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Back to the Old Farm.

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CHAPTER XIII.

HOPE REVIVED.

Prison, disgrace, ruin. The feelings of the proud Fred Riley can better be imagined than described.

He awoke before day dawned and overwhelmed with disgrace, sobbed bitterly.

"Back to the old farm! Back to the old farm! where free from temptations and deceit he could pass his days in peace."

This was the end of his bright dreams. Disgrace and ruin.

He prayed to die.

Miss Dashington would now despise him, and Mollie, even his plain country sweetheart, Mollie, might cut his acquaintance. Then he thought of his parents and reflected what they must feel when they learned that prison doors had been closed on their son who was the pride and joy of their old lives.

"It will kill poor mother," he sighed. "And then it must reach their ears. Of course, I cannot be retained at the bank any longer. I will be thrown into prison for the crime of robbing, and that former disgrace, which has haunted me like a terrible nightmare, must come out on me at last. Oh, heaven, what am I to do?"

It was not yet daylight when he heard voices at the door of his cell. Some one without was saying:

"Yes, I heard of it from one of his companions, and I am just in time."

The door opened and Mr. Briggs entered.

"Briggs! Briggs!" cried Fred.

"Hush, Fred, you are at liberty. The police judge is a personal friend, and I have procured your release."

"But I am ruined."

"No you are not."

"It will be in every paper."

"Not one; hush, no one here knows your name, and you are to go with me. I and one or two of your friends, who were with you, alone know of this, and I swear your secret shall be kept."

"But my name is on the record."

"Hush, they don't know your name."

"But they must enter some name on the record."

"Yes; and, fortunately, you were too drunk to know who you were, so I had entered the name of that common scape-goat, John Doe, who is accustomed to vicarious suffering."

"Briggs, you are a jewel; God bless you, Briggs."

"Oh, don't mention it," said Briggs with a laugh which was soul inspiring. "It seems that every young man must sow his wild oats at some period in his life. Better sow them now than later. Come on, your fine is paid and you can go."

Fred, feeling like a condemned criminal, left the prison. A close carriage was at the sidewalk and he was assisted into it and taken to his room.

"How do you feel?" Briggs asked.

"My head is ten times larger than it should be," answered Fred.

"Does it ache?"

"Ache! Oh my! I never knew what a headache was before."

"It was a poor quality of goods you took aboard last night my boy," said Briggs, with a smile.

"Well, one thing is quite certain."

"What is that?"

"You are not capable of doing any work to-day."

"I don't feel as if I could make an entry in a ledger, yet I must try."

"No, you must not."

"Why, it will arouse the suspicions of Mr. Banks."

"With a laugh, Briggs answered:

"If he sees you it will certainly rouse his suspicions."

"Then what must I do?"

"You are clearly on the sick list to-day."

Pressing his hands to his aching temples, the young fellow answered:

"I certainly don't feel well. My brain is almost bursting, and I—oh how I feel."

"Come, get in bed."

"But how will my absence at the bank be accounted for?"

"Trust me to do that," Briggs cheerfully responded. "I was informed during the night of your sudden illness. Came, and was there most of the night with you. Only an attack of bilious colic from which you will recover in a few hours. May expect you at the bank to-morrow ready for duty. One day out and you will never lose a cent."

Briggs went away, leaving poor Fred in bed with a burning headache. He slept part of the day, and at evening awoke feeling refreshed. His hopes were revived and his head ceased aching. Briggs came back at night and told him that Mr. Banks had been very solicitous about his health. He had said that he hoped he would not come the next day if he felt the least indisposed.

"Ah, bankers have hearts after all," said Mr. Briggs.

"His is a selfish interest nevertheless," said Fred. "He knows that Fred Riley well is worth more to him than Fred Riley sick."

"Oh, don't, don't, Fred, judge the banker so harshly."

"I cannot judge him otherwise when he exacts from me fifteen hundred dollars which he knows I did not take from his bank."

"But your books were against you, Fred. Books talk."

"If I had been guilty, he should have sent me to prison."

"Oh, no; that was a harsh means of doing it, Fred. Besides he does not really believe you guilty."

"He does not, and yet he exacts from me two years of penal servitude."

"Oh, Fred, how unreasonable you are."

"Why do you call me unreasonable. If I am guilty I should have been sent to the penitentiary according to the strict ideas of justice. If innocent I should not have to pay \$1500 for somebody else's crime."

"But just consider, Fred, if it was some one else's crime, its your blunder. Now according to all business principles the bank must not suffer for the blunder of others. You must be made to feel the effects of the blunder. He does not believe you guilty, neither do I, although in a court of justice you would undoubtedly be convicted and sent to prison, but he does believe it is your blunder which caused another's crime. Now while mistakes and carelessness are common, and without disgrace or crime, there are offenses in business law which must not go unpunished. Had he been a severe man Mr. Banks would have resorted to the harshest means and had you sent to the State's prison."

Mr. Briggs rocked himself in his chair, stroked his abundant beard, and looked the very picture of benevolence. His smile was pleasant and his eyes overflowing with affection for his young friend.

By degrees he brought the afflicted youth to take a more reasonable look at affairs, and he succeeded in a measure. Fred became more hopeful.

"Oh, by the way, my dear boy, I have more news for you," said Mr. Briggs, his eyes again beaming over with good will. "It may be pleasure to you," as the frogs said to the little boys, but it is death to me."

"What is it?" he asked eagerly.

"Aha! my dear boy, the flash of interest in your eagle eye and that tell tale flush on your manly cheek tells too truly that you already surmise the object to which I refer."

"But I do not."

"Well, it is pleasant to you, but harmful to me."

Fred gazed at him in blank amazement while Mr. Briggs tried hard to look pained, heaved a sigh

which was doubtful whether it was genuine or not.

"You speak in riddles Mr. Briggs, won't you please explain what you mean?"

"Your beautiful friend, Georgie Dashington, is very solicitous about your health."

"How did she learn that I was ailing?"

"How does she learn everything," returned Mr. Briggs with one of his most martyr-like smiles. "Why, she sent to the bank, it seems, on some business, but it required her presence. She came; she cast her darling brown eyes over the place and missed some one, which it seems was your precious self. She made inquiry and as it was known by all that you were indisposed she learned it. She sent her warmest sympathy to you."

A smile came over the pale face of the young clerk, and he could not but feel a little exultation over his generous rival. Mr. Briggs sighed and evidently gave this bit of evidence with some reluctance.

Next day Fred as usual was in the bank, and at his post behind the desk. Mr. Banks greeted him so warmly and seemed so kind that Fred was quite sure that he had wronged him all along. He felt his hopes rising as his opinion of Mr. Banks improved. As for Briggs, his generous rival, the young clerk thought him the dearest fellow on earth.

A week later as he was going down the street, his mind filled with thoughts of the beautiful Miss Dashington, he heard the discordant notes of a wheezy old hand organ which was being ground near by. He carried his eyes in the direction, and the red face and tangled hair of some one who was familiar to him glared at him from under an old battered plug hat, while the eye twinkled merrily.

"Hello, my jolly friend, how are you?" cried the organ grinder, coming over to his side of the street still turning the crank of his organ. "Don't you know me?"

"Happy Jack, the Rover."

"Struck it right the first time, my jolly Fred Riley. Put a penny in my hat to give me a start, won't you?"

Fred drew some small coin from his pocket and dropped it in the hat of the man who was holding it for him. The fellow chuckled as he pocketed the coins and said:

"I am in a new line. It don't pay very well, but it's better than nothing. I think it will be safer through the winter than trusting to luck and warm hay barns. Somehow the hay barns in Kentucky are not always the warmest places in the world."

"Jack, why don't you go home to your mother? Do you ever think how she watched over you, cared for you, prayed for you?"

"No," answered Jack, "I don't dare to think. It would drive me mad. I don't want to think just now. But why Fred, why don't you go home to your poor old mother?"

"I can't," gasped Fred with a start.

"No more can I. But listen Fred, you can hope now for a brighter dawn when we can both go home."

"What do you mean?"

"Stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord?"

Then with a laugh the jolly dog hurried away, his hand organ on his back.

CHAPTER XIV.

A STRAIGHT TIP.

The Louisville races have become famous the world over. Here can be seen the swiftest and best horses that ever trod turf.

The Louisville Jockey Club is very famous. The season for the races was drawing near, and as it approached Fred found himself growing very desirous of seeing the races.

"Of course you are going to attend the races, Mr. Riley?" Georgie Dashington said in a way which would imply the grossest

ignorance if he did not go.

"I have not made up my mind," he hesitatingly answered.

"Not made up your mind?"

"Not yet."

"Well, you must make up your mind then at once."

"Why?"

"Because we are going to attend."

Fred felt the effect of his crushing poverty most keenly and meekly returned:

"My services at the bank—"

"Ah, they say, they must discontinue your services for one day. I want you with me. You shall come with me to the races. There now, I won't take no for an answer," she concluded with a pretty little tyrannical pout.

Fred was more annoyed than he would like to have admitted. He went home that night feeling as if he would be undone if he did not attend the races, and yet how could he expect a holiday during the busiest season of the year. In his perplexity he applied to his friend who had stood by him all the time.

"Well, now, Fred," said Mr. Briggs, smiling and carefully stroking his handsome beard, "I think it can be done."

"What do you mean?"

"You can get a holiday. Now, how many holidays do you want?"

"But—here it is the busy season."

"Ha! ha! ha! What of that. Mr. Banks has a great heart in him, and when the matter is all explained to him, I know he will grant the request. I will engage to do it all—trust in me!"

"Mr. Briggs, you have the greatest heart of any man living," cried Fred, springing quickly to his feet, and seizing his friend's hand in both of his own.

Then the great hearted Briggs smiled so benevolently that tears came into his eyes. As soon as he could regain his self composure, he said:

"So you have decided to go to the races."

"Yes; I was invited to accompany some one."

"Ah! then, of course, you must go. Never fear, my dear friend, I will make it all right with the banker."

"Thank you; but Mr. Briggs, you are too generous. What you are about to do may be wholly against your own interests, too. I am to go with Miss Dashington."

For a moment Mr. Briggs was abashed. He seemed greatly pained to learn it, but now his generous soul got the better of the small amount of evil in his nature, and he rose in the fullness of his heart, and seizing the hand of his young friend, said:

"It's all right, Fred. You have vanquished me, but you did it fairly though. Everything was honorable, and I am willing to submit. Go in, my dear boy, and win the lovely Georgia Dashington, and may heaven prosper your union."

For several moments Fred was too much overcome by his emotion to make a reply, but when he did regain his voice he stammered:

"Briggs! Briggs! You are the noblest man on earth. May heaven reward your generosity as it deserves."

"So you are going to the races you say."

"I am."

"Do you ever bet, Fred?"

"Oh, no, I never have the money you know, and besides my father and mother never think it exactly right."

"They don't?"

"No. They regard horse racing as no better than any other species of gambling and all gambling is but little better than stealing."

"Oh, dear, no, no! not if it's honest. Why betting is not putting your judgement against another man's. That is all there is of it. If you put up your judgement against mine and back it with money and it is all fair, then who can be blamed?"

"But it's a great risk. It is a matter of luck, and luck is always against me. I dare not venture."

"I am sorry to hear you say that Fred!"

"Why?"

"I had a way in my mind whereby one sweep you might pay off the fifteen hundred dollars you owe at the bank and be a free man."

"Pay it off," cried Fred starting to his feet and staring at his friend, while his breath came short and quick. "Honorable?"

"Of course it is honorable or I would not suggest the plan."

"What is it?"

"Now sit down and I will tell you all about it."

Fred resumed his seat and Mr. Briggs looking very wise, gazed to the right and left to assure himself they were alone; got up and closed the door and sat down once more at the side of his young friend and lowering his voice almost to a whisper, said:

"This is a straight tip, Fred."

"A straight tip. What is a straight tip?"

Fred was ignorant of jockey gambling parlance.

"It is this. There is a horse to run in that race which no one knows. It is the horse called Darian. No one knows his speed save one or two. Now the proprietors of Whitenose, a horse to run in the same heat, who cannot by fifty paces at least come out with Darian, are betting heavy on Whitenose. Just thing of it, Fred, they bet three to one on Whitenose. Now all you have to do, is to take five hundred dollars and go to Jennings the evening before the race and put it up against Whitenose on Darian, and you are dead sure of fifteen hundred in twenty-four hours."

Fifteen hundred dollars; free! a man once more, could it be possible. His heart swelled within him and he could almost shout for joy. But he checked himself as the reflection came to him.

"I have not five hundred dollars to put up, won't you lend it to me Briggs?"

"Most willingly, my friend, but I have put up every dollar I could possibly spare on the races to back Darian; but that need not worry you, I can see a way out of this."

"How?"

"Take it from the bank."

"The bank. You cannot mean it."

"I certainly do. Why not? The money will not be out of the bank twenty-four hours, when it will be returned. Then you will have fifteen hundred dollars to buy off yourself, go home to your parents, and perhaps save your mother's life."

He pleaded so innocently, so earnestly for the youth whom he loved so devotedly, that Fred determined to adopt his suggestion, of course the banker need never know it.

As Mr. Briggs returned home that night there was a gleam of triumph in his eyes. His plan would succeed.

The day for the famous race when Darian was to sweep every thing came. Bright and early Fred Riley was astir and hurried to the nearest book-room to see how pools were selling. The book makers gave him no encouragement. Darian was by no means a favorite, and some were betting four to one against him.

Fred had drawn out the five hundred dollars and put it up with Jones against the fifteen hundred. Sometimes he felt within him an anxious uneasiness which could only be temporarily driven away by his reasoning that Briggs had advised him to put up his money and he had done so. Briggs would not advise him to do wrong.

"Say, youngster, air yer a bettin' on that Dary-ann?" asked an old horse gambler who had grown gray in the business.

"Yes."

"Well, ye'd better hedge for that critter can't run a little bit."

"What do you mean by hedge?"

"Go an bet jistez much on tother hoes, so you wont lose nothing; let it go either way. Ef yer got five hundred on Dary-ann put up fifteen hundred or two thousand agin him."

"Fred did not have the money to

hedge with, and he hurried away to find Briggs.

"Briggs, do you know the horse Darian personally?" Fred asked.

"No," Briggs answered.

"Well, why did you advise me to bet on him?"

"Because Roxy Smith, who knows all about it, has timed him and came and told me he was all right."

"They are running four to one against him."

"Don't get frightened, boy, if it's a hundred to one," said Briggs with a smile. "I guess it's a matter of bluff, and I wouldn't pay any attention to what they say. Don't hang around the pool rooms at all."

"Do you think that I am safe, Briggs?"

"I do; unless Roxy Smith has lied to me. If he has I will surely kill him."

"I am ruined if I cannot replace the money."

"No, don't think of that. I have no doubt but that I can fix it all up any way. It would only be a loan."

"A loan! My God, that will take half a year longer to pay out. Mr. Briggs smiled benevolently and said:

"You have not lost it yet."

"Wonder if I could withdraw the bet."

"No."

"If I had the money I would go and hedge."

"My dear boy, that would be a cowardly act. I would not think of it. Never cross a stream until you come to it. Wait until you have lost; there is time enough to get out of it in some way."

Fred felt a little encouraged. There was something assuring in the manner and voice of his friend Briggs.

"Mr. Briggs would not promise me to do anything that was not for the best, he thought, and I will come out all right yet."

It was near the time for the great race. People had for hours been crowding into the grounds and the great amphitheater constituting the grand stand was crowded with people.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Is Alum Poisonous.

[Hall's Journal of Health.]

"This question has caused a good deal of discussion. Alum is used by many bakers to whiten their bread, enabling them to use an inferior flour. It is most extensively employed as a cheap substitute for cream of tartar in the manufacture of baking powders. It has not been considered immediately dangerous; although if continued it induces dyspepsia and obstinate constipation. But the fact that many cases of poisoning have occurred from the use of alum, puts the question in a more serious aspect, and prudent people will exercise caution in the selection of baking powders."

"Under what conditions then, does this substance, formerly used only for mechanical or medicinal purposes, become poisonous? They are certainly obscure, and at present we can only surmise what they may be. We suspect that the cause exists in the individual poisoned; some peculiarity of the constitution producing a morbid change in the secretions of the stomach, with which the alum combines and forms an active poison: or the secretions may be healthy but in unusual proportions, in combination with the alum constitute a poison."

"For example, two parts of mercury and two parts of chlorine form calomel, which is not poisonous, but change the proportions to one part mercury and two parts of chlorine, and we get corrosive sublimite, which is a deadly poison."

Then, again we know nothing of the constitutional peculiarities. Why is it that one person can eat all kinds of green fruits and vegetables with impunity, while the same course might cost another individual his life? One person can handle poison ivy and sumac without being in the least affected; another is poisoned if he approaches to within ten feet of them. Out

of a family residing in a malarial district, some of the members will suffer half the year with fever and ague, while the others will enjoy excellent health during the entire year. Foods that are wholesome to some persons are actually poisonous to others. This is especially true of some kinds of fish. There is no safety in taking alum into the stomach, as it is shown to be always injurious, and often dangerous.

The Scientific American published in a recent number a list of alum and ammonia baking powders, which is of great value at this time. Following is the list compiled from official reports. Powders marked with a star seem to have a general sale, as they are mentioned in at least two of the official reports.

*Atlantic & Pacific *Royal

Cook's Favorite. Sciota.

Crown. Silver Spoon.

Crystal. Silver Star.

Daisy. *Snowdrift.

*Davis O. K. Sovereign.

Dry Yeast. Star.

Gem. State.

Globe. Standard.

*Kenton. Sunflower.

Pearson's. Washington.

Perfection. Windsor.

Peerless. Zipp's Grape.

Purity. Crystal.

There are, in addition to the foregoing list from the Scientific American, a number of such powders sold in the western that were not found in the eastern stores.

Following is the list to date:

Calumet. Contains Alum.

Calumet Baking Powder Co., Chicago.

Forest City. Contains Ammonia Alum.

Vonwee Bros., Cleveland.

Chicago Yeast. Contains Ammonia Alum.

Chapman & Smith Co., Chicago.

Ben Bon. Contains Ammonia Alum.

Hotel. Contains Ammonia Alum.

J. C. Grant Baking Powder Co., Chicago.

Unrivalled. Contains Alum.

Syracuse, Warner & Griswold, Chicago.

One Spoon Taylor's. Ammonia Alum.

Taylor Mfg. Co., St. Louis.

Yarnall's. Contains Alum.

Yarnall Mfg. Co., St. Louis.

Shaw's Snow Brand. Contains Alum.

Merchants' Mfg. associations, St. Louis.

Dodson & Hill's. Contains Alum.

Edison & Hill, St. Louis.

Shepard's. Contains Ammonia Alum.

Wm. H. Shepard, St. Louis.

Bain's. Contains Alum.