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A SHARP LESSON.

"I must put a stop to this sort of thing!" said Mr. McElroy. "If I don't, I shall certainly come to the work-house; I haven't saved money all these years to rain it down on people's heads as if it was hail-stone!"

John McElroy was a man who had, in Yorkshire phraseology, "saved a power o' brass." Being a great deal too economical to marry, he had invited his lame nephew, Matthew Rawdon, to come with his family and keep house in the old red homestead; and thereafter he took credit to himself for supporting all the Rawdons, although Matthew toiled diligently at his trade of shoemaking, and James, the eldest son, managed the farm with skill and success, while Mrs. Rawdon and her two daughters, Lucy and Deborah, were the model dairy-women and best managers of the vicinity.

In an evil hour Matthew had borrowed a hundred pounds of Uncle John to pay off an old debt that hung round his neck like a millstone.

He had kept up the interest pretty regularly, but it would have been about as easy for him to pay off the national debt as to discharge his obligation, and in this way Uncle McElroy contrived to keep him ground down into the very dust.

Had it not been for this debt the Rawdon family would have crept out from under the harrow of Uncle John's tongue and temper long ago.

"It don't seem as if we could stand it," said Mrs. Rawdon, plaintively.

"I don't care how much he scolds me," said Deborah, "but he has no business to tyrannize so dreadfully over poor mother."

"If I could only raise money enough to take a quarter's singing lessons, I could earn twenty pounds a year in the church choir," said Lucy.

The housekeeping book was particularly aggravating that morning; and Mrs. Rawdon had shed a few quiet tears before the interview was over.

"I hate whining women!" said Mr. McElry; and I hate extravagant ones!"

"I try to do the best I can," said poor Mrs. Rawdon.

And when the book was flung wrathfully on the table, and Mr. McElroy had dismissed his nephew's wife, he sat thinking.

"I'll do it!" he said aloud. "I've had it in my mind for some time. I'll send these people about their business. I'll put an end to these everylasting impositions of theirs. They only care for me just the length of my purse. They hate me, every one of 'em. I can see through 'em, dull as they think me."

As he sat there a little lad came to the door with a yellow envelope in his hand.

"A telegram for you," said he. "A shilling to pay, please."

"I wonder who it can be from?" McElroy said.

It was very brief. It said:

"Stocks have fallen. Your money is all gone. Sorry, but could not stand against market.

H. RAVEN & Co."

H. Raven & Co. Yes, that was the name of the stockbroking firm to whose care his diligently-hoarded fortune had been consigned. He read the brief despatch over and over again, as if it were impossible to comprehend its full meaning.

"I don't understand," he repeated to himself; "I don't understand. I thought those stocks were safe enough. I only believed what those scoundrels told me themselves. Stocks fallen. My money all gone. Oh, what will become of me now?"

His head fell forward on his folded arms on the window sill; he uttered a groan which seemed to come from the very depths of his heart.

"I am a poor man!" he faltered. "As poor as old Jim Wilson, the clock-mender; as poor as Matthew himself. The savings of years have all gone at once; and I am a poor man!"

"Uncle McElroy, don't mind it," said the cheerful voice of Matthew, when at last he had mustered courage to tell his troubles, and sat with his head supported on his hand at the table, with a face drawn and pinched as if he had just recovered from a long sickness. "I am doing well at my trade just now, and you shall never feel the loss of your money while I can handle an awl or draw a thread."

"Never feel the loss of my money!" vaguely repeated McElroy. "The man talks like a fool."

But nevertheless there was a grain of comfort in the words.

"And after all, Uncle John," consolingly whispered Mrs. Rawdon, "money isn't everything. You'll see how nicely we shall contrive to live. I'll take a boarder or two, if you don't object, this summer. Your comfort shall not be interfered with in the least degree; and we may even manage to save a little at the year's end."

The tears came into Mr. McElroy's dim, blue eyes.

"You always did have a good heart, Sarah," said he; "but I wonder how you can have any patience left with me, after the times I've scolded you for half a pound extra of coffee or nutmeg!"

"And I am going to take in dress-making!" declared Deborah. "Oh, you'll see, Uncle John—you will live like a gentleman. You needn't think that we have lived on your generosity all these years not to try and return it now."

"!! Generosity!" said Uncle John, hardly certain whether the words were in serious earnest.

But, no, there was no covert light of sarcasm in Deborah's bright, brown eyes as she bent caressingly over him. It was real love, real gratitude, that sparkled there.

And Lucy brought him a letter.

"It is from Mr. Grover, uncle," said she. "He offers to give me singing lessons for nothing, if I will help with the Sunday school music; and then, pretty soon, I shall be able to earn money for you, too. Dear uncle," with tears in her bright eyes, "we have all loved you, only we didn't dare to tell you how much. If—if you would only let me kiss you, Uncle John!"

The old man clasped her in his arms, with tears streaming down his wrinkled cheeks.

"I don't care for the money," he faltered. "Let the money go, if you will only love me like this. I never was happier in my life! I know now what that feeling is that has been chilling and freezing me all my life. It was my heart starving to death! Yes, yes, we'll begin the world over again, children—you and I. We'll begin to enjoy ourselves at last."

They were sitting talking in the purple dusk of the summer evening, when there came a knock at the door. It was the little telegraph lad, breathless with haste.

"I've made a mistake," said he; "I've left the despatch at the wrong place. Please to give me back the envelope!"

The family all looked at each other as the boy rushed down the road with his freight of evil tidings for someone else.

"And my money is all safe," said Mr. McElroy, with a long breath—"all safe. It seems like a miracle, don't it? or a lesson sent direct from heaven to try us. Well, it won't be thrown away on me. Matthew," fumbling in his pocket-book, "here's your note. I make you a present of it."

He tore it in two as he spoke.

"Deborah shall have her new dress just as quick as she and the milliner can settle matters between them," he continued. "Lucy shall take singing lessons, and I'll buy an organ for her. And Sarah shall have a girl to lighten up the farm-work a little. Hush! don't say a word, one of you. That money has come back to me, as if through a miracle, and I mean to enjoy it now."

For Mr. McElroy had learned more lessons than one in the course of the last twenty-four hours.

The Bishop's Dinner.

From All the Year Round.

Since the reign of the Emperor Frederick the Second few Italian lords have been so rich or so powerful as one known in his country as the Marquis de la Scala. He was one of the few men who are all through life the favorites of fortune, yet who knew how to make good use of their honor and of their wealth. This nobleman was very generous in entertaining his friends and acquaintances, and one day a superb fete was announced to be given by him shortly at his mansion in Verona. Great preparations were set on foot, and all tongues busied themselves in describing the grandeur of the coming banquet. Suddenly La Scala changed his mind for some unexplained reason, saying the fete would not take place at all. Many strangers had come to the town in readiness, and as the marquis did not wish these to go away under the impression that he was mean he loaded each one with presents which in value would far more than make up to them for the expense of their journeys.

He forgot one person only, a man named Bergamino, and it was rumored that this omission on the part of the nobleman had been voluntary; he did not know Bergamino, and therefore thought it needless to take the least trouble to please him.

Now Bergamino had undertaken this journey to Verona solely to assure himself if all the widely spread reports of La Scala's great munificence were true. It was thus a most vexatious disappointment, the more so as he had been at great expense in lodging himself, his servants and his horses at the inn. Nevertheless, he remained where he was until he had spent all the money he had brought with him, and that being exhausted he began to pay for his accommodation by selling his clothes. Three very rich dresses were in his trunks, for he had expected to need them when he took part in the gay doings at the house of the marquis. One of these had to be used to settle for what he owed, and it was not long ere the second was turned to similar account. The third would doubtless have followed but that just at the time Bergamino had resolved on another way of getting out of his difficulty. Presenting himself to the Signor La Scala, when that gentleman was at dinner, he assumed a very sorrowful and abstracted air.

"What ails you?" cried the nobleman; "you seem unhappy. May I be allowed to hear the cause of your trouble?"

Bergamino had already decided what he should say, so he at once opened his lips.

"You doubtless have heard, my lord," said he, "of a celebrated grammarian named Primasso, who made the most excellent verses of any poet of his time. His talent for improvising on any subject, combined with his other rare abilities, secured him many friends; in fact, his praise was spread both far and near. The desire to increase the number of his acquaintances led Primasso to undertake a journey to Paris, but he appeared there in a humble guise, for his knowledge had not made him prosperous—great people rarely recompense real merit!

"Arrived in the city, Primasso heard much concerning the bishop of Cluny, who, after the pope, was said to possess more wealth than any prelate in the church. Wondrous were the accounts of his magnificence, of the splendor of his table, and especially of the manner in which all were regaled who chose to visit him at the hour of dinner. Curious to see a rich man who was also generous, Primasso resolved to pay a visit to the good bishop.

"It appeared that, just then, the prelate was residing in one of his country mansions not many miles away from the city; therefore, Primasso calculated that by starting early he should be able to get there in good time for dinner.

"Having studied the road he made his arrangements for starting, but for fear lest he might lose his way and be delayed he had the prudence to provide himself with three rolls which would secure himself against hunger. However, he found the distance easier to accomplish than he had expected, so he was at the bishop's house somewhat in advance of the dinner hour. Being at once admitted, he had time to look around him and to observe the grand preparations which were making. Presently the governor of the household called out that dinner would shortly be served, and that the guests must place themselves at table. By chance Primasso was seated exactly facing the door through which the prelate would presently pass to the banquet, and it was the custom that even the first course should not be served until he was himself seated. Suddenly the door opened and the bishop was advancing, but his eye lighted on Primasso in his shabby garments, and a feeling of disgust took possession of him, though, by habit, he was the most charitable of men. Drawing back and closing the door sharply, he inquired of his servant who that person might be who was seated facing the door. No one knew, for Primasso was a perfect stranger to all. While the bishop still lingered outside the dining hall this unwelcome guest of his began to feel hungry, so, drawing one of the rolls from his pocket, he set to work to eat it. Presently a servant looked in to see if he were still in the same place. 'My Lord,' said this one, returning to the bishop, 'not only is the man there, but he is eating some bread which he seems to have brought with him.' 'Let him eat his own bread,' was the reply, 'for certainly he will not taste of mine to-day.' Though he said this, the bishop would not go so far as to order Primasso to retire, for he felt this would be too marked an incivility; nevertheless, he hoped the delay in serving the dinner might cause this man to depart unasked.

"Meanwhile, Primasso, having eaten one roll, began on the second with excellent appetite. He had noticed the prelate's expression at the moment their eyes met, and he partly guessed what was intended when that reverend gentlemen failed to reappear. Resolved to hold his ground, and quite indifferent to the impression he was making on those who were seated near, he drew the third roll from his pocket. The bishop was told that Primasso continued eating and made no attempt to depart, and, surprised at the man's pertinacity, he began to commune with himself after this manner: 'What unworthy suspicion has entered into my mind? Why do I feel such a contempt for a person of whom I know no harm? A hundred times I have admitted to my table every stranger who presented himself without considering if he was poor or rich, a noble or a common person, a merchant or a pick-pocket. I have been polite even to those whom I knew to be unworthy. I am ashamed of this repugnance to the man who has sought my hospitality, and as I have never experienced such a feeling toward the poor, it is very possible that this is really a person of importance.'

"With this conclusion reached, the prelate back one of his man servants ask the name of the unknown. The answer came back that it was Primasso, who desired to be a witness of the magnificent hospitality of which men spoke so much.

"His name was well known to the bishop, who felt covered with confusion for the way in which he had acted toward one so worthy of a welcome. A splendid dinner was served at once, and when it was ended he commanded that a horse and a purse of gold should be presented to this learned scholar, who received, moreover, an invitation to dine whenever he pleased.

"Primasso was full of gratitude, and thanked his lordship heartily; then he started on the road back to Paris, this time on horseback, instead of trudging wearily on foot."

Bergamino here paused, for his story was ended.

The marquis had listened in silence, and possessed quite enough penetration to understand why it had been told.

"My friend," he said, with a smile, "you have chosen a very good way of making me know your necessity, your merit, and my own meanness. I own that toward you I have not maintained my character for generosity, but I now make amends by according you that which you have adroitly asked of me."

With this the noble sent for some rich clothing as part of his gift; one of the best horses in his stable was placed at the disposal of Bergamino, and a purse of gold was dropped into his hand.

In addition to all this bounty his debt at the inn was paid for him by La Scala's orders; therefore his skill and courage resulted in his returning home a happy and contented man.

I Had a Dreadful Cough,—And raised a considerable amount of blood and matter; besides, I was very thin, and so weak I could scarcely go about the house. This was the case of a man with consumption, arising from liver complaint. He recovered his health completely by the use of Dr. Pierce's 'Golden Medical Discovery.' Thousands of others bear similar testimony.

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—R. C. Bruce, druggist, Tara, says: I have no medicine on my shelves that sells faster or gives better satisfaction than Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil, and the sale is constantly increasing, the past year being the largest I ever had. One of my customers was cured of catarrh by using three bottles. Another was raised out of bed, where he had been laid up for a long time with a lame back, by using two bottles. I have lots of customers who would not be without it over night.

An English manufacturer advertises that his safety matches may be eaten by children with positive benefit to the appetite and digestion.

—A field of corns.—Thomas Sabin of Eglington, says: "I have used Holloway's Corn Cure with the best results, having removed ten corns from my feet. It is not a half way cure or reliever, but a complete extinguisher, leaving the skin smooth and clear from the least appearance of the corns."

Attention is called to the provision of the law establishing a new house of lords in Japan, which orders the members of the aristocracy to provide for the proper education of all their relatives.

—A. Maybee, merchant, Warkworth, writes: I have sold some hundreds of bottles of Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil, and it is pronounced by the public "one of the best medicines they have ever used;" it has done wonders in healing and relieving pain, sore throats, etc., and is worthy of the greatest confidence.

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—Mr. R C. Winlow, Toronto, writes: "Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery is a valuable medicine to all who are troubled with indigestion. I tried a bottle of it after suffering for some ten years, and the results are certainly beyond my expectations. It assists digestion wonderfully. I digest my food with no apparent effort, and am now entirely free from that sensation, which every dyspeptic well knows, of unpleasant fulness after each meal."

—People who wish to note the progress Toronto is making ought to visit West Toronto Junction. It is within a few minutes of the Union station by the trains of either the Ontario and Quebec and the Grand Trunk or the Northern. The junction station of the C. P. R. is now in full blast and freight and passenger trains are stopping there every short while. New houses are going up all round while the plans of many handsome ones are still in the hands of the architects. Real estate in the neighborhood has steadily risen in value and promises to advance still more rapidly. A lot or block in this locality is the best investment a workingman or capitalist can go into. It will double itself in two years just as Parkdale, Brockton and the whole west end has done. Some of the best lots in West Toronto are to be had from George Clarke, 295 Yonge street.

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