

The Story.

A REVERSE OF FORTUNE.

(Continued from our last.)

During the rest of that week it seemed to Carr English that such a darkened existence was not worth having. To toil and strive with a reward in store, a prize worth winning, was hard enough to one who had thought the prize his own without an effort. But to labor and struggle for nothing, knowing the guerdon was never to be his! He would gladly give up the fight and his aimless life together.

Home at last! It seemed to him, as he neared the tall, pretentious-looking house, that the cloud hanging over it must be visible to everyone. It was so silent; so few lights, and those but dim ones, shone in the windows.

He went up into the large, well-stocked library. A fire was burning (for the evening was chilly), gleaming from the gilded backs of handsome volumes on their shelves, illuminating the old engravings on the walls, touching the red morocco furniture with a fiery glow.

A comfortable easy chair stood invitingly near the hearth. Carr dropped into it and buried his face in his hands.

Before long he was aroused by the door being opened. It was his father who entered—a tall, handsome man with hair sprinkled with gray, and a thin, keen, thoughtful face.

"Where have you been?" Mr. English asked, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, and looking sadly down at his son, who sat staring at the floor.

"To tell Minna I am no longer in a position to marry," he answered coldly.

"It was the only honourable course. But she would not release you?"

"She would though," said Carr, with a hard laugh.

It was a new blow for the elder man. He could see that the other was half maddened by his loss, and that he looked upon his father as the cause of all his trouble.

A lengthy silence ensued, but at last the son rose and moved towards the door.

"Stay a minute, boy, said Mr. English, slowly, "I want to speak to you. I am decidedly grieved to hear this about Minna."

"No doubt," said the young man, with a little laugh. "Her portion, small as it is, would have been welcome."

"Carr!"

The angry exclamation was still ringing in the air, when Janet came in hurriedly.

"Papa! Carr!" she cried, looking from one to the other in a troubled way. "What is the matter?"

"Go away, Janet!" said her brother, in a tone of authority.

"Not if you are going to be angry. Oh, don't make it all worse—"

Carr led her to the door and held it open for her to pass through, but she hesitated and looked appealingly at her father.

"Yes, leave us, Janet," said the latter quietly, but so firmly that she did not dare to disobey. One imploring look she gave to her brother, and the door closed after her once more.

Then said Mr. English slowly:

"I have always tried to do my best for you, Carr—for you and Janet. I have worked early and late since you were both children, with no other thought than that of making your future smooth and bright—of placing you above the necessity of spending your life in money-getting as I have spent mine. One slip—one great mistake, has undone the labour of more than twenty years. My youth, my best energies are gone. Do you think this blow is not crushing enough that they try to add to it by insults and estrangements?"

"If you had only trusted yourself less," Carr groaned; "if you had brought me up to some profession—"

His father made no reply, but resumed his first position, his elbow on the mantel-piece. The reproach cut him like a knife, for he felt that there was justice in it. He heard Carr walk the length of the room and back again, and then stop at his side and say huskily:

"Forgive me, father; I have lost Minna, and scarcely know what I say."

He wrung the hand that was extended, and the coolness between them was at an end.

"We will begin again, and work together," said Carr, eagerly. "With my energy and your experience, we shall soon retrieve this loss, and—"

He stopped. And then? What then? Their fortunes might be retrieved, but how about his shattered idol? He turned abruptly away, and without another word quitted the room.

The next few weeks were like a dreadful dream to Janet English. She was scarcely fully conscious of what went on around her—of the sale of the "household furniture and effects," or of the removal to the quietest and shabbiest of lodgings at Chiswick, for her whose mind was given to listening for the postman, and for some expected knock at the door.

Where was Leonard? Why did he not come? Day after day passed without bringing her tidings. She kept her misery to herself as long as she could; but at last one evening when Carr came in, weary and silent as usual, she knelt down by the chair into which he had thrown himself, and looked into his face.

"Have you been home, dear?"

"Yes. For the last time."

"And there was no letter there for me? Are you sure there wasn't one in the letter box?"

"Certain. They are all redirected at the post office now. And no one would leave one there, seeing that the place is empty, and a board up with 'To Let.' Don't think about him, little one. He's a contemptible—well, I won't say it. But where's your pride, Janet?"

His sister dropped her face on her hands on his knees. Carr stroked her hair pityingly, and muttered a word or two between his teeth by no means flattering to Leonard King.

The next day he was walking down the Strand, when he was startled by a hearty slap on the back and a familiar:

"English, old man, how are you?"

Carr turned, coolly looked the speaker over; then, as though convinced that he did not know him, walked steadily on.

The other, a pale, slim, studious-looking young man, stared after him in a discomfited way, then strode on and overtook him.

"Look here, English," he said, taking hold of his arm with a firm grip that he could not easily shake off, "I am not going to be cut by you without knowing why."

"Come out of this row, then," Carr rejoined, fiercely, "and I'll tell you."

They turned down Surrey Street, but neither spoke until they were out on the Embankment, when they came to a stop and faced each other.

"Well," said Leonard King, quietly, "what have I done?"

"Behaved like a cad and a scoundrel," Carr answered, angrily, but not loudly enough to attract attention.

King bit his lip and his eyes flashed, but he merely said:

"Explain."

"You sought my sister's hand while there was something to go with it. Now she has nothing you throw her over. That is the conduct of a—"

"That will do, English. But you are off on the wrong tract. It is Janet who has thrown me over—not I her."

"It is false," said Carr, but more mildly, for there was something convincing about the other's manner. "Have you ever been near us since the crash?"

"I wrote the very same night that you came to our house, offering to marry Janet when she would; or rather asking her, with what eloquence I could command, to have me. She has not even taken the trouble to reply."

(To be continued.)



Our Prize Competitions.

GENERAL RULES.

1. Each competitor must send his or her real name and address with each competition; but such name and address will not be published except in the case of the prizewinners.

2. *Noms de plume* adopted by competitors must be strictly adhered to in all answers they may send in.

3. The awards of the competition editor are absolutely final.

4. All competitors for any prize must be *bona-fide* subscribers to the EXCHANGE AND MART. Non-subscribers wishing to compete, must enclose with their first effort, stamps or P. O. O. to the amount of 75 cents, in return for which the EXCHANGE will be forwarded to their address for six months. This will entitle them to compete for any prize offered within the period covered by their subscription.

5. In the case of literary competitions, all matter must be written in a clear and legible hand on one side of the paper only.

6. All MSS. sent in for competition become the absolute property of the editor.

LITERARY COMPETITION.

Two prizes, value \$5 and \$3 respectively, will be offered to the writers of the two best comic stories (absolutely original).

SPECIAL RULES.

1. All MSS. must be sent in between June the 1st, and July the 1st, 1884, both days inclusive.

2. The tales must average in length 3 columns (1 page) of the EXCHANGE (brevier solid).

3. The fun or comicities must be refined; any coarseness or vulgarity will at once condemn the MS.

4. The full name and address of the competitor must be legibly written in the top left hand corner of each MS.

Prizewinners will be requested to select their prizes from the following lists:

1ST PRIZE.

Five dollars in cash.
A handsome rosewood or walnut writing desk, value \$7.00.

A handsome sterling-silver locket with monogram of prizewinner, and inscription for watch-chain or necklet.

A valuable and handsomely bound copy of Shakespeare's complete works.

2ND PRIZE.

Three dollars in cash.
A handsome double inkstand suitable for drawing-room, library or office.

A handsomely bound edition of any of the poets or any work of Charles Dickens.

LADIES' COMPETITION.

A prize, value \$5.00, is offered for the most neatly worked and carefully made child's flannel petticoat. All the garments sent in will be given to the inmates of the children's hospital.

SPECIAL RULES.

1. All garments for competition must reach this office between May 25th and June 1st 1884, both days inclusive.

2. The little petticoats must be made of good, though not necessarily expensive, material. Herring-bone, feather stitch and other kindred ornamentation is expected, but no surplus trimming will be allowed.

3. The garments should be of a size to fit children between three and ten years of age.

The full name must be legibly written on a slip of paper and sewn to the band of the garment.

The prizewinner will be requested to select her prize from the following list:

Five dollars in cash.
A handsome rosewood or walnut writing desk.

A handsome rosewood or walnut workbox fitted with all necessary materials and implements.

A valuable photograph album (4 cartes to a page with space for cabinet and panel photos), a handsome sterling silver locket with monogram of prizewinner and inscription.

THE PETTICOATS WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR JUDGMENT TO THE WIFE OF A RESIDENT CITY CLERGYMAN FAMED FOR SKILL AT HER NEEDLE.

CONSOLATION PRIZE.

A consolation prize of \$2 in cash is offered to any person of either sex, who, wishing to compete, finds the two former competitions unsuited to his talents. SUBJECT.—The best essay on "Household Life in Canada."

SPECIAL RULES.

All MSS. for competition must reach this office between May 15th and May 30th, 1884, both days inclusive. The full name and address of each competitor must be legibly written on the top left hand corner of each MS. The essay must not exceed, in length, one column of the EXCHANGE (brevier solid).