

unavoidable expenses of a funeral, that she took to her bed, and in less than a week after her husband's death she too died of a broken heart.

Leslie Bunk was now a rich man—the richest in fact, in all the surrounding country. Yet he was not happy. He was terribly shocked at the idea of having to incur the expense of two funerals within ten days. It was simply outrageous, he thought. His mother, he said, might have waited a few days longer, until he had made up by some means the loss caused by his father's death and burial. But no; she had become reckless of expenses, and now he had to make up for two funeral expenses instead of one; and he set himself about doing it at once.

The next day after his mother's funeral he seized under a mortgage the last cow, two pigs and a half dozen hens, owned by a poor neighbor who owed Abner Bunk for a little bread and meat furnished to feed the poor man's suffering family, and for which the poor man had been unable to pay when due. Leslie felt better now. The poor man only owed some ten dollars, while the animals he had taken were worth fully forty.

Two years rolled on, and Leslie Bunk garnered, and kept every cent that came in his way. He saw nothing and thought of nothing except to contemplate it in view of its actual value in dollars and cents. During these two years Leslie had met and been introduced to Miss Clara Banks, the daughter of a wealthy widowed gentleman living some twenty miles distant from him. Miss Clara was the perfection of female loveliness, both mentally and physically. Words would fail to convey any idea of her personal beauty or of the far more valuable adornments of a well cultivated mind. Clara was nineteen years old when she first met Leslie Bunk. Leslie thought and said he was in love with Miss Clara, and this was the way in which he arrived at such a conclusion.

"Now," said he to himself, "she is right and pretty, and would set a fellow's house off a good deal. Then if I marry her she will do the cooking, and that will save the six dollars per month I now pay a cook; and of course she will do the washing and mending, etc., and that will save another six dollars per month."

He came to the very sensible conclusion that marrying Clara Banks would be a good speculation for him. He determined, therefore, to take stock in that bank at once, never dreaming that any one, much less Clara herself, would have any objection to such a proceeding.

Having made up his mind, Leslie determined to carry his plans into execution at once. So fixing himself up in his best attire, he took the packet early one morning and went to visit his future wife, as he was pleased to term her. He spent nearly two hours in her company that day, telling her how rich he was, and describing minutely each piece of property owned by him, thinking thereby to impress her with an exalted idea of his greatness and grandeur. That night he went home on the return packet, so as to lose no unnecessary time. Two weeks after his visit was repeated, as well as the very interesting description of his personal and real goods and chattels. Upon his return from this second visit Leslie began to count the cost a little. He found that it had already cost him four dollars in travelling expenses and two days of valuable time. He could not stand that, and he determined to settle the matter at his next visit.

"He visited her again in two weeks, and devoted some two hours to the repetition of his already twice-told inventory of his goods, wares and merchandise, winding up with a fine commercial speech on the subject of matrimony, and proposed to her that they two do enter into a lifelong partnership for the purpose of mutually aiding each other in the accumulation of dollars and cents, and the enjoyment of such little pleasures in life as they could while doing so.

Leslie's surprise can hardly be imagined when, for answer to his proposition, he received a flat and unequivocal refusal. He was, moreover, terribly shocked when told by Miss Clara that she had no notion whatever of ever marrying a man who cared more for his money than for his mind; who would love his wealth more than his wife; and who would worship his gold more than his God.

Leslie returned home mourning. He had invested six dollars and three days time in a bad speculation, which was ruinous. He determined he would never venture any further capital in the purchase of a wife, and set himself to recover his losses by some better speculation. But somehow he was ill at ease; something was the matter with him, and he could not tell what it was. There was about him a lack and a want of something, and he could not tell what.

A few days passed, and Leslie found himself wishing to go and see Miss Clara once more. But, then, the lecture she had read him at his last visit convinced him that it would be useless to press the marrying question further. Matters grew worse; and a spirit of restlessness had come upon him. What could be the trouble? His wealth had lost the power of satisfying his mind, and he found himself thinking more and more of Miss Clara, and longing to go and see her once more.