

"Oh, fear nothing," exclaimed Pierce Neige, "the white crosses have taken care to provide us with another light," pointing to the fire which illuminated the greater part of the forest.

(To be continued.)

The House Circle.

SAVED BY A WORD.

"Hallo! Here, my friend, what's the matter!" The speaker was Mr. Sparton, and his words seemed to possess a magic power over the poor wretch who lay in the gutter at his very feet.

"Friend!" repeated the man, staggering to his feet, and gazing curiously into Mr. Sparton's face, "this is the first time that any one has called me friend for many months. I once had friends, but I had money then."

"Have you none now?" "No," said the man, "I paid my last dime for drink, just in there," pointing to a saloon across the street, "and they put me out because I had no more."

"Where do you live?" asked Mr. Sparton. "Live! I don't live anywhere."

"Well, where do you stay?" "In any place I can. I have not known a home for many years."

Mr. Sparton, seeing that the man was unable to help himself, and had no means of support, offered to take him home with him. The poor wretch was only too glad to accept the offer, and, with the support of his new friend, managed to walk to that gentleman's residence.

He was led into the dining-room, greatly to the surprise of Mrs. Sparton; but matters were soon explained, and she immediately procured the poor fellow something to eat, also bringing him a cup of strong coffee. By the time the half-famished man had eaten his supper, he was both warm and drowsy, and by Mr. Sparton's advice, soon retired to rest.

The stranger guest did not awake until it was time for breakfast the next morning. He was invited to sit down and eat with the family, and took the preferred seat with thanks, and in a manner which showed very plainly he had seen better days.

After they were all seated at the table, the conversation was opened by Mr. Sparton, who asked the stranger if he rested well.

"Thank you, I did, indeed. I slept very soundly. It was the first time I had rested on a bed for over two months."

An exclamation of pity broke from the lips of the entire group. He then continued,—"I presume it is my duty, after your kindness to me, to give you my name, and also the history of my past life."

"We hold you under no obligations," said Mr. Sparton, "still we would be glad to learn your history."

"My name is Frank Edwards," said the stranger. "I am the son of Mr. Charles Edwards, merchant, who died some six years ago in the city of C—.

Perhaps you have heard of him." Being answered in the affirmative, the man hurriedly related his story. His love for liquor had first commenced in his college days, when he was one of a set of merry, thoughtless students.

After his graduation, the appetite increased, and, as time passed on, he became a confirmed drunkard. His father, broken-hearted, died, leaving all his wealth to his wayward boy.

While it lasted, the young man had plenty of friends to join with him in reckless debauchery; but, when his fortune was all squandered, friends deserted him, and he became the poor, deserted vagrant whom Mr. Sparton found in the gutter.

"If I could only gain one true friend," concluded the man, "who would trust me with work to do, that I might gain a decent livelihood, I would earnestly try to please. But every one turns away from the poor drunkard, and refuses to trust him. How I have lived for the last few months I cannot tell you, I only wonder that cold and want have not killed me."

Mr. Sparton was struck with the apparent truthfulness of the man, and also his gentlemanly manners, which went to prove the truth of his story. So he took him down to his store, and gave him some light task. He seemed willing to work, and, as Mr. Sparton was just then in need of help, he concluded to retain him for a while, at least.

Weeks passed, and he still kept him. He proved a most efficient clerk. A few years passed, and the former vagrant had managed to save enough money to take an interest in his benefactor's business. He is to-day among the most respected citizens of a city not many miles from here.

Such is the result of kindness, and a word, kindly dropped from the lips of a passer by upon some degraded wretch, may be the means of saving him. Years have passed since the facts related in this story transpired, and Mr. Sparton has never had occasion to regret the night he called a poor drunken wretch "friend."

Truth can hardly be expected to adapt herself to the crooked policy and wily sinistries of worldly affairs; for truth like light, travels only in straight lines.

UNCLE IKE'S MULES.

The fire burned brightly in the fire-place of the little inn, throwing its flickering light over the well-padded floor. The wind blew boisterously out doors, rattling the windows, and making the old sign creak on its hinges; but within, under the cheerful influence of the fire, peace and comfort reigned.

Seated comfortably around the fire was a merry circle, consisting of the landlord, a traveller stopping over-night at the inn, and several of the villagers, who had dropped in for their usual gossip. After a time, as a means of passing away the winter evening, stories were proposed, and, after each had contributed his share to the evening's amusement, the landlord turned to an old man who had just entered and taken his seat by the fire, and said,—"Uncle Ike, can't you give us a story? We have all told one; now it is your turn."

After a little persuasion, the old man straightened himself in his chair with the air of one who felt equal to the occasion—for he had the reputation, in the village, of always having a good story to tell—and commenced,—"Waal, seein' I've got to tell a story, I'll jest tell you about a team of mules I bought once, I was livin' on the old farm then, before I moved up where I am now. Somebody had been tellin' me what a nice thing mules was for work, best team in the world for farm work; and so forth, and one of the neighbors had bought a team; an' they worked so well I was anxious to get sum' myself. So, one day, I hitched up Dobbin, and drove over to Penthook's, as I hear he had a team to sell."

"When I got over there, I told him what I had 'em for, an' he was 'dressed pleased, an' sed he had got just the team I wanted. So down to the barn we went to look at 'em. He brought out two of the critters, an' they was purty, considerin' they was mules; he took an' hitched 'em onto a loaded wagon that stood in the yard, and they walked off with it as easy as you wud' with a wheel-barrow. I asked him if they was gentle, an' wud' drive well, an' he sed, 'Yes,' an' I almost made up my mind to take 'em, an', arter considerable hagglin', I did take 'em, an', tyin' 'em behind the wagin, started fur hum'."

"The next day I hitched 'em up to go to town; they started off briskly, and, fur a mile or so, went first-rate; but arter that they began to slow down, an', as I was in a hurry, I touched 'em with the whip; but they didn't mind it any more'n if a fly had lit on 'em, an', if you want to work, jest get hold of a good lazy mule. I thrashed them critters all the way into town, an' all the way hum', an', wore out a good rawhide whip, an' made my arms so lame I cud' hardly use 'em doin' it."

"Nice things to drive in a cold day, mules is; you can keep warm thrashin' 'em. Waal, I concluded the next time I wanted to go to town I'd take Dobbin, an' leave the mules to hum'. Except for their bein' so consarned lazy, they made a fustrate team; when you wanted any pullin' done, they was right thar every time, an' I was purty well pleased with my bargain. But I didn't know the critters yet."

"One day, 'bout a month arter I got 'em, we wanted sum' wood down at the house, so I hitched up the mules an' started for the wood lot. As I was goin' out they acted kinder frisky, but I though it was cause they hadn't been worked enough."

"Waal, I got out there, an' got my load on—you see the wood was piled outside the fence—an', jest as I got ready to start, 'loug cum's a neighbor of mine, an' sez he,—

"'Good mornin', Uncle Ike; is that the new team you've been buyin'?' "Yes, an' a good team they are too," sed I, pickin' up the reins.

"I spoke to the mules, but, instead of startin', they jest stood still, an' laid back their ears in a way that wa'n't encouraging, I tell you. I felt awful cheap jest about that time, but purty quick my dander began to rise. I yelled at the mules, but, inste'd of goin', they commenced backin' an' kickin'. How them critters can kick! I begun to get mad, an', pickin' up the whip, I did give it to 'em good. The more I pounded the more they backed an' kicked; at last, arter they had kicked off most all of the front part of the load, it got too hot fur 'em, an', the fust thing I knew, they both give a jump forrad an' started, an' fore I cud' ketch up the reins, they was out of reach."

"I hollered, 'Whoa!' but the more I hollered the faster they went; the wood began to tumble, an' that scart 'em all the more, an', givin' a jump, they cleared the fence, an' went tearin' down through Betty Snood's garden and orchard."

"I tell you the time them mules made wasn't slow; they cud' run if they was lazy; through the garden inter the orchard, an' through that inter the field, they went. Betty had her milk pans an' tins out on the benches, dryin', an' such a scatterin' of tinware you never see as when them mules went through there."

"Betty heard the racket, an' cum' runnin' out to see what the matter was, an' soon as she found out, she commenced givin' me a piece of her mind, but I hadn't any time to stop an' argify with her jest then, so I kept on arter the mules, an' left her drawin' in her breath fur another blast."

"As the mules was runnin' through the medder, little Sim Trotting started to go across, an' I yelled at him to stop 'em, Sim had his umbrel' with him, an' he commenced swingin' that, an' cryin', 'Whoa! Whoa! But the mules didn't 'whoa!' they wasn't any 'whoa!' in the peasy critters; an' Sim, heoln' they didn't stop, run an' jumped the fence to get out of the way. But he jumped squar' out of the fryin' pan inter the fire; for the mules was makin' fur the road as fast as they cud'; the road was narrow, an' there was not much chance to get out of the way. Sim seen it, an' what did he do but start down the road as fast as his legs wud' carry him, an' the mules arter him. Such a race you never saw; his hat cum' off, fore long, an' his hair an' coat tails stuck right out straight; but he hung onter the old umbrel', an' arter a while I s'pose the idea cum' inter his head to jump over the fence an' get out of the way; anyway, he did it, and the mules went by him down the road, where they was stopped, a few moments arterwards, by sun' men. But Sim didn't forgit that run fur a long time."

"A day, or two arterwards, I took 'em back to Penthook an' asked him how much he'd give fur 'em, told him I believed I didn't care about mules any more. Waal, I got half what I give, an' considered myself lucky at that. He sed, 'Lad, fix 'em; I s'pose he meant he'd fix 'em up, an' sell 'em to somebody else."

"I had to pay Betty Snood fur her fences an' tinware, an' altogether, it cost me more than the contarned mules was worth. Arter that, I didn't want any more mules. A mule is the peskiest, contrariest critter that ever walked on four legs, anyway. There, boys, that's my story."

Having finished which, Uncle Ike arose, buttoned up his coat, and vanished homeward. "Yes, and it's my opinion he made it up out of whole cloth," said the landlord, as he began to cover up the fire preparatory to retiring.

CHASED BY A SAW LOG.

A Canadian who was engaged last week on the brow of a hill, near Pittsfield, Mass., in cutting timber and rolling it to the bottom, endeavored to manipulate a log for a safe descent, but discovered that it was getting the better of him. He was on the under side, and it would not do to "let it slide," so he screamed for help. But no help came. His strength was surely and rapidly failing, and there was nothing to do but run for it; and run he did—a fearful race. The natural philosophers say that a log gains in rapidity as it descends. It is otherwise with human legs on a run, even when, as in this case, the descent is steep and icy. There was no turning out, and the log gained with terrible rapidity on the frightened Cauuck, and was now just on his heels, when luckily he spied a hollow in his path, into which he popped with a bound, but had barely time to huddle himself into his hole, when crash! crash! the log thundered over him, and left him safe, but about the most badly scared man that ever halloed.

ALL RIGHT.

How many of us but use the expression a dozen times a week, and have it stick in the throat, at least half of them? It is coming to be a hypocritical appendage of business and social intercourse.

A sponger goes behind the counter, cuts off a dime's worth of tobacco or cheese, with an excuse that he wants a "sample," and the grocery man says, "that's all right."

A customer returns a pair of shoes to the dry goods man soiled and injured after a half day's wear, grunting, "they are too small," and the merchant says, "that's all right."

A church member puts his name down for \$25 to pay the preacher, and when called on, gives only \$10, with the remark, "that's times are too hard," and the parson says, "that's all right."

A loafer makes a regular practice of coming into a printing office, and begging a copy of the paper, stating that he "just wants to read it," the edition is short, and the editor groans with ghastly politeness, "that's all right."

An extravagant debtor tells a patient creditor every time he meets him that he intends to pay the account "to-morrow, certain," and the poor dun turns off with "that's all right."

And so it goes. It's all wrong, and we say it's all right, and by our want of spirit and independence encourage laziness, imposition, stinginess, and every other sin under the sun.

A SHARP EDITOR.

Dr. Sones, of New York, told the subjoined exceedingly laughable story at a recent celebration of a Welsh society, the authenticity of which had been vouched for:—

"Editors," he said, "like other shrewd men, had to live with their eyes and ears open. I have heard related a story of an editor, who started a paper in a new village in the West. The town was infested with gamblers, whose presence was a source of annoyance to the citizens, who told the editor if he did not come out against them, they would not take his paper. He replied that he would give them a smasher the next day. And surely enough, his next issue did contain the promised 'smasher,' which did not belie its name."

"On the following morning the redoubted editor was seated, scissors in hand, in his sanctum, cutting out news, when in walked a large man, with a club in his hand; and asked:—"Is the editor in?"

"No, sir, was the reply—he has stepped out. Take a seat, and read the papers; he will return in a few minutes."

"Down sat the indignant man of cards, crossed his legs with the club between them, and commenced reading a newspaper. "In the meantime the editor quietly vamoosed down stairs, and at the landing below met another excited man, with a cudgel in his hand, who asked him a second time; "Is the editor in?" "Yes, Sir," was the prompt response; 'you will find him up stairs reading a newspaper."

"The latter, on entering the room, finding the editor prepared to meet him with his club, with a furious oath commenced the violent assault upon the former, which was resisted with equal ferocity. The fight was continued until both had rolled down to the foot of the stairs, and pounded each other to their hearts' content."

This was "equal and exact justice" all around; and it is to be lamented that all attacks upon honest and free speaking editors against great evils should result in a similar manner.

KEEP YOUR WORD.

When you promise to do a thing, be sure to keep your word, as well for the sake of truth as in justice to others. This very interesting story is told of a boy who was singularly faithful to his word.

He had borrowed a tool from a neighbor, promising to return it at night. Before evening he was sent away on an errand, and did not return until late. Before he went he was told that his brothers should see the tool returned. After he had come home and gone to bed, he inquired and found the tool had not been sent to its owner. He was much distressed to think his promise was not kept, but was persuaded to go to sleep and rise early and carry it home. By daylight he was up and nowhere was the tool to be found. After a long and a fruitless search, he set off for his neighbor's in great distress to acknowledge his fault. But how great was his surprise to find the tool on his neighbor's door-step! And it then appeared, from the prints of little bare feet on the mud, that the lad had got up in his sleep and carried it home, and went to bed again and knew it not. Of course, a boy who was prompt in his sleep was prompt when awake. He lived respected, had the confidence of his neighbors, and was placed in many offices of trust and profit.

A GENTLE REBUKE.

A lady, riding in a car on the New York Central Railroad, was disturbed in her reading by the conversation of two gentlemen occupying the seat just before her. One of them seemed to be a student of some college on his way home for a vacation.

He used much profane language, greatly to the annoyance of the lady. She thought she would rebuke him, and on begging pardon for interrupting them, asked the young student if he had studied the languages.

"Yes, madam; I have mastered the languages quite well."

"Do you read and speak Hebrew?" "Quite fluently."

"Will you be so kind as to do me a small favor?"

"With great pleasure, I am at your service."

"Will you be so kind as to do your swearing in Hebrew?"

We may well suppose the lady was not annoyed any more by the ungentlemanly language of this would-be gentleman.

NEVER TEMPT A MAN.

The late John Trumbull, when a boy, resided with his father, Governor Trumbull, at his residence in Lebanon, Connecticut, in the neighborhood of the Mohegans. The government of this tribe was hereditary in the family of the celebrated Uncas. Among the heirs to the chieftainship was an Indian named Zachary, who, though a brave man and an excellent hunter, was as drunken and worthless an Indian as could well be found. By the death of intervening heirs, Zachary found himself entitled to the royal power. In this moment the better genius of Zachary assumed sway, and he reflected seriously. "How can such a drunken wretch as I am aspire to be chief of this noble tribe? What will my people say? How shall the shades of my glorious ancestors look down indignant upon such a successor? Can I succeed to the great Uncas?—Ayé—I will drink no more!" And he solemnly resolved he would drink nothing stronger than water; and he kept his resolution.

Zachary succeeded to the rule of his tribe. It was usual for the Government to attend at the annual election in Hartford, and it was customary for the Mohegan chief also to attend, and on his way to stop and dine with the governor. John, the governor's son, was but a boy, and on one of these occasions, at the festive board occurred a scene which I will give in Trumbull's own words:—

"One day the mischievous thought struck me to try the sincerity of the old man's temperance. The family were seated at dinner, and there was excellent home brewed ale on the table. I thus addressed the old chief:—"

"Zachary, your beer is very fine; will you not taste it?"

"The old man dropped his knife, and leaned forward with a stern intensity of expression, and his fervid eyes, sparkling with angry indignation, were fixed upon me."

"John," said he, "you don't know what you are doing. You are serving the devil, boy! Do you know that I am an Indian? If I should taste your beer, I should never stop till I got to rum, and I should become again the same drunken, contemptible wretch your father remembers me to have been! John never again, while you live, tempt a man to break a good resolution."

Socrates never uttered a more valuable precept. Demosthenes could not have given it a more solemn eloquence. I was thunderstruck. My parents were deeply affected. They looked at me and then turned their gaze upon the venerable chieftain with awe and respect. They afterward frequently reminded me of the scene, and charged me never to forget it. He lies buried in the royal burial-place of his tribe, near the beautiful falls of the Yantic, in Norwich, on lands now owned by my friend, Calvin Goddard, Esq. I visited the place lately, and above his mouldering remains repeated to myself the inestimable lesson.

CURING A WIFE.

Mr. Dimlight, for the past ten years, had prayed every day that his wife would tumble down stairs and break her neck, or else die, like a Christian in her bed.

The simple reason of this is, that Mrs. Dimlight was fond of complaining, taking medicines, and having protracted interviews with the doctor, all of which required money; and money Mr. Dimlight hated to part with. In fact, he had much rather part with Mrs. Dimlight; but that lady manifested no intention of leaving this pleasant world and taking up her abode in an uncertain sphere. Neither did she say that she would live; leaving her lord in an uncertain state, and her physician in a perplexed condition. The doctor said she wanted rousing, and Mr. Dimlight thought that he would do something to start her, and get her out of bed.

He hit upon a plan which ought would operate in a successful manner.

Mrs. Roundwink acted in the capacity of nurse to Mrs. Dimlight. Mrs. Roundwink was a widow, voluptuous, pretty and coquetish. For a handsome present she resolved to enact the part that Dimlight marked out for her; so, one evening, when Mrs. Dimlight was groaning, and threatening to die, Dimlight called in the widow.

"She is going to kick the bucket at last," said the husband, "so you and I may as well fix things so that we can start fair."

Mrs. Dimlight turned her head and stopped moaning. Her eyes began to assume an unnatural brilliancy. The parties in the room no took notice of her.

"Yes," said Dimlight, "she is going at last. Now we can talk over our own affairs."

Mrs. Dimlight raised her form in bed, and sat bolt upright. She listened attentively, and her eyes grew brighter and brighter.

"How soon shall we be married after she is dead and buried?" asked Dimlight, passing his arm about the substantial waist of Mrs. Roundwink.

"I suppose you will be willing to wait a week or two?" simpered Mrs. Roundwink, as she lovingly reposed on the breast of the affectionate Dimlight.

Mrs. Dimlight uttered a loud exclamation which sounded like an oath, and giving one spring, landed on the floor.

"You think I'm going to die, do you?" she yelled. "I'll see you hanged first! I'll live to spite you—yes I will. Now out of this house!" turning to Mrs. Roundwink; "for you don't stay here another minute! I can act as my own nurse, you good-for-nothing hussy!"

And from that day there was rapid improvement in Mrs. Dimlight's health. She no longer tolerates nurses, but one can imagine what kind of a life poor Dimlight leads. His version of the love-making scene is not believed by the restored Mrs. D.

Grains of Gold.

He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping.

Prefer loss before unjust gain, for that brings grief but once, this for ever.

Men may judge us by the success of our efforts; God looks at the efforts themselves.

The best and noblest conquest is that of a man's own reason, not his passions and follies.

Be always at leisure to do good; never make business an excuse to decline the offices of humanity.

He permits himself to be seen through a microscope who suffers himself to be caught in a passion.

However many friends you have, do not neglect yourself; though you have a thousand, not one of them loves you so much as you ought to love yourself.

We should always rest satisfied with doing well, and let others talk of us as they please, for they can do us no injury, although they may think they have found a flaw in our proceedings, and are determined to rise on our downfall, or profit by our injury.