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A KING IN DISGUISE.

My brain is dull, my hands are tired,
I have no heart for work or play;
Just let the hours go as they will,
I can do naught at all to-day.

Life's battle does not need my aid;
I'll lay aside my sword and shield;
To-morrow, perhaps, with better heart
I may be glad to take the field.

What is To-day? A few short hours
In which men toil, or think, or weep.
I'll let them idly drift away,
And sleep and dream, and dream and sleep.

"What folly!" cried my better self.
"Lift up thy drowsy heart and eyes.
What is To-day? He is a king,
A mighty monarch in disguise.

"His hands are full of splendid gifts—
Honor and wisdom, wealth and fame.
Haste thee!" perchance this very hour—
This only hour—he calls thy name."

Then anxiously, with eager haste,
I went and stood in Duty's place;
And just at noontide's weary hour
Fortune and I met face to face.

She said: "I've waited here for thee,
And half I feared thou would delay.
Now what the Past has still denied
Is thine with tenfold grace To-day."

What is an hour? Oft fortune, fame,
Of weary years the goal and prize;
What is To-day? Go serve it well,
Perchance a monarch in disguise.

—*Lillie E. Barr, in Harper's Weekly.*

OLD POPPLEWELL'S WILL.

It was a great shock to the feelings of Mr. Silas Popplewell to discover that his father had bequeathed a legacy of £2,000 to his house-keeper, a certain Mrs. Draycott. The woman had entered the old man's service only about a year before his death, and if there had been anything remarkable in her demeanor toward him, it consisted rather of scant courtesy and want of attention. She had never apparently made the slightest attempt to ingratiate herself with her master, who, on his part, had always seemed to regard his attendant with calm indifference. But Silas felt doubly aggrieved because his father had scrupulously concealed from him that he had made a will, leaving him to believe that he was bound to inherit everything as next to an heir-at-law.

Silas Popplewell came across the will quite unexpectedly while going through the old man's papers a few hours after his decease. The document appeared to be perfectly legal, and had evidently been prepared by a solicitor, whose name was appended as one of the witnesses to the testator's signature. Except the legacy of the housekeeper, it left everything to Silas Popplewell, and appointed him sole executor. Considering that old Joseph Popplewell was reputed to be a wealthy man, most persons in Silas' position would not have suffered the unexpected legacy to disturb their equanimity. But Silas Popplewell was one of those mean, grasping, avaricious individuals who cannot bear the thought of losing anything. He considered he was both legally and morally entitled to the whole of his father's property, and regarded the legacy to Mrs. Draycott as a fraud upon his just rights. He was, therefore, overwhelmed with rage and disappointment, and worked himself into a perfect fever of virtuous indignation.

In the midst of his tribulations it suddenly occurred to him that but for the sheet of paper which he held in his hand he would be a richer man by two thousand pounds sterling. This eminently practical view of the situation aroused his worst passions, and he soon found himself wondering what would probably happen if the will were not forthcoming. Supposing, for instance, he were to leave the document where he found it and say nothing to anybody! The chances were, he thought, that the housekeeper would believe the testator had revoked it, assuming she had ever been aware of its existence; while it was quite possible, considering his late father's habitual reticence concerning his affairs, that the woman suspected nothing. If the worst happened, and a hue and cry were raised, the will could be conveniently found; or better still, who could gainsay him if he were to declare boldly that his father had deliberately destroyed the will in his presence?

Such insidious reflections as these are apt to blunt a man's moral perceptions, especially when he is laboring under a keen sense of injustice. Silas Popplewell's standard of morality was not a high one, and he would any day sooner have done a shabby trick than lose a sixpence. The consequence was that after a little hesitation he yielded to an uncontrollable impulse, and consigned the obnoxious will to the flames.

When the paper was reduced to ashes, Silas suddenly awoke to the fact that he had committed a felony and rendered himself liable to penal servitude. He turned deadly pale when he thought of this disagreeable contingency, and for a moment was inclined to repent of what he had done. But when he reflected that his wicked act had not been witnessed by any mortal eyes, while the only evidence of his guilt—the charred papers—was rapidly disappearing up the chimney, he soon recovered his spirits. Having waited patiently until there was no longer any trace left even of the ashes of the will, he locked up the strong box in which he had found it and left the room, feeling tolerably easy in his mind.

Nothing occurred during the next few days to arouse Silas Popplewell's apprehensions, and as he was not troubled with a conscience he began to congratulate himself upon the decisive step he had taken. The housekeeper went about her duties as usual, and did not seem to trouble her head as to whether her master had left a will or not, from which Silas gathered with heartfelt satisfaction that she knew nothing about her legacy. He could not refrain, however, from watching her furtively, knowing what he did of his father's intentions towards her. She was a vulgar, illiterate, elderly woman, singularly devoid of personal attraction, and apparently not possessed of much intelligence. While striving in vain to account for his father's extraordinary predilection for her as manifested by his will, Silas was struck by an expression of determination on the woman's face which seemed to indicate a desperate character. He began to suspect that she had forged the will by the aid of accomplices, and was waiting with calmness the issue of her machinations. If so, she was doomed to disappointment, thought Silas, and he chuckled at the notion of having frustrated such an infamous scheme.

When the day of the funeral arrived Silas felt strangely nervous and uncomfortable. He was very much upset by the unexpected number of mourners, the mere fact of having to provide gloves and crape on such an extended scale being sufficient to cause him serious vexation. Old Joseph Popplewell was a man of very humble origin, having, in fact, commenced life as a common laborer, and Silas scarcely knew any of his father's relatives. Several of these turned up, however, without being invited, and Silas resented their presence very much, not only because he was not anxious to claim kinship with them, but because they would no doubt make particular inquiries about the destination of the old man's property.

It is to be feared that Silas suffered his mind to wander a good deal from his old father's obsequies.

He may have had a soft corner in his heart for the old man's memory, but nervousness and apprehension rendered it inaccessible on this occasion. The solemn words of the burial service fell unheeded on his ear, for his mind was disturbed by the prospect of having to explain to his relatives that his father had died intestate. His newly discovered kinsmen were a painfully vulgar and coarse-minded set, and several fragments of conversation referring to his father's suppose testamentary intentions had reached him. The idea that the old man had left a will seemed as general as the extravagant notion that each individual mourner had been named in it Though he was guiltless as far as they were all concerned, Silas Popplewell, being agitated and unnerved, shrank from the task of answering their inquiries; while he was seized with sudden terror lest the housekeeper should take the opportunity to give utterance to unpleasant suspicion.

When the mourners returned to the house, Mrs. Draycott was standing by the fire-place in the sitting room conversing with a prim, professional-looking gentleman, who, on perceiving *Silas, advanced to meet him, rubbing* his hands.

"Mr. Popplewell, I believe," he said, with a slight bow.

"Yes," replied Silas, uneasily.

"You will doubtless know my name when I mention it," replied the other; "I am Mr. Reeves, of Grays' Inn Square."

Silas turned very white and his knees trembled for Mr. Reeves was the solicitor who had witnessed the execution of his father's will.

"I—I beg your pardon," he said falteringly; "I think there must be some mistake. I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"I imagined your housekeeper wrote to me by your instructions," said the solicitor, slightly embarrassed and glancing at Mrs. Draycott.

"I wrote because the late Mr. Popplewell told me to in case you did not," said the woman, looking towards Silas, defiantly. "He wished the will to be read at the funeral."

"Will! what will?" exclaimed Silas, with feigned surprise; and then he added, as though bracing his nerves for the ordeal: "Pray be seated, gentlemen, and take a glass of wine and a biscuit."

Each person selected a chair and subsided into it with a good deal of shuffling of feet and coughing, but no one accepted the proffered hospitality. The dead silence which ensued indicated breathless interest and excitement.

"My father has left no will," asseverated Silas, taking up his position on the hearth-rug and endeavoring to speak calmly.

"I think you are mistaken, Mr. Popplewell," said Mr. Reeves, politely but firmly: "Your father executed a will in my presence which I prepared for him about a year ago. He certainly has left a will—unless, of course, he has destroyed or otherwise revoked it."

"The will is locked up in the iron box in the study," interposed Mrs. Draycott, with decision.

"I repeat that my father has left no will," cried Silas, angrily. "Any one is at liberty to search the iron box if he likes. As Mr. Reeves suggests, my father destroyed the will."

"I don't believe it," exclaimed the housekeeper, excitedly. "Why, I saw it with my own eyes not a month ago"

"When did he destroy it? Who seed 'im do it?" inquired a voice from among the mourners.

"He destroyed it in my presence last—let me see—last Thursday week. I fetched it at his request from the iron box, and he put it in the fire of his own free will," said Silas, lying glibly.

Though affecting to recall the date promiscuously, Silas had been careful to prepare this story beforehand. On the day named he had sat with his father alone for more than an hour during the afternoon while Mrs. Draycott had been sent out on an errand. If the deceased had intended to destroy the will he would probably have got the woman out of the way on a similar pretence, and the suggestion was plausible enough. The housekeeper gave a palpable start, and was evidently impressed by the coincidence, but among the rest of the audience there was a general expression of incredulity, with a good deal of head-shaking and some murmurs.

"Well, gentlemen, I must say that Mr. Popplewell's account is perfectly straightforward," interposed the lawyer, who, whatever his private opinions might have been, probably thought it prudent as a matter of business to side with Silas. "Testators frequently revoke their wills in the manner described. If it is any consolation to you, gentlemen, I may mention that as far as you are concerned the existence of the will would have made no difference to you."

"Will you tell us, Mr. Lawyer, who will get the money, supposing what Mr. Silas says is true," inquired a voice in an aggrieved tone.

"Mr. Popplewell will inherit everything as next-of-kin and heir-at-law," replied the lawyer.

This information elicited a loud chorus of indignation, and many insulting epithets were leveled at the head of the luckless Silas, who, pale and trembling, realized that his triumph was dearly bought, even at the price of £2,000. Suddenly the strident tones of Mrs. Draycott became audible above the uproar, and compelled attention.

"The old villain has broke faith with me, and a sneaking scoundrel he always was, and so he died," cried she, speaking under strong excitement. "But I'm no longer bound to keep his secret, and I won't. I say, Bill Allen!" she exclaimed, appealing to one of the mourners, "you ought to know me, though it's thirty years and more since I was supposed to have died. You recollect Poll Saunders that old Joe Popplewell married when he was working at the railway down Liverpool way?"

"Why, surely!" ejaculated the individual referred to. "Aye, it's Poll, sure enough!" he added, shading his eyes with his hand.

"I was his lawful wife, Mr. Reeves, and he knew it," she explained, turning to the astonished solicitor. "He deserted me years ago and married a lady—Mr. Silas' mother. I found him out again by accident quite recently, and promised to keep his secret on condition that he would provide for me by his will. But he has been false to me as he was years ago, and now I won't keep silence any longer."

"This is most serious," said the solicitor, turning to Silas, who stood aghast with horror and amazement, "if this—this lady can prove her marriage."

"Oh! I have proof enough. I took care of that," interrupted the *soi-disant* Mrs. Draycott, producing a long slip of paper from her pocket, and handing it to the lawyer, who took and look at [illegible] back."

"It is a marriage certificate," said Mr. Reeves, glancing at it; and turning it over he read aloud as follows:

I, Joseph Popplewell, do acknowledge that my housekeeper, Mrs. Draycott, is my lawful wife, which I married under the name of Mary Saunders in 18—, and I, Mary Popplewell, or Draycott, do hereby swear that if my husband, Joseph Popplewell, leaves me £2,000 by his will, I will keep his marriage secret.

"This extraordinary document purports to be signed by both parties," added the lawyer, handling the paper reverently, "and I must say that upon the face of it, taken in conjunction with the certificate, it appears to be incontestible evidence."

"Who gets the money now, then?" demanded the same person who had asked the question before.

"Well, gentlemen, I am sorry to say that Mr. Silas Popplewell being unfortunately for himself, *nullius filius*, or illegitimate, can inherit nothing," replied Mr. Reeves. "The estate will, therefore, be divided between the lawful widow of the deceased and his next of kin, according to the statute."

The excitement of the audience at this announcement found vent in a hoarse cheer, in the midst of which poor Silas sank into a chair in a half fainting condition. He now understood—too late, alas!—what had caused his father suddenly to make a will, and he was also keenly conscious of the fact that having borne witness to its alleged revocation, it was out of the question to endeavor to set it up again. He was aroused from his bitter reflections by the touch of the housekeeper upon his shoulder.

"Cheer up, my lad," she said roughly, but not unkindly: "I did not know it would be so bad for you as this, and I don't pity you less because I suspect you've brought it on yourself. Now, I won't make any rash promise, because I don't know how much money I'm going to get. But you shall have the £2,000 you grudged to me, even if I don't receive a farthing more."

—The Newport *News* says of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's recent sermon: "It was a beautifully written and finely delivered effort from the text: 'God so loved the world.' She divided her text into several practical applications, speaking of the world of business, the world of politics, and the world of religion and morals. She pictured in glowing language the insincerity which underlies much of the modern society and the tendencies of the day, and als the necessity of an earnest, vital, wholesome religious spirit. Mrs. Howe's manner of address was devout and tender, and her fine conduct of the entire service was pleasing."

—Since the first oil-well began to flow, $1,500,000,000 have been added to the wealth of this country by the product of petroleum.

Youths' Department.

BABY IN CHURCH.

Aunt Nellie had fashioned a dainty thing,
Of Hamburg and ribbon and lace,
And mamma had said, as she settled it 'round
Our beautiful baby's face,
Where the dimples play and the laughter lies
Like sunbeams hid in her violet eyes:
"If the day is pleasant and baby is good,
She may go to church and wear her new hood."

Then Ben, aged six, began to tell,
In elder-brotherly way,
How very, very good she must be
If she went to church next day.
He told of the church, the choir and the crowd,
And the man up in front who talked so loud:
But she must not talk, nor laugh, nor sing,
But just sit as quiet as anything.

And so, on a beautiful Sabbath in May,
When the fruit-buds burst into flowers,
(There wasn't a blossom on bush or tree
So fair as this blossom of ours),
All in her white dress, dainty and new,
Our baby sat in the family pew.
The grand, sweet music, the reverent air,
The solemn hush and the voice of prayer

Filled all her baby soul with awe,
As she sat in her little place,
And the holy look that the angels wear
Seemed pictured upon her face.
And the sweet words uttered so long ago
Came into my mind with a rhythmic flow.
"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," said He,
And I knew that He spake of such as she.

The sweet-voiced organ pealed forth again,
The collection-box came round,
And baby dropped her penny in,
And smiled at the chinking sound.
Alone in the choir Aunt Nellie stood,
Waiting the close of the soft prelude,
To begin her solo. High and strong
She struck the first note, clear and long.

She held it, and all were charmed but one,
Who, with all the might she had,
Sprang to her little feet and cried:
"*Aunt Nellie, you's being bad!*"
The audience smiled, the minister coughed,
The little boys in the corner laughed,
The tenor-man shook like an aspen leaf
And hid his face in his handkerchief.

And poor Aunt Nellie never could tell
How she finished that terrible strain.
But says that nothing on earth would tempt
Her to go through the scene again.
So, we have decided perhaps 'tis best,
For her sake, ours and all the rest,
That we wait, may be, for a year or two,
Ere our baby re-enter the family pew.

—*Minnie M. Gow, in N. Y. Independent.*

A MODERN WOOD DEITY.

In very ancient times, when men believed that almost every mountain and river, brook and grove, was presided over by a deity of some sort, it was said that nectar and ambrosia were the drink and food of these gods. Because those old poets and philosophers indulged in those fine stories about nymphs and satyrs, fawns, naiads and dryads, we call them heathen; but, after all, their myths, like the fictions of our own writers, are beautiful and entertaining. I have often thought of a charming story which might be written by some imaginative boy or girl about a wood deity which haunts some of the groves of America. It can be said with much truth that nectar and ambrosia fill the cups and pots of this bright and joyous being. I have seen him sipping nectar more fragrant than the fabled sweets of Hybla and Hymettus. This is saying much, for Hybla used to be the most famous town in the world for its honey, and Hymettus was a mountain, southeast of Athens, in Greece, where the bees stored their combs with the purest distillations from the flowers. But I have looked into the clean, curiously wrought cups of our American grove-god, when they were full to overflowing with clear fluid. I have even tasted the nectar, although the cups were so small that only the merest bit of my tongue could enter. It is slightly acrid, this nectar, but it has in its taste hints, so to speak, of all the perfumes and sweets of the winds and leaves and flowers—a fragrance of green wood when cut, and of the inner tender bark of young trees. And a racy flavor, too, which comes from the aromatic roots of certain of our evergreens, is sometimes discoverable in it.

The being of which I speak is an industrious little fellow. Many times I have watched him making pots to catch nectar in, and cups to hold the precious ambrosia. These he hollows out so neatly that they all look alike, and he arranges them in rows around the bole of a tree—sometimes a maple, often an ash, may be a pine, and frequently a cedar. He has a great many of these pots and cups—so many, indeed, that it seems to keep him busy for a great part of the day drinking their delicious contents. He has very quiet ways, and you must be silent and watchful if you wish ever to see him. He rarely uses his voice, except when disturbed, and then he utters a keen cry and steals off through the air, soon disappearing in the shadows of the woods.

In the warm, dreamful weather of our early spring days you may find him by keeping a sharp lookout for the pots, which are little holes or pits bored through the bark and through the soft outer ring of the wood of certain trees. Very often you can find rings and rings of these pits on the trunks of the apple-trees of the orchards, every one of them full of nectar.

And now you discover that, after all, my winged grove deity is nothing but a little bird that many persons call by the undignified but very significant name of Sap-sucker! Well, what of it? My story is truer than those of the old Greek and Latin poets, for mine has something real in it, as well as something beautiful and interesting. I suspect that many of the ancient myths are based upon the facts of nature and are embellished with fantastic dressing, just as some imaginative boy or girl might dress up this true story of our sap-drinking woodpecker.

In fact, how much happier, how much more redolent of joyous sweets, is the life of this quiet bird than that of such beings—if they could have existed—as those with which the ancients peopled their groves and mountains! Think of flying about on real wings among the shadows of the spring and summer woods, alighting here and there to sip real nectar and ambrosia from fragrant cedar pots!—*Maurice Thompson, in St. Nicholas.*

"Boy Wanted."

Passing along the streets of this great, bustling city, the passer-by often sees in the windows of the business houses a placard with the inscription: "Boy Wanted," and as there are thousands of boys who want places, and will make application for them, we will tell them in advance, for nothing, just the kind of a boy that is "wanted."

The boy that is "wanted" must be active, intelligent, cleanly in his habits, quick to learn, obedient, truthful, and, above all, he must be honest. Honesty is the pearl of great price in a boy, as it is in a man, and no boy is "wanted" anywhere in the wide world outside of the Penitentiary or State Reform School who is destitute of this essential qualification. The honest boy is certain to come to the front, and the dishonest boy is just as sure to take a back seat and keep it through life. The boy is not "wanted" in any establishment who will take a cent of his employer's money, for the boy who steals a cent will by and by steal a dollar, and after that a hundred and a thousand dollars. The honest boy remembers the couplet his good mother taught him in the nursery rhyme—

It is a sin
To steal a pin.

Every day we read in the newspapers of men who have gone wrong, become defaulters, embezzlers, thieves and rascals, most of whom were probably not the right sort of boys on the start. They began by being "sharp" and dishonest in little things, and the bad habit grew upon them until they ended their lives in the State's Prison, a disgrace to themselves, and a burning shame to their acquaintances.

The boy who is "wanted" is the boy who does not need watching. He is true to his employer under all circumstances, because he is true to himself. He does not shirk when he is at work alone out of sight, but does his best, as if a thousand eyes were upon him. "Poor Richard's Almanac" says that "the eye of the master is worth one servant," by which is meant that hired men and women as well as boys need watching.

Boys are "wanted" everywhere—in the fields of the farmer, in the stores of the merchant, in the banks, at the hotels, in all the offices, and in every business place there is room for the honest, industrious boy. It will not be long before the boys who are "wanted" in these subordinate capacities, in which the pay is small and the responsibility slight, will be "wanted" to take charge of the immense business of this Nation, in place of the men who are now at the head of affairs. In a few years more the boys that are needed to-day to run errands and do trifling service, will be "wanted" in Congress, for railroad officers, for Governors, for legislators, editors, lawyers, ministers and merchants, and to take the responsible places in public and private affairs, in place of those who fall out by the way-side as the great army of humanity advances. The right kind of boys are "wanted" everywhere. No others need apply.—*Chicago Journal.*

A Fashionable Calamity.

Among the recent calamities reported by Paris newspapers is a terrible mishap that befell a leader of fashion at Trouville the other day. At French seaside resorts it is well established that any lady endowed with the least self-respect must change her dress from head to foot at least four times a day, and were she to wear the same costume twice during her sojourn by the ocean she would irretrievably forfeit her status as a "lionne." The fashionable lady referred to had made arrangements to stay at Trouville just a fortnight, and had therefore brought down fifty-six toilets, just enough to satisfy the minimum requirements of the place. Circumstances of a domestic nature required her to remain there four days longer than she had contemplated, and her consternation at her unfortunate predicament cannot easily be imagined. What was she to do? She could not appear in a dress she had already been "seen in." There was but one alternative and she had to accept that. She retired to her room and remained in heroic seclusion, not daring to venture out even after dark, lest a too keen eye should detect her shortcomings.—*French Paper.*

An Amusing Court Scene.

A young Austin lawyer was appointed to defend a negro who was too poor to hire counsel of his own. After the jury was in the box the young lawyer challenged several jurymen whom his client said had a prejudice against him.

"Are there any more jurymen who have a prejudice against you?" whispered the young lawyer.

"No, boss, de jury am all right, but now I wants you to challenge de Jedge. I have been convicted under him several times already, and may be he is beginin' to hab prejudice agin me."

The young lawyer, this being his first case took the advice of his client, and, addressing the court, told the Judge he could step aside.—*Texas Siftings.*

—No person can become a chemist by the study of books alone. He must go through a course of practical study in a laboratory as well as study books to learn this art and science. A blind man might as well expect to learn to paint landscapes by hearing descriptions of scenery read to him as a man expect to become expert in any art or science whatever by reading only.—*N. Y. Times.*