

SANDERSON'S HALF MILLION.

They were sitting before the fire in Judge Carrol's old-fashioned parlor, discussing a recent magazine story.

"I think he ought to have told her," Miss Carrol said warmly. "What if he were poor and she had always been used to the luxuries of life! He was a better man than the other, and she ought to have known, and had a chance to choose."

"I don't think so," said Sanderson, bluntly. "She did not care anything for him, so it would not have made any difference."

"She might have cared," Miss Carrol insisted.

"All the more reason why she should not say anything."

"I don't agree with you. If she had loved him what difference would his property or anything else have made? It always struck me that it was more the opinion of other people than a high sense of honor that kept a man silent in such cases."

Sanderson gave an unpleasant laugh. "If she had married him, and then had been obliged to do the washing and scrub floors and live as poor people have to live—well her love would have changed to something quite different in a very short time. Oh, I've figured that all out."

He got up abruptly and went and stood with his back toward her, looking out of the window. Her face flushed, and there was a light in her eyes as she watched him. "It was perfectly dreadful of me to say what I did," she thought, "but it seemed as if I must know. And he does care, I am sure now."

Sanderson stayed a little longer, then took his leave rather earlier than usual.

"That was a narrow escape," he muttered. "I must try and keep away. Well, there's no harm done. She could not have suspected anything from what I said. She was only thinking of the people in the story."

At the gate he met the judge, who bowed to him stiffly, but with studied politeness. As he passed on, however, the judge frowned. He did not like the idea of having that young Sanderson around so much. There was nothing against the young man except his property. It would have been easier if there had been. As it was, the judge dared not say anything to his daughter for fear she would be more than ever interested. To be sure the judge had been a poor boy, and he was not extremely wealthy even now; but it troubled him to think that his daughter might take a notion to marry a poor man. Sanderson never would be anything else. His father had been poor before him. It was in the blood. And what could you expect of a man who lived as Sanderson did, in a cheap boarding house, and picked up a precarious living by scribbling verses and silly stories, with now and then a little reporting?

A few days later the judge's opinion underwent a change. He came home with an interesting bit of news. A rich uncle of Sanderson's had died leaving him half a million dollars or so.

Miss Carol changed color. "I am sorry on some accounts," she said. "He will be spoiled

for writing now. I expected great things for him."

"Nonsense!" said her father. "He never would have amounted to anything in literature. Now if he was like some men, I should expect that he would be worse off than before, but it will be different with him. He hasn't any bad habits and he knows the value of money. On the whole I think it is a very good thing."

Miss Carrol said no more. After dinner she went slowly to her room. Sanderson would probably come and she must dress to receive him. She was puzzled at her strange reluctance. She ought to be glad to have all obstacles removed, but somehow she wished the money had come to him in some other way. If only he had earned it how different she would feel. Now he would come, and she would have to congratulate him, and then—However, she made herself look her best, and went down-stairs to wait for him.

And after all he did not come. Indeed she did not see him for a week; and then it was only a moment one day when she was downtown shopping. He nodded and smiled in a kind of abstracted way, and as if he had forgotten who she was. Miss Carrol did not like this, and when he called the next day her manner was rather formal. She did not have to congratulate him, in fact the legacy was not mentioned. He talked with great animation, and did not seem to notice her coldness.

"I am going to be very busy," he told her at parting. "You will hear from me very soon, but I am afraid I cannot get to see you as often as I want to."

"What did I tell you?" said the judge, a few days later. "There is more in young Sanderson than you have ever given him credit for. What do you think he is doing? He is getting out a paper in opposition to the 'Eagle,' and it is good, too," and the judge took a folded paper from his pocket and passed it to his daughter. "You see, don't you, that it is wide awake and up to the times?" he said when she returned the 'Herald' to him. "I predict a brilliant future for it."

Time proved the judge to be a true prophet. Sanderson began in a very modest way, and the judge really deserved great credit for astuteness. In a year the 'Herald' had bought out the 'Eagle' and was issuing two editions daily. Part of its prosperity was due to the fact that the town was making a rapid but healthy growth.

As for the editor of the 'Herald,' everyone was surprised that he continued to live at Mrs. Moriarty's boarding house, and that he dressed so shabbily. He was working hard, that was plain; and at times he had a careworn look. Opinion was divided as to whether he was losing money on the paper or was growing miserly. Judge Carrol was his best friend, making him welcome at all times at his house, and complaining that he came no oftener.

Sanderson did not see much of Miss Carrol on these calls, for the judge persisted in talking business. Miss Carrol listened eagerly to all that was said, and took a keen interest in the 'Herald.' If she had any feeling of bitterness toward Sanderson, no one ever knew.