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THE WILL.

No two persons were ever more unlike each other than were old Richard Symmons and his brother James. Richard was the pattern of what we are accustomed to call a "true English heart," and his looks bore out the character well. A ruddy countenance, open as day, with locks almost entirely white, hanging around it like snow around a Christmas rose, and an erect, firmly-knit frame, formed the material case in which was enclosed as kind and generous a spirit as ever existed. Very different from the hale, hearty appearance of his brother, was that of James Symmons, and as different were his mind and character. James was a hunx, a curmudgeon, a miser; so, at least, said the whole village of Springwell, and the village had known him long, and had formed its judgment from deeds as well as looks. Shrivelled, shrunken, squalid in aspect, James might be compared to a bottle of thin beer that time had soured into vinegar, whereas Richard, like more generous liquor, had only been mellowed and improved by age. James's pinching parsimony, it was said, had broken his wife's heart, and had driven his son, his only child, to the door—to wander over the earth, it may be, a homeless outcast.

But these latter matters were partially forgotten at the time we write of, having passed a good many years before. As time had run on, the peculiarities of James Symmons had not become softened, but, on the contrary, increased in strength as he grew older. Though he had amassed considerable property, he lived in the meanest and most wretched way, keeping house, or rather hovel, alone, and denying himself even the necessaries of life. Most unlike this was Richard's way of

living. He had been in business, had earned for himself a comfortable competency, and he enjoyed it in comfort. Richard had never been married, but he was not, therefore, without a family; for he had taken to his home and heart a widowed sister, who had been suddenly thrown destitute upon the world by her husband's death. And this sister had a daughter, who became the apple of old Richard's eye. She had come to his care a child, and each succeeding year, as she shot up into comely womanhood, had bound her more firmly to the good man's love. As she tripped up and down his dwelling, his affectionate eye followed her light and graceful motions with delight, and it was his chief pleasure to select for her with his own hands all those little adornments which he thought would become and gratify her. Then would he say, as her pretty rosy lips thanked him with a kiss on such occasions, "Ah, Luce! I am just giving thee a staff to break my own head. Thou look'st so handsome now with that bonnet and those ribbons, that all the young sparks must fall in love with thee. And what would thy poor old uncle Dick do without thee, girl?" At other times he would aver, in the fulness of his heart, to his special crony, the schoolmaster, as they sat with a mug of ale and the backgammon board before them, that his "Luce was fit to be a duchess, and that she had repaid what he had done for her a thousand times over and over; though he had done nothing but his duty, by his poor sister and her child, neither."

But the worthy old man fell ill—became sick almost unto death. Illness was a thing Richard had scarcely known in his lifetime, and this attack reminded him forcibly of what health too often makes