



SIGNIFICANT.

WHAT AN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOLITIONIST SAW WHEN HE LOOKED AT THE ECLIPSE.

UNCLE WORLDLY'S LETTERS TO HIS NEPHEWS.

No. 1.

ON LYING.

MY DEAR BOYS,—I am glad to hear that you are both now thoroughly established in business in Montreal; Sam as a druggist and Bill in the dry goods way. You ask me to give you advice on points about which you are doubtful. I shall do so with pleasure, and thank you for paying me the compliment of asking me. I did not carry on a business for thirty-five years without, as you may imagine, learning something.

Your first question, I own, surprises me. You ask if, in business, it is ever lawful to tell a lie? Why—of course it is. Lying is the fulcrum on which the lever of business depends.—it is the language *par excellence* of business; I might almost say, business itself! Not that truth may not be hazarded sometimes, but it is a weapon which requires a very experienced hand to wield. I cannot advise you to try truth at present. You are too young and inexperienced. My dear boys, let no absurd ambition induce you as yet to play with edged tools. *Stick to good wholesome lies.* You know that I never was in the habit of wasting much time in reading, or, at least, in reading books unconnected with business. I have, however, been lately much delighted by perusing "Motley's History of the United Netherlands." It is a most instructive work. I did not before know that diplomacy was so akin to commerce. In those days, nations were goods to be sold and monarchs and heads of republics the buyers and sellers, statesmen and generals being the clerks and commercial travellers. Heavens! how wonderfully these royal merchants lied. I always had a great respect for Queen Bess; but I never before knew that she was so accomplished a liar. Why, all the great liars of the age,—Philip of Spain, Henry IV., Parma, and even her own great statesmen, were children to her. She could wind

them round her little finger. But I mentioned this book more to give an example of masterly truth-telling. Henry IV., of France, who was maintaining neutrality between Spain and the Dutch, (a lie, of course,) asked Spinola in what direction he was going to open the campaign next summer. The wily Italian saw through Henry in a moment, and deceived him. How, think you?—By telling the exact truth. He declared that it was his intention to move his armies to the coast of Flanders. Henry immediately informed Maurice of Saxony of what Spinola had told him. Of course, both thought it a lie, and Maurice moved his forces in a contrary direction, finding out soon that he had been circumvented by truth. This is marvellous as it is rare. My dear boys! *Never use truth except to deceive.*

In starting a new dry goods store, the first thing to be done is to intimate either by advertisement or placard, or both, that you *have only one price.* This is a lie not precisely meant to deceive. No woman would ever believe it, and not many men; but still, it looks the thing,

and may be useful in cases of strangers,—Yankee tourists especially. As you know, I am not so well acquainted with the dry-goods trade as with others, and therefore I can hardly advise you as to the practice of "ticketing" goods in the window. I should say, that, judiciously done, it must be very advantageous. As you say, some people do not consider it respectable. Now I cannot advise you to aspire to respectability *yet*, you are too young. It would be an insult to greater liars than yourself. I should think that "ticketing," done, as I said before, with judgment, affords great opportunity for sound lying. It is true that there is one disadvantage in it. The lie and its subject are here in juxtaposition. If not cleverly managed, this might be awkward. You can however remove or destroy the ticket at a moment's notice and dead tickets tell no tales, which is not the case when you lie in the advertizing columns of a newspaper. I once saw a most absurd instance of truth as applied to ticketing. I saw a very fine piece of plaid in a shop window labeled "All Wool." On examining it I perceived that this was no more than the truth. Could anything be more ridiculous? "All wool" when genuine requires no ticket, it carries its own character about with it; but where goods are not "all wool," and you wish to persuade us they are, it is then that the public require information, that is—lies. I cannot but think that in this and similar cases you can most appropriately lie by ticket. In selling dry goods, be very careful how you lie to ladies. For instance, you ticket goods twenty-five cents a yard, you sell the article to a lady at twenty cents the yard. And I do not think it advisable to ticket anything at much more than twenty-five per cent. above its real value. Be certain of this, that the lady will tell all her female acquaintance that she bought this at Worldly's and what she gave for it. Try then and find out who these female acquaintances are, and if, as you are sure to, you see some of them in your shop, do not tell *them* that you never sold this article for less