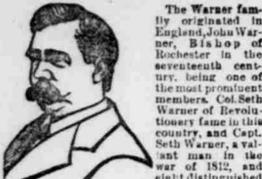


A Successful Man.



The Warner family originated in England...

OLD MR. NICKLEPOD.

"You will be leaving him some time, I suppose Blossom?"

"Yes, in about fifty years," said the girl to herself.

"And you see, child, Mr. Nicklepod went on, 'it would be very handy for you, for it has only had to come next door to see you.'"

"I never thought of that," said Flossie. "And I guess I'll come, said she aloud, and then to herself, 'I wish I dared ask him how long he thinks he is going to live.'"

"I've a good mind to take you to your word, Blossom. I'm a pretty old man, but hearty yet, and there is one thing I haven't forgot, and that's how to treat women folks. I'm a very lonesome old duffer, too, with all my money, child."

"The back gate would be real convenient for papa, wouldn't it?" said Flossie into the trumpet, and in a tone which had a peculiarly sly quality.

"Excited idea. He would doubtless settle a million on you, and be accommodating enough to die in a month or two."

"He's most old enough to die, isn't he?"

Judge Somerton looked up from his pile of papers and gave his daughter's speaking countenance a quick examination.

"Mr. Nicklepod told me one day that he would give anything if he could have me about his house all the time," the girl went on, half laughing and half pouting.

Keep the Flies Out.

It is "fly time," as the tormenter house-keeper well knows.

"My father," Mr. Nicklepod resumed, "lived to be 90 and then died from an accident. My mother was in her 90th year when she passed away. In fact, we are a very long-lived race, though we seem to age early."

"According to precedent twenty years at least," said the Judge.

"The reason I haven't married again," the millionaire went on, "is because I could never bring myself to believe that any one whom I cared for could ever care for me; and to have a wife whose constant wish was for my death would be rather hard lines—eh, Blossom?"

"Blossom" managed to nod her head, but her face was turned away from her host, and her father was surprised to see how pale it was.

"Why are you like Caesar's wife?" the father managed to ask, in his old joking manner. If Flossie lost her grip at this crisis the consequences would be more dramatic than he cared to contemplate.

"Oh, no, indeed!" said Flossie. "I was thinking how nice it would be to have all the flowers I wanted."

"You could have had those at any time," was the somewhat disconcerting response.

"Yes, Mr. Nicklepod," Flossie was determined to be honest even in the hour of her greatest deceit—and all the money."

The seamed and wrinkled face took on a grave expression, and the old head shook a little at the mention of this word.

"Money isn't everything, Blossom," he said. "Money won't provide me with ears, or keep the rheumatism out of my knees, or the loneliness from my heart. But you shall have money. Now go and tell John to cut all the flowers you want, and then run home and tell your pa of my offer; I think you had both better come in and take dinner with me tonight, and we'll talk it all over."

"He doesn't act particularly hilarious, seems to me," said Flossie, as she turned away. "But I'm engaged, anyway—plighted to an octogenarian, or a centurion, or something of that kind. Jack'll hate me, of course; and he'd never be the wiser. I'll consider it, papa."

"When a woman considers, she is generally safe. At this point the Judge resumed his search among the intricacies of chirography, and his daughter went on with her dusting and putting rights. After a while the silence was again broken by the latter.

"You were poor when you married, papa."

"As a church mouse, Flossie."

WORTH KNOWING.

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