting his own senses. Could it be possible that the dying merchant had become such a living man. The change to him was more surprising than it was to Lydia, for she had watched each slow development of returning health, when he saw all at once. It was, in truth, a wonderful change.

Quickly did Lydia prepare a simple repast for her uncle, and then old times were talked about. Lauson told how he had succeeded on his farm, and Langrave told where he had been in the south. The evening wore away pleasantly and agreeably. At length the old man remained silent for some moments, and Lydia began to tremble.

"Lauson," said he, "how would you like to go back to the city, and enter into business again?"

"I couldn't do it," said the young man with a slight shudder.

"But I think I could raise the means."

"No, no, I am not fit for a merchant. Mine is a constitution that cannot give up this sweet rest for any establishment in the city. Alas, sir, I learned a lesson when I came here, a lesson of life. I know that I should have been in my grave if I had remained in the city. I did not see it then, but I see it now. At first I thought the loss of my property was a calamity but it was a blessing in disguise. Look at me now, and see if we are not happy. And, continued Lauson, with increasing emotion, to-morrow morning you shall see my children. You will have to rise early if you would hear their first smile of gladness."

"Thank God, Lydia," murmured the old man as he turned towards his niece, "your plan has been blessed."

Lauson Watkins gazed first upon his wife and then upon her uncle. He was puzzled. His wife caught his eager gaze, and with a convulsive movement she sprang towards him and drew her arms about his neck.

collection of uncle Langrave, but they soon learned to love him, and so well did he love them, and all else about them that he determined to make the cottage his home.

Lauson Watkins was once more a rich man, but he did not leave the home where he had so well learned the great lesson of life. He enriched it with rare fruits and pleasing ornaments, and then from out of his bounty he sought to do good for his fellows. He was a happy man, and he had a happy wife, and they had happy children, and all of them had one of the most joyful, merry, laughter-loving old uncles in the world.

LET'S VISIT STUDIES.—Calling at a fashionable French private hotel, the other day to pay a visit, we were admitted by a gentleman—certainly a gentleman, we will by no means recall the name—who, in a low but bred tone, and the purest Italian of the papal states, replied to our apologetic inquiries, and gave us the information we desired. At the foot of the stairs we were encountered by another Italian gentleman, who arrayed in the garb of a cook, with apron and paper cap in due form accosted us with the exquisitely polite and deferential, "come sta Ella?" always employed by well bred Italians. This one we recognized as a gentleman to whom we had been introduced in New York some six months ago. He was once a postmaster, and had been imprisoned in Italy on account of having expressed his hatred of the Austrians, and had been liberated, after three years' confinement, on condition that he should leave Europe immediately. He arrived here without means, hoping to gain a livelihood by some employment. Knowing not a syllable of our language, and being equally ignorant of our customs, manners and ways of doing business, of course, this was impossible—and he fell back upon an ingenious process of making little fancy baskets out of scraps of paper—an art which he had learned during his imprisonment. There with one left foot on the lower step we learned his history since we had last sight of him.

It seems that he received the offer of a situation at a coal mine somewhere in Pennsylvania, where he was sent down the shaft in a bucket, and set to digging coal and hauling it in a wheelbarrow. Half-dressed with the gas and thoroughly disgusted with his "situation," he managed to make his escape, and kept on running for dear life, supposing of course, that he would be arrested and brought back in the Austrian fashion. He finally brought up at Baltimore, where he was entirely without food for two days. At length meeting a countryman in the street, he made known his wants. The other told him that he had just taken a situation as waiter in a cooking house, and that they were in want of a cook. The result was, that our refugee applied for the vacant apron and crown of the realm of the frying pan, and now at least makes sure of his regular meals.

The waiter's story is brief. Educated in a university in Italy, and intended for a physician, just before he was about to graduate, he was discovered to be the author of some verses bitterly satirizing the Austrians. He was immediately banished—and after hovering over the brink of starvation for several months he had finally taken a place as waiter. He was a young man of prepossessing appearance and the quiet ease and elegance of a well bred gentleman. Both these men have thoroughly adapted themselves to their new positions, and give the best evidence of the intrinsic qualities of their nature, by cheerfully accepting their fate and their duties.

Wm. R. King.—The omission by the last legislature, says the Selma (Ala.) Reporter, to provide for the erection of a suitable monument in public memory of the late vice-president, leaves for the present the duty to be discharged by the citizens of the State at large. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to his rank among the first statesmen of our country, history records that he was chosen by the suffrages of the nation to fill the second office in their gift, and contingently the president in absentia. Every citizen who should have professed him for the first time who fills his life. Wm. R. King was a man of larger political experience, of a more extended observation of national affairs, than is Mr. Pierce, while he had the decision, firmness and courage of the tried patriot to hold him in his duty. But it is not our purpose to institute a comparison between the president and the late vice president that we write. We differed politically from Mr. King in his life time, but as one who has illustrated the history of Alabama as well as the nation at large, we would justly honor his memory, now that he sleeps in death with his great compeers. A public career so unobtrusive yet so prolonged—so successful yet so unambitious, as was his while it provokes not the boast of history, yet repels its pages with a genuine satisfaction. The great men of our country knew Mr. King well—better perhaps than the people, from whom distinguished as he was, he was known in a private letter to a gentleman in this city, a speaking of him. "We had been on terms of the most unreserved intimacy for a quarter of a century, and no passing cloud ever, for a single moment, obscured our mutual friendship. I relied more upon his advice than upon that of any other man I have ever known. In him "the elements were so combined" that no event whether prosperous or adverse, could shake his settled purpose or disturb his wise equanimity, and yet he always loved his friends and country with a warm, profound and enduring devotion. His qualities, both of head and heart, enabled him to adorn every public station to which he was called by his country. A pattern of ancient honesty and fidelity, and of matured and unassuming wisdom, he performed all his duties, both as a private and a public man with a deep sense of his responsibility to his God and to his country." And who will not ratify and confirm this assertion of his great virtues—his efficient and distinguished career? He died in his armor with the love of country, rejecting in his very pulse, and we claim that in honoring his public memory we but honor ourselves. We allow not that by whose immediate votes he was so lately elevated to the second office in this nation to exclude us from joining our expression of pride in that, while his name belongs to the nation, his home was with us, and that his dust is now the historic affluence of our soil.

Then let every Alabamian unite to erect to William R. King a monumental tribute of public respect, that future generations may see that we were neither unappreciative nor ungenerous.

We would suggest that a meeting of our citizens be called by the mayor, and a monument association formed to take the matter vigorously in hand and carry it forward to immediate success.

At a period of life when most English women calmly quitted down into staid and stately matrons and leave maneuvering for the flattering and homage to the young, the giddy and the beautiful, the French women have attained their most attractive age. Beauty may have declined—or may be on the wane; but from its wreck springs forth a more potent charm—the art of fascination. This is the reason why the French women are so universally admired by men of education and refinement.

The Paris correspondent of the National Intelligence, in his interesting letter of the 23d August, says that an English colonel returning to England as an invalid passed through here two or three days since from Yarna, who told me the English as well as the French army was demoralized and greatly discouraged. The English had lost one thousand and the French four thousand men by cholera. They were in want of every thing, and the roads were detestable. In marching to the Danube, where they expected to have a brush with the Russians they suffered dreadfully. Such was the severity of water that at times only one battalion could march the same day. He says that Sebastopol is under mined, though they do not care for that as their engineers can discover those works, but he fears the expedition will be a failure, and gives a very sad account of the discouragement of the troops, the sickness, want of food, etc. in the arrangements, etc. The expedition against Sebastopol, he says, is delayed on the motives stated, but from the state of the health of the army. Lord Raglan is no doubt a brave officer, probably a good one, but no one so highly of the talents of the French general in command. There is no doubt that the emperor of Russia is playing a deep game. You will soon hear of cries and lamentations in England among the higher classes, owing to the deaths of many first-rate officers in the crack regiments now in Turkey.

In France every thing is tranquil and solid. No better proof of it than the emperor's prolonged residence at Bayonne, and every thing here an extraordinary man.

The harvest is very abundant, the like not known for many years, all over Europe. Wheat will be low, and if exports are permitted, from the Black Sea I shall expect to see large shipments of it to the United States. I send you some extracts from various public journals, the subject of the crops, which it might be well to have published for general information, as there will be no demand in Europe for bread-stuffs from the United States.

The attention of the government at Washington should be called to the subject of passports issued by its diplomatic and consular agents in Europe. Some of them, it is thought, serve a proper caution in granting them only to American citizens, but others issue them with a recklessness that is utterly disgraceful, as any vagabond can buy one at a price varying from ten to thirty dollars. Furnished with these documents the parties think they can slip with impunity, and enter into plots and conspiracies against the constituted authorities, and you will probably hear that persons with American passports, and claiming to be American citizens, have been shot or hung as traitors or revolutionists. A great clamor, no doubt, will be raised on the subject at home over the sacrifice of some of these fellows, who have never been in the United States, and are the sons of European parents.

Mr. Marcy's circular on dress, which excited such general ridicule, receives but little attention from a very large portion of his European subordinates. None are so marked for their ridiculous prominence on every public occasion in tinsel dress, as American officials, with embroidered gold eagles and stars on their coats, and gold-mounted swords at their sides. They appear and act as if like Louis XIV.—monarchs à l'égal.

Connected with the passport system, I would mention "the bearers of dispatches," who swarm in about the city. Every steamer from the United States brings two or three, and to our ministers, and even our consuls, are duly and continually granting passports of the same kind, until it has become a matter of job and per all over the continent. One of our consuls in the south of Europe, during a recent visit there, told me he certified in one month the passports of twenty-three bearers of dispatches issued by the department of state at Washington and different American ministers in Europe, some of the bearers being no credit to the country, but giving themselves all the airs of great men.

The disease in the grape has again appeared, and it is really a most severe scourge to France, and a great pecuniary loss. Wine will be very high.

The cholera is abating rapidly in this country, and it is hoped will soon disappear. It has ravaged over a very large portion of the empire.

TELEGRAPH BETWEEN ENGLAND AND AMERICA.—The London correspondent of the New York Herald, says that the project of connecting England and America by telegraph is seriously engaging public attention in the former country. The practicability of laying a submarine cable directly across the Atlantic, from Galway to Cape Race, in Newfoundland, has been advocated among some of the most daring enterprises. "The price," he says, "of such a cable would be about \$10,000,000. It is an electric current can be passed through 2000 miles of cable? By an enormous battery power it is possible can be accomplished, through wires suspended in the air, but can it be effected over a vast length of gutta serena, or gutta serena, passing through salt water? There is such a thing as too great an insulation, and professor Faraday has shown that in such circumstances the wire becomes a Leyden jar, and may be so charged with electricity that a spark cannot, without the greatest difficulty, run through it. To escape this, another proposition is to carry the cable from the northern point of the highlands of Scotland to Iceland, by way of the Orkney, Shetland and Faroe islands, to lay it from Iceland across the northern point of Greenland, thence down the coast of Cape Farewell, where the cable would again cross to the water, span Davis' strait, and run right away across Labrador and upper Cape Cod to Quebec. Here, that it should look in the North American press-work of wires, which hold themselves—so to speak—like an open hand for the European grasp. In this way the cable required would in no point exceed one hundred miles in length."

MONUMENT TO PULASKI.—The State of Georgia some time ago authorized the erection of a monument in honor of the heroic services of Pulaski, during the revolutionary war, and the design of his gallant conduct in Savannah, at the siege of which he fell, on the 9th of October, 1779. The Journal of Commerce says: "This work has just been completed in this city by Mr. R. E. Lantz, the Russian sculptor. It is a square column, sixty feet in height, with a Corinthian cap, and surmounted by a statue of liberty. With the panels of the pedestal are inserted appropriate designs, wrought in basso relievo. This monument is to be erected in a few weeks in Monterey square, Savannah, and in the ceremonies incident thereto, the public authorities will participate. Mr. Lantz, the artist, superintends its erection." It will not, we presume, be set down as an ornament in favor of the barbarism of Russia, that an artist of that country has been selected by one of the richest cities of the American Union to superintend and direct the erection of a monument which is to afford a lasting exhibition of the taste and character and to do honor to one of the bravest soldiers who fought in the revolutionary war.

The northern papers already notice the appearance of cold weather.