

A WAY OUT

Ronald Markham glanced up at his employer for a moment, and something very nearly akin to hatred shone in his eyes. He was used to vituperation, and had schooled himself to bear it more or less philosophically, but this was something new in the way of moral torture, and for a moment the long-cherished feelings broke through his outward mask of composure.

This common, unscrupulous, middle-aged money-grubber—as he inwardly apostrophized Anthony Burkett, his employer—had calmly announced to him his approaching marriage with Celia Chambers, to whom, a few weeks ago, he, Ronald Markham, had been engaged. There was some mystery underlying all this, and probably—since Anthony Burkett was concerned in it—some double dealing.

It was a week since he had received the extraordinary letter from Celia breaking off the engagement. In it she had still professed undying love for him, but stated that circumstances which she was unable to explain forced her to marry another man. The letter had ended with a heartbroken appeal to him not to misjudge her, and, if possible, to forgive her.

Appeals to her, both in person and by letter, had proved unavailing. She answered all, with the same reply; she was not a free agent. And now Ronald had at length learnt that the man she was deserting him for was the man he hated more than he had ever thought it possible to hate anyone.

The pressing need for information which would elucidate the mystery had led him to assemble his feelings just now, and after that one brief glance, which passed unobserved, he resumed his customary attitude of indifference. Burkett, goaded by his love of torture, might let slip something which would throw some light on Celia's extraordinary actions. And presently his circum-spection was rewarded, there was some talk of a bill which could not be met by Celia's father, some more talk of benevolence on his, Burkett's part, and all this led up to the word "forgery."

This word Burkett rolled round his tongue like some delicate morsel saved to the last. The bill was ostensibly backed by Sir Peter Ayling, but he, Burkett, had discovered that the signature was forged. The whole solution was now in Ronald's hands, and Burkett, goaded by the indifferent attitude of his "stuck-up" clerk, realized that no had said more than he intended.

As soon as the office closed for the night, Ronald made his way to Celia's house, and, armed with this intelligence, succeeded in getting the whole story from her. It appeared that some fifteen months ago—before they had met—a favorite sister of Celia's father developed signs of consumption, and the doctor had positively ordered her to Egypt for the winter. Mr. Chambers, who held a poorly paid but reasonable position in a bank, in despair at his inability to raise the necessary funds, abstracted money belonging to his em-

ployer, a large landowner, to whom he had once acted as secretary. The bill he had discounted with a somewhat shady firm of bill-brokers in the City, and with the proceeds made good his defalcations. This document had in some mysterious way got into Anthony Burkett's hands, and it fell due in a week's time. Her father, Celia said, had endeavored to get it renewed without success, and, fearing discovery, had ended with a frenzied appeal that at least it should not be referred to Sir Peter Ayling. This appeal had, of course, given Burkett the clue that he wanted, and he shrewdly jumped to the conclusion that the signature was forged.

He had always coveted the beautiful fiancée of his "stuck-up" clerk. Here was a chance to kill two birds with one stone—spite the man he hated for his beautiful bride. He dictated his terms to the broken man. On the day he, Anthony Burkett, married Celia Chambers the bill should be destroyed, could Celia never be father a felon when an act of hers, however distasteful, could save him from the dreadful fate? There was the whole sordid story, and Ronald left her sick at heart with his own helplessness. Something must be done, but he refused to give up without a struggle.

In urgent need of advice, he bethought him of a college chum—Mark Stanford, a struggling young barrister. Mark was the shrewdest man he knew, and his rooms near Lincoln's Inn, Stanford heard his story through without interruption, and, when he had finished, stroked his head despondently.

"Two things are needed to defeat your friend the enemy," he said: "one is money—sufficient to meet the bill—and the other is the good will of Sir Peter Ayling. Neither of these, I take it, you possess. Slay, though—he pondered for a moment—"Sir Peter—Ayling! I seem to know the name."

He walked to the shelves and took down a bulky volume, turning the pages quickly.

"Yes, that's it!" he said, at last, with a delighted exclamation. "I think we have your third link, Markham."

"Good man!" cried Ronald, clapping him on the shoulder; "but in Heaven's name tell me how."

"Tell me," this Anthony Burkett, has he recently purchased an estate?"

"Yes, yes, somewhere in Yorkshire. But what does—"

"Have patience, man," said Stanford, with deliberation. "Some time ago I held a brief in a disputed boundary case—a most enormous affair. The parties were Sir Peter Ayling and a Mr. Hugh Forsyth. It was the usual thing—fences removed in the night, battles between keepers, and all the time-worn paraphernalia of these affairs."

"My dear fellow, do bear me out," replied Mark. "I say this case, which roused the most bitter feelings on both sides, was never settled. Now your friend, Burkett, has recently acquired Mr. Hugh Forsyth's estate, and I don't think he knows of this boundary dispute, which is still being carried on with acrimony by the stewards of the estates. It may be that Sir Peter is in ignorance of the new owner's name, in which case it will be your pleasant duty to enlighten him on that point. On the other hand, had you vouch for word of explanation. That was perplexing number two."

Anthony Burkett frowned. He had learned that Sir Peter Ayling was in town, and he now dispatched a messenger for him. They had dined, very well, then, he would have his revenge. He would show no mercy. He had been on the point of permitting himself to be chuckle, when the office-boy entered and announced a visitor.

"Mr. Mark Stanford," said he.

"What does he want?"

Stanford, who had entered, answered the question in person.

"On behalf of my client, Mr. Chandos Chambers, I wish to tender you a settlement of the bill due to-day," he said, calmly, producing a fat pocket-book.

"Chambers!" sneered Burkett. "Where did he get it from? He was always ingenious in his methods of raising money, but I should have thought he had exhausted all but honest methods, which, of course, would not appeal to him."

"As you seem interested," said Stanford, placidly, "I do not think there can be any harm in my informing you that the money was loaned to him by Mr. Ronald Markham."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the other. "Excellent, my dear sir; excellent. Markham got all he was worth from me—and that wasn't much; and he has now lost even that for leaving without notice."

"Indeed!" was the bland reply. "It is a strange thing how many young men throw up good situations when they come in for money. But I am detaining you; if you will return me the discharged bill, I—"

"Not so fast, young man," put in Burkett, triumphantly. "I've no doubt that would be good sport to send you here kicking the dirt at me, but they have not done with me yet."

"No, I don't think they have," smiled Stanford.

Burkett brushed aside the interruption. "I refused to discharge the bill till Sir Peter Ayling has seen it. I have sent a messenger to his hotel, and I hope you will wait to hear what he has to say."

His trump card was down, and he glanced triumphantly at his opponent.

"As you will," said Stanford, feigning annoyance.

About ten minutes later Sir Peter Ayling bustled in. He was a fussy little man with a pompous manner, and he scolded Stanford as one whom he had previously met.

"Well, sir, well!" he said, addressing Burkett. "I can't think why you have sent for me, unless it is to apologize for your outrageous conduct."

Burkett was a little nonplussed, not understanding the other's allusion, but he stuck to his point. "I regret to say, sir," he said, "that I have to expose a person who has rewarded your kindness to him by a dishonest and treacherous act." Here he produced the bill. "I think you will admit that that is not your signature."

Up went Sir Peter's eye-glass.

"And why should I admit any such thing?" he said, deliberately. "It certainly is my signature, and I don't think I have any cause to be ashamed of it."

Burkett labored still deeper into the mire. "But, my dear sir, have you read the document?" he said.

"What kind of a fool do you take me to be, sir?" roared the infuriated baronet. "Do you think I affix my name to papers without reading them?"

"But—but—" stammered the unfortunate Burkett.

"Surely it is enough that you order your steward to pull down my fences," cried the other, "without this unwarranted interference in my business affairs? Good day to you, sir. You shall hear further from me on this boundary question," and he swept pompously from the office.

A light dawned on Burkett at last, and he swore softly.

Stanford rose from his seat. "I have heard what Sir Peter said, and it was both entertaining and edifying," he said blandly; "and now shall we settle our little business?" He counted out the bank-notes carefully, and just as carefully destroyed the bill, which was handed to him with a very bad grace.

"Good day, Mr. Burkett," he said, "and if I may tender you a piece of advice, never go out of your way to do another bad turn. We human beings are all

rather apt to bite the hand that feeds us."

The post of Sir Peter Ayling's secretary is now filled by Ronald Markham, and he lives with his charming wife in a house on the estate. The boundary dispute is now more acrimonious than ever.—London Answers.

CHARITIES OF THE RICH

INTERESTING EXAMPLES OF IMPULSIVE GENEROSITY.

Mr. Rockefeller Helps the Poor — Mr. James R. Keene is a Good Giver.

Mr. Rockefeller, the oil magnate, is, and always has been, a very systematic giver. So much per cent. of his income he distributes each year, and a very good percentage it is. Years ago, when he earned less than £200 annually, he gave away the same percentage that he gives to-day, and from a very early age he has practised and preached the duty of putting aside so much of one's income—however small it be—for the benefit of the poor. Mr. Levi T. Schofield, an intimate friend of the millionaire, relates how, when the civil war broke out in 1861, Rockefeller called him into his room one day and gave him \$300 out of his strong-box. At the same time he guaranteed to give the family of each of twelve soldiers \$300 a year until the war was over, although at this time he was known to be worth only \$10,000.

A STOCKBROKER'S GENEROSITY.

Many stories are told of Mr. James R. Keene's boyish impulsiveness regarding philanthropic matters, of which the following is one of the best: One morning he was sitting in the famous Hoffman House cafe in New York with his friend Arthur A. Housman, looking out of the window at a blinding snowstorm that was raging. Keene, after a moment's silent contemplation, turned to Housman and said, "This is a terrible storm, and will bring untold suffering to the poor." Housman assented, and for a few minutes there was silence. Then Keene suddenly jumped up and exclaimed, "I tell you what I'll do. If you will give me \$5,000 I will give \$25,000, and we will have it distributed where it will do the most good." Housman was a bit startled at the suggestion, but cheerfully agreed to the proposition; and the following day the \$30,000 was distributed among the freezing and destitute poor of New York.

Keene once expressed his views on charity, and these are so practical and clearly the character of the millionaire so clearly that it seems well to give them here. "I believe," he said, "in giving money when people need it, and to people who are in actual want, regardless of the causes of their want."

IF A MAN IS HUNGRY

He should be fed, and at once. If he has become accustomed to drink and his system needs a drink, it should be given to him. Never mind what his past has been. If it be a woman who is in need, it is of no importance whether she is worthy or not. The question is whether she is hungry, or is in need of clothes or shoes or fuel. Such assistance is generally asked by the man or woman who has made a mistake of some sort or other. It is generally due to this lack of character that they come to want. These are the persons who need help and the ones I seek to assist when I give money. When poor people

HE HAD MANY ADVENTURES.

On one occasion he sat down on a doorstep, and while resting there with his head bent a poor and wretched-looking woman came up to him and asked if he were ill. So many people had passed without taking any notice of him that Fiechman decided to try whether her sympathy were real or assumed.

He thereupon answered that he had nothing to eat all that day, he said. Tears came into the eyes of the woman and, taking from her pocket a very black and grimy-looking rag, which might once have been a handkerchief, she undid one corner of it and took out a 10 cent piece. "Come with me," she said. Fiechman followed her and they stopped at a "lunch wagon," where the woman ordered him a cup of coffee and "slinkers" (doughnuts), which the millionaire was obliged to consume. The cost was 5 cents, and the nickel that she left the woman very carefully again. Before parting Fiechman learned the name of this truly philanthropic woman, and subsequently set her up in a little business of her own, and to-day she is a

PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY WOMAN.

Mr. Fiechman frequently told the story to the credit of her whom, he said, he should always regard as the greatest and most unselfish philanthropist he ever met.

There is an interesting story told of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt relative to how he came to make a fortune for a widow of an old fellow-speculator. The husband of this woman had died and left her penniless. One day, when she was sewing in a capitalist's house, she heard a great mining operation being discussed. She was enough versed in stocks to realize that a great deal was on hand. Taking some diamond earrings, which she had treasured as the last gift which her husband had given her, she went with them to Vanderbilt and begged that he would invest them, which she had heard discussed.

It turned out that the information she had received was the "tip" that Vanderbilt was looking for, and it came just in time to help him make a large sum. "You have done me a great service," he said; "keep your diamonds, and I will invest some money for you." And he did invest a sum which, when the stock took an unprecedented turn upward, yielded the astute woman something like \$500,000.

SCRAPS OF WISDOM.

The wise man knows when not to be patient. So many people worry about things that never happen. Jealousy is the tribute a woman pays to a man's vanity. If we could only be content with what others say is good for us! Wise are those who know what to remember and what to forget. Bear in mind that the higher you climb the further you may fall. Love is like the wind—no one knows whence it comes or whither it goes. Some folk are so busy trying to get a living that they haven't time to live.

MUGGSY HAS ANOTHER CLOSE CALL, BUT COMES OUT AHEAD

