

"It is a fact; a keeper was put in his store this afternoon and an attachment put on his horses and carriages."

"That was all because he kept two horses when one was enough for him," interposed Mrs. Dykes.

With her the moral was between two horses and one.

Before the squire left he had sold his lady's horse. Mrs. Dykes was perfectly happy, and her heart began to warm even towards poor Uncle Phil. When the retired shipman came in from the meeting there were a dozen things she wanted to do for his comfort. The lady had beaten her husband and his uncle, and she was satisfied.

Before breakfast the next morning Graves' man led the horse over and put him in the little stable. One of the clerks was to take care of him. Uncle Phil saw the purchase but he said nothing unpleasant. He looked the animal over, said he was sound and worth the hundred dollars to be paid for him in goods from the store. Marian even thought she liked Uncle Phil then. He did not prophesy any evil or disaster.

After breakfast the lady thought she would drive over to her father's, in the next town.

She returned in season for dinner.

But Uncle Phil did not come down to that meal. The lady rang the bell but with no better result. Uncle Phil evidently did not hear the bell, for he never kept the table waiting for him. Mrs. Dykes went up to his room to call him. The door was wide open, and she went in. The shipmaster was not there. His trunk was not there; the picture of the Seabird in which he had sailed many a voyage, had been taken from the wall.

Was it possible that Uncle Phil had gone without even saying good-by to them? There was a letter on the table addressed to "Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dykes." With the letter in her hand she hastened down to the dinner-room. To say that she was astonished and chagrined, would not half express her feeling.

"Uncle Phil has gone!" she exclaimed. "He has left for good, bag and baggage." She tossed the letter upon the table, for she had not the courage to open it.

"Then I suppose you are quite satisfied, Marian. You have got the horse, and got rid of Uncle Phil," said Mr. Dykes, greatly grieved to learn that the worthy man had gone; and he saw that he must have heard the impulsive words of Mrs. Dykes the evening before.

Mrs. Dykes dropped into her chair at the table, and burst into tears. Just as she had become reconciled to the boarder, he had fled without even a word of explanation. She intended to treat him with the utmost kindness and consideration, as a noble warrior treats a fallen foe. Just then she felt as though she would be willing to lose the horse to regain Uncle Phil.

Charles opened the letter. It was very short, but there was not a particle of bitterness in it. He should still pray for them, and desired to do all he could to serve and make them happy.

"I will go to him and beg him to come back, Charles!" exclaimed the weeping wife. "You will hate me for what I have done. You will never forgive me."

"I am very sorry he has gone, but I will not hate you, Marian. We will call upon him this evening at the hotel."

They did call. Uncle Phil was exactly the same as he had been before. He was glad to see them, and there was not a particle of change in his tone of manner. Both Charles and his wife tried to say something about his leaving their house; but he headed them off every time. He would not

permit the matter to be mentioned. They went home, unable even to get in an apology.

Both of them missed the kindly words and wholesome advice of the good man, though Mrs. Dykes would not acknowledge it. His good influence upon both was lost. Even Charles became reckless in his finances.

The closing of Tinkham's store brought more business to the young merchant for a time, though the bankrupt's successor soon made things exciting for him. A ruinous competition followed. No longer restrained by Uncle Phil's prudent counsels Charles branched out, and grasped more than he could handle.

At the end of a year the balance sheet was not pleasant to look upon. Then followed a reckless attempt to recover lost ground. Notes at the Tripleton Bank became very troublesome. One of them was given for a new piano. People said Dykes was living too fast. The young merchant was worried. He had yielded to one extravagance and there was a long train behind it.

His next balance sheet showed that he was three thousand dollars in debt, and his stock was not worth half that sum. He saw that he must fail. After supper, one evening, he told his wife all about it. It would be a terrible humiliation. To fail as Tinkham had; and poor Marian wept as though her heart would break.

In the midst of the scene, Uncle Phil walked into the room, as he always did, without the ceremony of knocking. He opened called.

"Uncle Phil, I am going to fail, for I cannot pay a note of four hundred dollars that falls due to-morrow," said Charles bitterly, when he saw that he could not conceal the facts from the good man.

"How much do you owe in all, Charles?" asked Uncle Phil.

"About three thousand dollars," groaned Charles.

"Will three thousand put you on your feet, solid?"

"Yes, sir; but I can't raise three hundred."

"I will give you a check for three thousand in the morning. I will be at the store at eight o'clock. I noticed that you have looked worried lately; but you said nothing to me."

"I could not say anything to you, Uncle; and I cannot take your money after what has happened."

"Nothing has happened yet, and with the blessing of God, nothing shall happen."

Uncle Phil would not understand him.

"You may help me on one condition," added Charles, after some discussion. "And that is that you will come back and live with us."

Marian joined in insisting upon this condition, and the good man yielded. He used no reproaches; he would not even say, "I told you so." The note was paid the next day, and in the evening, Uncle Phil was domiciled in his old apartment, quite as happy as the young people.

Charles sold the lady's horse, the buggy, the piano, and other extras, and reduced all his expenses to a very reasonable figure. Marian was happy again, and did not believe that there was any too much salt about Uncle Phil. She has given up the business of conquering a husband. In fact, both of them have come to believe that neither should conquer the other.

After a while it came out that Uncle Phil was worth at least about fifty thousand dollars. Doubtless the Church and the mission will get some of it; but it is probable that Charles Dykes will be remembered, though both he and his wife sincerely hope that the good man will live till he is hundred.