

## THE MILAN EXCHANGE.

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MILAN.

TENNESSEE.

### THE GOOD OLD FARM.

There's got to be a revival  
Of good sound sense among men,  
Before the days of prosperity  
Will dawn upon us again.  
The boys must learn that learning  
Means more than the essence of books,  
And the girls must learn that beauty  
Consists in more than looks.

Before we can steer clear of failures  
And big financial alarms,  
The boys have got to quit carkin'  
And get back onto the farms.  
I know it ain't quite so nobby,  
It ain't quite so easy, I know,  
As parin' your hair in the middle,  
An' slickin' up for a show.

But there's more hard dollars in it,  
An' more independence, too,  
An' more real peace and contentment  
And health that is ruddy an' true,  
I know that it takes hard labor,  
But you've got to "hang on" in a store  
Before you can earn a good livin'  
And clothes, with but little more.

What hosts of 'em go back broken  
In health, in mind and purse,  
To die in sight of the clover,  
Or linger along, which is worse.  
An' how many mourn, when useless,  
That they didn't see the charm,  
The safety and independence  
Of a life on the good old farm.

—Indianapolis Journal.

### JACOB AND POLLY.

Jacob Cattle was a messenger to Messrs. Perkins-on, Goldchest & Co., the rich bankers in Lombard street. At least he always considered himself attached to the establishment as a messenger, though he had never "signed articles" with the principals, and was just barely tolerated outside on the pavement, at an acute angle of the building and three feet from the street doors, where customers and clerks were not likely to tumble over him. He had been hanging outside this big bank for many years now; and it had become a custom, of late days, to send him on little errands which were not within the province of a regular clerk's duty, and which clerks of Perkins-on, Goldchest & Co. would have scorned to perform at any price whatever. If anybody required a cab, Jacob was sent for one; if a country gentleman with a big balance on the books wanted to be shown the way to the Bank of England, or Billingsgate, or the Tower, Jacob was told off as guide; if something was wanted surreptitiously by the clerks, in the shape of a newspaper or a ham sandwich, Jacob was sent for it; and there had been times when it was considered safe to trust him even with a telegram.

Jacob received no salary, but was supported by voluntary contributions, like a hospital; and what these contributions amounted to in the year there had been much speculation concerning at the bank, amongst the clerks. It was set down by young and imaginative minds as a "pretty penny, take it altogether." But taking Jacob Cattle altogether was, to the ordinary observer, to set him down as a poor, half-starved, ill-clad, miserable old man, struggling hard to live, and always on the brink of falling at it. A shabbier old gentleman was not to be found between the bank and Houndsditch; but he was never in rags, and he always boasted a clean face under his rusty-brown top hat, which he poised at the extreme back of his gray head. He did not appear to flourish on his contributions, but grew thinner and more pinched with every week of his out-door service there. "You can see him shriveling away," one young man had seriously asserted. "He's a regular miser, I'll be bound." And with his hollow cheeks, and peaked nose, and prominent chin, ground fine to match that poor pinched nose of his, he might have been taken for a miser, or a pauper, or, indeed, anything deplorable.

Still he had what the clerks called his "tips"; and Mr. Goldchest, every Saturday morning, when he left the bank and before he stepped into his carriage, the door of which Mr. Cattle always opened for him, gave him something, it was noticed; but whether a sovereign or a threepenny piece was a matter of uncertainty, the claw-like hand of Jacob closing so quickly on the gift. The junior clerks thought it would be a "threepenny," Mr. Goldchest not being a liberal paymaster, in their humble opinion, forcibly expressed each quarter day; but Jacob, probably of a reticent disposition, never let them know, and at all events he did not wax fat on his emoluments, and in the rainy and frosty seasons caught many a cold and cough, and wore, winter and summer, the same suit of gray threadbare clothes, to which, in very inclement weather, a red cotton neckerchief, relieved by white lozenges, and tied in a strange knot, was added, by way of protection to a giraffe-like throat.

Jacob was considered a poor hanger-on, but Jacob had his hangers-on, too, and people whom in his turn he took upon himself to patronize. There are always depths below depths in this eccentric world of ours, and always some poor brother and sister to whom a hand can be held out, or a little kindness rendered, and Jacob Cattle had his dependent in the background, and one who waited and watched for him as regularly after banking hours on Saturdays, as he waited and watched for Mr. Goldchest about noon; and this dependent on Mr. Cattle was a dark-haired, dark-eyed purveyor of penny "button-holes" and two-penny bouquets: a poor flower-girl, who regarded Mr. Cattle as a regular customer on Saturdays, one who was always good for a penny, sometimes even two-pence, when he had been extra fortunate in the city.

Jacob, it may be said, never pur-

chased his flowers in Lombard street; no one in that busy center had ever seen Jacob Cattle spend a penny-piece on anything; but once away from the city proper, and hurrying away toward Blackfriars Bridge—on the Surrey side of which he lived, and which he crossed regularly twice a day to and from his "place of business"—any one who had taken the trouble to watch him—which no one ever had—would have seen Jacob somewhere in the neighborhood of Ludgate Hill bargaining with Polly Baxter for a nosegay every Saturday afternoon.

Jacob Cattle would even condescend to patronize Polly Baxter, and to occasionally pass a remark upon the weather, or the extent of her stock in trade; but all this was done in an austere, stand-offish way, which did not encourage conversation in return, and which was a washed-out copy of the great Goldchest manner, when the big banker-skated across the pavement to his carriage. Polly Baxter did not know this, and thought it was very kind of the old gentleman in the queer-looking comforter to say a word or how to her now and then—words which, with all their coldness, had a little ring in them of interest or sympathy, or something not easy to comprehend, and which the flower-girl did not attempt in any way to account for. Sometimes she wondered why he bought her flowers, or what he did with them after he got home; he was so particular about the bunch he purchased, and had so strong a fancy for the brightest colors.

Suddenly Jacob Cattle was missed from Lombard street, and from the neighborhood of Ludgate Hill; and Polly Baxter's basket blushed with flowers in vain for him. Every day Polly Baxter had been accustomed to see him between four and five trotting homeward, with his sharp face set due south; every day he had said: "Good morning," in a grave, fatherly way, and with a solemn bend of his long neck; and on Saturdays, as we have intimated, he always stopped to bargain with her for her gayest penny-worth. And now Jacob was missing; and no one knew where Jacob lived, so that the mystery of his disappearance might have been solved by a friendly call.

"He's dead, for sixpence, poor old cove!" said the junior clerk, a pert and slangy and over-dressed youth, whom Jacob had in his heart disliked, despite the offering of a penny now and then. "He's off, depend upon it. I'm sorry I was hard on him last week."

Polly Baxter wondered more about him than the rest of the community aware of his existence. She did not know why she should "bother about the old man," but she did. He was a something removed from her life, a regular customer gone; and that was to be regretted when regular customers were scarce. When she had bought her flowers at Covent Garden Market in the early morning, and had taken them to the little attic where she made up her penny bunches for the day, she caught herself thinking of the "funny little man," and of his grave, old-fashioned ways. She had had a father like him once in some respects, and he had died in the workhouse, praying that she would "keep good," which she had. Polly was a poor, ignorant girl enough, who had never been taught to read and write, and her father had been "a bad lot," as it was termed, and had not cared to see her taught, or cared much about anything save himself, until he had become a martyr to rheumatism and had lost his situation in the market, and had to go finally into the house, leaving his daughter with all the world to herself and nobody in it to look after her. Then the father was sorry and woke up to some little thought of his motherless girl, when he could do little else but think. He was one more of the big army of plodders who march under the banner of "Too late."

Nevertheless, Polly Baxter earned her own living honestly, and made the best of her position by thrift and industry, coming very close to starvation once or twice in the hard times which will turn up to the hard workers. Still she fought on, and had begun to teach herself to read and write of late days, and to find her way on Sundays to a little chapel down a back street, and listen with much surprise to what they told her there, and wonder why it had been kept from her all these years, and why no one in the highways and byways of her life had said a word about it.

Possibly thinking of this had made her think of other folk as the light filtered a little through the darkness of Polly Baxter's life; but she did think a great deal of the poor, old-fashioned little man, who seemed to have vanished like a ghost, and it became a matter of speculation why he had ever bought flowers of her at all, being a man who probably had not much to spend on the minor luxuries of life. And so regular a customer, too, thought Polly, with a sigh again.

Suddenly the regular customer, however, appeared again one Saturday, six weeks or two months after everybody thought he was dead. It was like a ghost rising up in Lombard street, and even Mr. Goldchest, taken unawares by this first appearance at his carriage door, gasped out: "Bless my soul!" and slipped one foot off the curb-stone into the gutter in his first surprise.

He was even a little curious for so great a man, and said:

"Have you been ill, Jacob?"

He did not know his caller's name, "Old Jacob" was Mr. Cattle's cognomen in Lombard street—"Cranky Jacob" sometimes.

"No, sir."

"Then—"

Jacob's rugged face twitched very much as he touched his hat deferentially, and said:

"I've had a loss, Mr. Goldchest."

"Oh! indeed?"

Mr. Goldchest did not ask what or whom he had lost; he glanced at the big rusty hat-band wrapped round the rusty hat of his humble dependent; there was a fugitive fear that there might be something "catching" from Mr. Cattle's close proximity, and he stepped with alacrity into his carriage and drew up his window sharply. He did not reward Jacob on that occasion; he gave no thought to the arrears which might have accumulated during Jacob's absence from his duties; and the old man walked home very thoughtfully, and with a downcast expression of countenance. On his way home he encountered Polly Baxter, who also was disposed to take him for a ghost, and nearly dropped her basket into the London mud at the first sight of him.

"Why, lor, sir! Who'd have thought of it?" she exclaimed.

"Thought of what?" he asked, a little curiously.

"Of your being alive, and moving about like this. I'm so glad."

"Glad, are you? What are you glad for?" he inquired sharply.

"Glad to see an old customer turn up," was the truthful reply.

"Ah! just so," Jacob.

"And not that exactly, mind you," added Polly, "but because you are here, you know. That's it. Where have you been, sir? Ill?"

This was Mr. Goldchest's inquiry also, but not conveyed with so much interest. And his answer was the same as before.

"I've had a loss."

"Not—lost money?"

"I've lost my daughter; all I had in the world to me; all I cared for, child. Good day," he said, with an excitement for which Polly was wholly unprepared.

"Yes; but here; hold hard!" she cried, inelegantly. "Ain't you agoing to have any flowers to—"

The old man hurried away from her, darted across the road under horses' heads and omnibus wheels, with almost the alacrity of youth, and it was not till he was upon Blackfriars Bridge that he had recovered his composure, and quite finished with a ragged pocket handkerchief, which was evidently a segment of his winter wrapper, being of the same striking pattern and color. When he had crossed the bridge and Southwark street, and was turning into one of the little crowded thoroughfares on the right of the Blackfriars Road, leading to the salubrious quarters of Gravel Lane and parts adjacent, he was astonished and discomfited again to find Polly Baxter at his elbow, exceedingly red in the face and short of breath.

"Well, you can just walk, old gentleman, and no mistake," she said.

"What do you want with me?" he asked, testily now. "What—what is it?"

"I only want to say I'm sorry like," she blurted forth. "I didn't think, all at once, about the loss, and that you wanted them for her, of course, who's gone now, and who was fond of flowers. I see; I see. You won't mind what I said; will you, now?"

Jacob Cattle stared at her; but he croaked forth very hoarsely:

"No."

"I'll never ax you again; I'll never look your way again; but take this, please, for this once; won't you?"

And Polly held out his usual-sized bunch of flowers, at which the old man shrank back as though it had been a pistol leveled at him.

"It isn't for the money," said Polly, excited now herself. "I don't want any money. Ketch 'old. Please do. Jest to make believe you're taking them to her the same as ever, sir."

The old man stretched out a trembling hand toward the flowers at this suggestion, and Polly thrust them into his grasp and fairly ran away across the bridge again, leaving him looking after her open-mouthed, and with some salt tears brimming over his blinking eyelids and making their way down the deep furrows in his cheeks.

On the Monday Jacob passed her as usual on his homeward route, and with his old patronizing bow, and with a staid stare at her, too, as if no longer afraid to face her. But Polly looked the other way and would not see him—fell into the habit of hiding from him, even—and on the following Saturday would also have eluded him, had he not come up the reverse way of the street, and taken her unawares by a flank movement.

"Let me have a good bunch to-day—a two-penny bunch," he said, in quite a business-like manner.

Polly Baxter was surprised; but she gave him the flowers he required, and he "popped the money into her basket."

"You don't want them now; do you?" she murmured.

"Yes, of course I do. That was a good thought of yours, child, last week. And I took the flowers to her."

"Oh! I see!" ejaculated Polly.

"And shall do so every week, making believe, as you say, that she's waiting for them. It's not a bad thought at all," he muttered. "She was so fond of flowers."

"How old was she?" asked Polly.

"About your age, I should say."

"And ailing always, was she?"

"For the last three or four years, yes. Good-day."

And then Jacob hurried away, and this time she did not attempt to follow him.

It was from this time that Jacob contrived to be as regular a customer to Polly Baxter as he had ever been; and had any one had the curiosity to follow the movements of the old man, he or she would have seen him every Sunday, in fair weather or foul, plodding on to Tooting Cemetery to lay his little offering on the grave of the daughter who had been always fond

of flowers. When the winter time came on, and flowers grew very scarce and dear, and Polly was compelled to raise her prices, the old man looked very pale and pinched with cold, and did not move along with his customary alacrity; on the contrary, limped painfully at times with the rheumatism which had seized him.

One very cold Saturday she said to him, suddenly:

"You ain't well?"

"Well, not quite as well as I might be, perhaps," he answered, cautiously.

"I don't mind your paying for these some other time, you know," she added, hurriedly, "if—"

"If what?" he asked, as she came to a full stop.

"If you're hard up. It won't make much difference to me; and she might miss 'em, too."

"Thankee," he said, gently, and he looked very hard at her from under his tangled, wiry eye-brows. "That's a kind thought, child. What did you say your name was?"

"I didn't say," she answered, surprised in her turn, "it's Polly Baxter."

"Living where, now?"

"St. James' Row," she answered.

"At the back there. But why?"

"Good day."

That was the last time that Polly Baxter met Jacob Cattle in the London streets; for Jacob disappeared again, and Lombard street and the flower-girl on Ludgate Hill missed him altogether.

"He must be dead this time, poor old chap!" thought Polly.

But Polly was again deceived. One morning a short, red-faced woman, with a market basket on her arm and a key in her hand, looked hard at her, and stopped.

"Is your name Baxter?"

"Yes."

"Polly Baxter?"

"Yes; that's it."

"You're wanted in George street, Gravel Lane, No. 29. My lodger, the old man who used to buy flowers of you, wants to see you precious bad."

"He ain't dead, then?" cried Polly.

"Well, I am glad."

"Don't see what you've got to be glad about," said the woman, sharply.

"But no; he ain't dead yet; he's going, though."

"Oh! Is he? Oh! I hope he ain't!"

"Can you find your way?"

"Yes. Trust me for that."

Polly Baxter trudged away at once to George street, and to No. 29, where on the top floor she found poor Jacob Cattle, very much down in the world, and with very little life left in him. The rheumatics had got an iron grip of him at last and fever had followed, and this was very nearly the last of him, as the red-faced woman had prophesied.

As Polly entered the room he quite smiled at her, as at an old friend.

"Polly," he said, speaking with great difficulty, "I wish to put you in mind of an old offer to me."

"What's that, sir?"

"I want you to open a credit account with me."

"A what?" cried Polly.

"It's a term we have in Lombard street," he explained. "To trust me, I mean, for a little while for a few flowers."

"To be sure!" cried Polly.

"I'll pay you soon; and I want you to do more than that—much more."

Polly waited and wondered till he took time to recover his breath; then he added:

"I want you on Sunday afternoon to take them to her and lay them on her grave. Do you mind very much?"

"Not at all," said Polly. "I'll go every Sunday directly after chapel, if you'll tell me how to find it."

"Oh! you go to chapel, then?"

"Yes, sir; reg'lar."

"Good girl! Keep that up."

"No fear, sir."

"And come and tell me regularly what they tell you there; will you, child? I should like to know."

"To be sure I will, sir."

"When you come back from her."

Then he gave his directions, which Polly Baxter carried out faithfully, until the end came, and Jacob Cattle was buried with his daughter.

After his death, Polly Baxter went regularly to the cemetery just the same and laid her little bunch of flowers on the grave of him who had said kind words to her in life. This was the end of him, and of the story, she thought, until one day, a week or two afterward, a prim little gentleman in black called upon her and asked her many questions, and made perfectly sure that she was the genuine and only Polly Baxter, flower vender, before he surprised her with his news.

Jacob Cattle had been a bit of a miser, after all, and had scraped together, by his humble and faithful services in Lombard street, the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds. He had died without a relation in the world to care for him, and he had left his money to Polly Baxter, of 49 St. James' Row, City, E. C., in remembrance of her kindness, and in "settlement of his credit account with her."

Polly Baxter is married now, and she and her husband have a flourishing little greengrocer's shop and are doing very well. There are fresh flowers still on the old man's grave at Tooting, and one grateful heart keeps his memory green.—F. W. Robinson, in N. Y. Independent.

—There is nothing quite so amazing as a Japanese statistical report. The progress of the people in civilization is probably the most rapid ever known in the history of the world. The authorities there have just published a summary of educational works for 1882, showing there were then in the country 28,908 elementary schools, 76,769 teachers and 2,616,879 scholars. In 1880, 37,683,633 papers were sold.—Current.

### FACTS AND FIGURES.

—There are 34,000 deaf mutes in the United States. By their intermarriage, they are constantly increasing.—N. Y. Sun.

—Since 1880 the increase of deposits in the State and savings banks of the country has been nearly \$500,000,000.—Chicago Journal.

—Massachusetts statistics show that the chance of being killed by the cars are one in 20,000,000 now, while in 1858 they were one in 5,000,000.—Boston Transcript.

—The statisticians of the United States Mint estimate that the total production of gold in the world during the 400 years ending 1882 was 10,394 tons, equal in value to \$7,211,797,860. During the same period the production of silver was 197,731 tons, of the value of \$8,807,318,975.—Philadelphia Press.

—What is claimed to be the largest grain elevator in the world has been erected at Newport News, Va., by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company. It is 80 feet wide, 386 feet long and about 164 feet high, with engine and boiler rooms 40x100 and 40 feet high. The storage capacity of the house is 1,600,000 bushels, with a receiving capacity of 30,000 and a shipping capacity of 20,000 bushels per hour.—St. Louis Post.

—The first attempts to introduce gas as an illuminator in the United States were made in Baltimore between 1816 and 1820. They failed, but it was successfully introduced in Boston in 1822. The next year the first gas-light company was formed in New York, the "New York Gas-Light Company." They began operations with a capital of \$1,000,000. But the people were so slow to adopt the new illuminator that the company was not in full operation until 1827, when the population was about 165,000.—Baltimore Sun.

—According to the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics among the women laborers of that State are 106 barbers and hairdressers, 6 barkeepers, 3 billposters, 9 commercial travelers, 2 bank officials, 2 pawnbrokers, 4 teamsters, 2 sailors, 1 gun and locksmith, 75 bakers, 58 shoemakers, 6 carpenters, 2 door, sash and blind makers, 13 masons, 1 paper-hanger, 1 plumber and gasfitter, 2 carriage makers, 16 watch and clock repairers, 20 cabinet makers, 10 harness makers, 7 machinists, 4 blacksmiths, 235 printers, 2 stone cutters, 4 coopers, 295 laborers, and 5 engineers.

### WIT AND WISDOM.

—What sound is to the ear, and what light is to the eye, that the soul is to the brain.—N. O. Peary.

—He that rightly understands the reasonableness and excellence of charity, will know that it can never be excusable to waste any of our money in pride and folly.—W. Law.

—Artist's friend (pointing to sketch).—Say, Harry, where did you get this? Harry.—Why, I got that out of my head. Friend.—Well, it's a lucky thing for your head that you got it out.

—The best recipe for going through life in a commendable way is to feel that everybody, no matter how rich or how poor, needs all the kindness they can get from others in the world.—Boston Budget.

—Yes, my son. There is gold in the mountains of Idaho and Montana. Lots of it. And so there is heaps of it in the United States Treasury, too. And it is just about as easy to get it from one place as the other. Good deal easier, in fact.—Burdette.

—A young man blackened his mustache with a lead comb and then took his girl out for a moonlight stroll. When the fair one appeared in the bright light of the family circle a couple of hours later her face looked like a railroad map.—Wasp.

—Reckless dude (to burglar, whom he has discovered in closet): "O, you nasty, saucy thing, to hide in my bedroom! There! I'll break your umbrella, so you can't go out without getting soaked, for it's raining like anything outside." Burglar faints.—Chicago Tribune.

—A policeman who was patrolling Montcalm street last the other day heard a whistle blow for all it was worth, and ran a block and a half, to find a woman with her head out of a chamber window. "Who blew that whistle?" "I did." "Do you want me?" "No, sir. My gal and her beau are spoonin' around on the side stoop, and I blew the whistle to let him know that it was time to skip or look out for clubs."—Detroit Free Press.

—"I'm afraid I was cheated on those lightning rods." "What's the matter with them?" "I hadn't had 'em up more'n a month when a fearful stroke of lightning knocked 'em all ways for Sunday, burned my barn, and everything in it." "But didn't the agent give you a guarantee?" "Oh, yes; I wrote to him, and he wrote back very consolingly." "What did he say?" "That lightning never strikes twice in the same place."—Rochester Post-Express.

—"Is there anybody about this establishment who loves poetry?" he said as he opened the door and glanced around the editorial room with a doubtful look. "Certainly there is," said the editor: "have you got some there?" "Yes, four poems, all of 'em on spring." "Good! That's just what we want. John sprinkle a little mint sauce on these and take 'em down stairs." "What for?" demanded the poet. "For the goat. He is the only one about the establishment who loves poetry. But he won't eat spring poetry without mint sauce."—N. Y. Sun.