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BROWNVILLE, NEBRASKA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1877.

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J. S. STULL, Attorney and Counselor at Law. Office over Hill's store, Brownville, Neb.

J. H. BRADY, Attorney and Counselor at Law. Office over State Bank, Brownville, Neb.

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FIRST CLASS WORK allowed to leave my gallery. A full assortment of PICTURES, FRAMES, of all sizes and grades on hand. ALBUMS, LOCKETS, CLEARING ORNAMENTS FOR THE PARLOR. Persons wishing Photograph work done in the best style, at lowest prices, should not fail to call and see for themselves. P. M. ZOOK.

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J. L. ROY, UNDERTAKER. Keeps a full line of BURIAL CASES & CASKETS. CONSTANTLY ON HAND. 56 MAIN STREET, BROWNVILLE, NEB.

My Mother's Wheel.

In the shadows creeping o'er Narrow pane and attic floor, Stands a wheel with mouldering band, Turned no more by foot or hand; Stand upon it deeply lies, Tiny specks that cloud the eyes; Over it the spiders spin Daylight out and evening in.

As I sit beside it now, Weary heart and aching brow, Years go backward as the tide From the after-noon's shade glide. Light again to passing fair, Sunshine glints my face and hair, And a simple child I kneel, Happy by this little wheel.

Once again I hear its hum, While the moments go and come; See the trifling things hold Fast threads like shining gold; Buy till the sunset red, Till the last faint beam is fled; Spinning all the living day, Hours of pain and joy away.

Faithful hands that toiled so long, Like and such my rights once more, Lighten burdens before! Softly through this silent room Floats a brightness through the gloom, While her presence seems to steal Back to me beside this wheel.

THE WENTWORTH MYSTERY. —OR— Who Will Save Her?

CHAPTER XII. (Continued.) "Why, but for the color of the hair, it is Gertrude herself!"

"The color of the hair can be changed," suggested the silvery voice of Darknell in his ear. "These three men—second-rate all, yet each moved by so different a feeling, gathered round the desecrated coffin, upon whose inmate the double lanterns poured down a flood of light.

"A face of exquisite beauty, ghastly in its shroud perhaps, and terrible in the rigidity of death, but beautiful exceedingly. "Who would have thought," murmured the lawyer half to himself, as he turned away from the open coffin, "that Rose Ayllife could ever have looked like this? If death works such miracles, who knows but I may become an angel in my coffin?"

"In your coffin perhaps, yes, but never elsewhere," laughed the cynical doctor. Matthew Rockwood turned to the lodge-keeper. "Never was a scheme better concocted; we work without even a fear of detection. This idea of yours will save all, Benjamin Darknell."

"They, the lawyer and the lodge-keeper, drew Malton towards them, and, with heads bent low, communed in the shadow. Mean while, Powder Blue, from the mere habit of business, tested the coffin-plates, and was greatly disgusted to find they were not silver. "It's like 'em," he muttered; "always a cheat in the poor man—definitely in death!"

The three evil heads, taking no heed of him, had drawn together. "The Baronet is at his last gasp. I know the exultant nature of Miss Gertrude. Leave all the rest to me." It was the doctor who spoke. "And the change"—his hand for the moment, nearly touches the quiet face in the coffin—"when may that be made?"

"In a week from this. I have prepared for all." "And Dr. Balm—that is, your sister—"

"Has agreed to everything. We cannot fail." And again the three evil heads gets still closer together, till they make but one menacing shadow on the wall.

CHAPTER XIV. TWO EASY GOERS. It was morning when the conspirators came stumbling out of the old church vaults, and stood blinking, ow-like, in the light of the dawning day.

But few words were interchanged between them. Darknell, who had extinguished the lantern he carried, led the way back to the lodge. Here refreshments had been prepared, so that his guests might eat, drink, and if required, sleep, without disturbing the village out of its accustomed propriety, or causing unpleasant questions to be asked by its ever curious, though poppy-headed inhabitants. And the four men, moved by such different instincts, yet bent upon one common end, passed through the thickly populated churchyard, threading their way among graves, scattering the dew from the tall grass, and each alike anxious to avoid the coming sunlight.

The plan so long matured was now approved of by all, and, creatures of darkness, they hurried home through the pure morning air and pearily light to rest. "To rest! while the dying Baronet moaned in his bed, and Gertrude—poor defenceless child—slumbered in hers, all unconscious of the terrible doom pronounced. The sun rose higher and higher in the heavens, and the birds, those winged musicians of the air, flutter from bough to bough, or spring aloft, filling all space with melody. An awful contrast this bright and hopeful world with that within the dark and crumbling catacomb beneath

the stone floor of the old Abbey Church, abiding place of the bat and the spider, yet where manly strength was left to moulder, and beauty—youth and beauty—to decay.

"Ugh! let us for the time being shake such dreary thoughts from us, and wander down by the river's bank till we come to a cozy spot we have had our eyes upon, even at the commencement of this chapter, and where we hope to introduce the reader to a very nice old gentleman.

Here he is, lying on his back, a soft felt hat forming a pillow for his partially bald head; a rod which he is too lazy to hold, supported on a couple of crossed sticks; and a float, which he is watching with half-shut, pleasant eyes, bobbing about in the water. A portly old gentleman, white-haired and ruddy-cheeked, a nose as straight as a dart, and upper lip short as any bygone Greek's statue. He is inclined to corpulence, and is dressed in a suit of tweed, the latter spotted and stained by much sylvan wear and tear.

Now take all this in at one comprehensive glance, and you will have something of an idea of the personality of Mr. Francis Midway, Rector of Drispey Bridge and its twin parish of Wentworth.

Unmistakably a gentleman—Frank Midway might have worn ragged corduroy or trowzy fustian, but the most inexperienced eye could not mistake him for anything but that.

An easy-going—hurting no man's prejudices—having none of his own Pa'son Midway was beloved by all, from the Radical cobbler, who, as he wouldn't come to church, Pa'son Frank made a point of preaching to his little shop window, down to the village cur, who, conscious of concealed biscuits in the good gentleman's spacious pockets, came sniffing obsequiously at his heels.

This is no cur, however, whose black, dewy muzzle is resting on the rector's shoulder, and whose sweet brown eyes, full of fun and mischief, are watching the bobbing float with far more attention than Pa'son Frank himself.

Mentioning the dog, recalls us to the fact that the rector is not alone. Standing against the trunk of a tree, "arranging" but for the rector's lines, is the dog's master—Mr. Peter Applethwaite.

A curious, but none the less constant, companionship is that between Pa'son Frank and Sandy Peter. "Oh! I shall reclaim him some day," the laughing rector would say in answer to a remonstrance from the "uncle guide" of his parish. "Peter has been twice to church, and would have continued to come but that his snoring disturbed the congregation."

"Peter," said the rector, without looking up, "I think I've got a bite." Applethwaite glanced at the float, and shook his head. "Not you; besides, Rummager's got her eyes on the float, and would bark if it moved."

There was a pause—a short one, broken by the rector. "Peter, I don't like the way you're bringing up that dog—it's not Christian."

Peter's face expanded into its usual expressive grin. "Why not, Pa'son? If education means Christianity, Rummager's got it. 'Tisn't my fault, Pa'son Frank, if the school board set themselves agin' Bible teaching."

"The Scriptures say, 'Remember to keep holy the Sabbath-day.' Now, Rummager doesn't."

"I'm impossible for words to describe the tone of protest conveyed in this ejaculation. "Why, Pa'son, I don't think that dog would bark at a cat, much more start a hare, of a Sunday." (This with a sly look at the rector.) "She has kept too good company for that."

"She's a ne'er-do-well, and you're another," said the rector, crossing the sleek, black head of the dog. "No! I must say," he added, with a merry laugh, "that when you were illegally boozing at some ale-house, Rummager followed me to church, and sat out the entire sermon in the centre aisle, barking her lips, and starting me out of countenance."

"And I'll be bound," said Master Applethwaite, "as she understood you, Pa'son Frank, as well, if not better, than the rest of the congregation."

"It is possible," assented the rector, reflectively. "Possible! I'd back her," and Peter jerked his thumb in the direction of the dog, still intent upon the float, "agin' Farmers Jowler and Fleek, who are sound asleep afore you give out the text. Why, to see the way Rummager turns over a rabbit would make a Christian of a heathen. She makes a dash, knocks it over, and holds it down until I come and set it free again."

Another pause, again broken by the rector. "Peter!" "I'm all here, Pa'son; on'y too glad to be here when you talk. It a'most makes one wish to be a'nigh all ears, like a donkey."

The good-natured old gentleman, accustomed to Peter's ways, took not the shadow of an offence; indeed, had he done so, Peter's misery—for he adored the rector—would have been complete for the day.

We have said that they understood each other. "Over that old stone bridge"—and the rector raised himself on his elbow,

pointing to two picturesque arches of drooping ivy and mouldering stone that spanned the river—over that bridge, Peter, the ancient Romans passed."

"Why not?" said the unimaginative Applethwaite; "they must have passed over somehow; that bridge is as good as another. I've not much opinion of them Romans myself. Why that iron pot as I fished out of the river bed—"

"And for which I gave you half-a-crown." "Though I said it wasn't worth a sixpence—for it wasn't a thing to bibe a taturin. Now, meanin' no disrespect to you, Pa'son; but the ancient is a matter as calls for discussion."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the rector; they have called for a great deal, and I don't know that much good has come of it. This little book" (and the rector took up a well-thumbed volume that had been reposing by his side) "contains about as much wisdom as, with the exception of One, I care to study."

Listen to this, Peter," and, in a rich, soft voice, the rector read: "No life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on the cowslip banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams which we now see glide so quietly by us."

Peter Applethwaite, who was a good listener as well as talker—the former qualification being a great recommendation to the rector—nodded approval.

"May I ask the name of the gentleman as figured that up?" "Isak Walton."

"Then please score one in my name to Mr. Isaacs—we think alike. Was he a Pa'son, sir?" "No—and yes—he was a splendid preacher. Listen; and again the rector read:

"Every misery that I miss is a new misery,—that's good, Peter?" "First-rate!"

"A business man himself, but not so busy but he had leisure to laugh; he had what he himself calls a meek, contented quietness—such a quietness as makes a man's very dreams pleasant, both to God and himself—that great Maker of us all, Peter, who gives us flowers and showers, and stomachs and meat, and content and leisure to go a-fishing."

"And the rector, exulting, in rich, mellow tones, the old song: "Other joys Are but toys; Only this, Lawd's will, For her skill Breaks no ill, But content and pleasure."

Here Rummager gave a short warning bark. "A bite!" cried Peter. And it was a magnificent fish, which the rector, now all life and animation, springing to his feet, landed in thorough sportsmanlike fashion.

"There!" he said, as, with glistening eyes he surveyed his prize, which was still quivering with life in the sweet meadow grass. "Can anybody here two opinions about angling, Peter?"

"No one—cept, possibly, the fish." "Umph!" granted the rector, somewhat vexed.

"But," continued Mr. Applethwaite, "what must be will be, even when it oughtn't to be; because, you see, the world goes round on its axle-trees, and we can't put the skid on just as we choose;" with which luminous piece of philosophy he withdrew the hook, and consigned the fish to the basket. As he did so his eyes fell upon the little book, now lying open on the grass. "Why heart alive! I should know him! That book was Mister Everard Corbett's!"

"Quite right, Peter. He made me a present of it the day before he left. It was my own selection. There's not a page of it we haven't travelled over a hundred times together. Fine lad!—noble lad!"

"There couldn't be a better?" was Sandy Peter's ready response. "I loved him like my own son," said the rector. "Bless him! I should be sorry to leave this world without having looked into his handsome face once again. Yet, India's a long way off, and I—I'm getting old."

As the kind soul whisked out his handkerchief to pass over his eyes, a small paper, folded note-form, fell at his feet.

"What's that?" "It looks like a letter," said Applethwaite, as he picked it up; "and I think I remember Mrs. Grace" (the rector's housekeeper) "giving it to you as we came away. She said one of the Abbey gardeners brought it."

"So she did—so she did. And I put it into my pocket, along with the box of gentles, that I shouldn't forget it. How foolish of me! It's written in pencil, too. That's queer."

Thus chatting, the easy-going rector mounted a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles upon the bridge of his excessively handsome nose, and opened the note.

A glance at it, and the whole expression of his countenance changed; the ruddy color went out of his cheek and, for the first time in Applethwaite's memory, the hearty old rector turned pale.

The words he read were these: "DEAR MR. MIDWAY,— Do come and see me at once. I feel that something terrible is about

to happen at the Abbey, and I have no friend to advise with but you. They keep me confined to my room, and say that I am not in my right mind, but that's not true. Oh, Mr. Midway! I don't know what to do with all these people about me. Do come and see me, and see poor dear papa at once—at once!"

"Yours, in much alarm, "GERTRUDE WENTWORTH."

After having read this epistle through for the third time, the rector folded it carefully up, and returned it to his pocket.

Then, wiping his gold-rimmed glasses thoughtfully, he returned them also to their case and the same receptacle.

He looked down at his very uncerulean, stained but of tweed, and, for a moment, hesitated, speaking for the first time after reading the note aloud.

"I'm afraid I don't look much like a parson Peter."

"That depends how parsons ought to look. For my part I don't see why them as preaches the Word of Life should be dressed like undertakers. It's a matter for discussion."

"We will not fish any more to-day, Peter. I'm going to the Abbey."

Peter opened his eyes a little. It was a fact well known in Drispey, that "beastion Sir Hugh" and the good old rector were not on a friendly footing.

"No bad news about Sir Hugh?" asked Applethwaite. "Why, yes;—no, no—nothing in particular."

"Miss Gertrude's well, I hope?" this with much anxiety. "Miss Gertrude is not well, and I'm going to see her. You can take that fish for your own breakfast, and there is a shilling to get something to wash it down with."

So saying, the rector, thoroughly preoccupied, put the coin into Applethwaite's brown palm, and turned upon his heel.

He had not taken many steps before he turned and again addressed Applethwaite. "Peter, you bear a bad name; but it is my conviction there are many worse people in the world than you."

Peter grinned. "Stick firm to that conviction, Pa'son Frank, and you can't go wrong."

"I know you will be one of the most inquisitive fellows in existence—like Rummager, there, poking your nose into everything that does not concern you."

"Oh!" Peter was about to enter into a virtuous disclaimer, but the rector cut him short.

"What have you heard about these newcomers at the Abbey?" "Mister Rockwood?"

The rector gave another wave of his hand. "I know him. I allude to the London doctor and nurse."

Peter slowly rubbed his head before he answered. "The doctor bean out-and-out clever one, that be sure. He set Joe Grummell's arm, which was broke in two places, an' never took a shillin'."

Then he cured the miller's wife as old Doctor Bowley give over; for which they do say the miller can't abide the sight of him—ha, ha!"

"A clever man, yet always at the village Inn. Scarcely respectable that, Peter?"

It is possible that that the rector and Peter entertained very different opinions upon the latter point, the very notion of the village Inn being, to Mr. Applethwaite's idea, a promised land, flowing with—well, something stronger than milk and honey.

The doctor do lay in the rum-and-water, to be sure; but whether a bottle of rum and a tumblerful of water be too much for a man in one day, is a matter open to discussion."

"Um!—and the nurse?" "A tidy little body, neat as a new pin, as makes no more noise than a shadler. She was down in 't village to-day, and I'd a good look at her. She has got one of them faces as you're never quite certain whether you're seeing it in profile, three-quarters or full front. Sort of woman as would rather listen to other folks talking than talk herself."

"A rather uncommon sort of woman that," laughed the rector. "Well, I shall make her acquaintance for myself. Good morning, Peter."

"Mornin', Pa'son."

Mr. Applethwaite knuckled his forehead and seraped his boot—if not with a Chesterfieldian elegance, with something that was far higher and nobler, a genuine love and respect for the kind-hearted rector, who, again relapsing into thought, strode away along the banks fringed by tall, tufted reeds and over-grown with willows, and then into the moist meadow land beyond.

"Well," said Peter, with a sigh, as he gathered the fishing paraphernalia together, "I thought parson and me would have had a pleasant mornin's sport; but there's nothing certain in this world, Rummager, my lass, and here he turned to his dog, 'but death and Rummager's taxes.'"

Rummager, who was engaged seeking to catch glimpses of the hidden fish through the interstices of the basket, looked up, and solemnly shook her ears. Whether she understood her master's sentiments is uncertain, but she looked as if she did, which was equally satisfactory to him.

"I don't know much about the people up at the Abbey," he said, as he unscrewed the joints of the fishing

rod, "but I do know something about one as belongs to them—that ill-looking chap with the smudge of blue on his face. He's a varmint all over, or I'm no judge of breed. P'raps we shall meet him, Rummager, down at the 'Arms,' for he's like your master in one thing—he's got a thirst as nothing can quench, and if we meet we'll fall out."

He shouldered the fishing rods, and took up the basket. "Why, 'bless my heart,' as he would say, Pa'son's forgot his book! Never knew him do that before. If all the leaves was bank notes, he couldn't care more for it."

He placed it carefully in his pocket then whistled the dog. "And now for breakfast, Rummager. That bandy-legged fellow promised your right honorable master a thrashing, and your right honorable did promise him one, which is a matter as will admit of discussion."

And with thoughts full of Homerio battle, Peter Applethwaite strode on his way—a different way to that taken by the rector—among trailing brambles and fern-leaved ferns, and past delicious water spots still as silver mirrors, flecked by shifting shadows, and, to the experienced eye, full of rich promise of fish.

For once, Mr. Peter Applethwaite was oblivious to all this. But two things held possession of his thoughts—his fear that something had gone wrong with the rector, and his resolve to give Powder Blue a thrashing.

CHAPTER XV. THE RECTOR IS PUZZLED. "What, not see Miss Miss Gertrude? Why, my dear Mrs. Bleek, it is by her own desire I am here. See her I must and will!"

And the Reverend Mr. Francis Midway emphasized this expression of his determination very strongly. He was standing in Mrs. Bleek's, the housekeeper's room, wiping the drops from his broad, brave forehead; for he had come across the park from the river, and had been walking fast.

"Deary, deary, deary me, Pa'son Midway!—and the ancient woman's wrung her hands. "It's all confusion and frustration. Nothing peaceable and quiet, as when I was a gal! Then everything went reg'lar, like the ticking of a clock; while now—"

"In Sir Hugh's state, I suppose, Mrs. Bleek, you are mistress here?" said Pa'son Frank, impatiently. "I mistress! There you be again, deary, deary me! I don't know whether the Abbey is resting on its own foundations, or standing on its chimney pots. Ever since those people from London have been here, I've been sitting on earthquakes, that I have! If the ground was to open beneath my feet, it wouldn't surprise me a bit! There's death in the air, Pa'son Frank. There's death in the air!"

"What the dev—I mean, what on earth do you mean, woman?" ejaculated the easy-going, for once startled out of his equanimity. "I mean this,—and Mrs. Bleek sunk her voice into a whisper,—that the voice of the fox was heard all night in the copse; that them two owls in the clock tower never stopped hooting; and the croak of the raven was heard under my own window; all certain signs, and sure that a Wentworth is about to die!"

"Nonsense!" said the rector. "The death of a dozen Wentworths couldn't concern the owls, nor ravens, much, though possibly the fox might have a larger interest in the matter. How is Miss Gertrude?"

"Clean off her head, I'm 'feared. She talks and raves about all sorts of things. I think her mind is gone, sometimes—that is."

"The more reason that I should see her, and above all, the doctor."

"The doctor?" said a rich, mellow voice, almost at the rector's elbow. "The doctor's here, only too delighted if he can be of any service."

Pa'son Frank, who had opened the door of Mrs. Bleek's sanctum, in preparation for his quitting the room, started, and let go of his hold on the lock.

In the smiling gentleman who stood in the doorway he recognized—having more than once seen him pass the rectory—Doctor Malton.

Somewhat confused, the rector reddened. He returned the doctor's bow. The latter advanced with an air of easy frankness—a "gentlemanly air," but little in keeping with bottles of rum and the village Inn.

"I must apologize for a seeming rudeness, but I was myself about to turn the outside handle of the door when it opened. Listeners, it is proverbially said, hear no good of themselves. I trust, as my listening was unintentional, that I am an exception to the rule."

"I am happy to have an opportunity of making Doctor Malton's acquaintance," said the rector, bowing; "the more so as I have already heard of his skill, and how kindly it has been used to the benefit of some of my parishioners."

During all which stiff talk doctor and rector alternately surveyed each other.

Both were mutually satisfied with the inspection. The good parson's face was far too frank and open to give the cunning, clever doctor much uneasiness; while the mask of