

having been received, he was given up for dead. Tony, knowing so little of him, had altogether forgotten that such a relative existed. But it was most extraordinary that his reappearance should happen at the critical moment of Tony's departure from Mr. Spangler's, and that it should lead to the breaking up of all Tony's plans for entering the army.

The horse was quickly taken out of the carriage, Tony's little bundle was replaced in his chamber, the girls dried up their tears of sorrow, but wept fresh ones of joy; the boys recovered their spirits, and even Uncle Benny's heart was made lighter by the prospect of Tony's still remaining among them. It was one of those sudden transitions from general grief to general joy which sometimes occur in human experience. Tony was less affected than others. He had obeyed his uncle's command without understanding the object, or what was to be the end of it.

But Alfred King had mingled with his fellow-men all over the world, and, being able to make himself at home wherever he might be, soon brought his new acquaintances to an understanding of his character and intentions. Leaving home poor and friendless, he had fought out for himself, in a remote section of the country, the great battle of life, and had now returned to his native State, not overburdened with riches, but with moderate fortune,—not enough for many of us, but sufficient for him. The disposition to be satisfied with what he had acquired, in reality made him rich.—for riches come of a contented mind, not of an overflowing purse.

He had now returned to settle somewhere near the spot where he was born. He had been searching for his relatives, but, in absence of many years, all but Tony had been swept away by death. Him he sought long and anxiously, and by the merest accident learned of his being with the Spanglers. By the singular coincidence just related, he reached the farm-house just as the object of his search was about departing to enroll himself in the army of his country. One hour's delay in arriving there would have seen Tony beyond the reach of his affectionate intentions.

A genial intimacy soon sprung up between Mr. King and Uncle Benny. The latter gave him a connected history of his nephew, how well he had behaved himself, how worthy he was of his love and protection, and how ardently he desired to strike out for himself as the owner of a farm. It was natural that Mr. King should concenrate upon his only surviving relative his whole affections. He had enough of this world's good for both of them, and he avowed to Uncle Benny his intention of establishing for himself and Tony such a home as the deserving boy was longing after.

Now, it had always been insisted on by Uncle Benny, in his arguments with Spangler, that the latter was farming too much land; and that he would thrive better, make more money, and have less work to do, if he would sell one half. Some men might drive a hundred acres to great advantage, but Spangler was not one of them. Organized as he was, he could do better with a half than with the whole. Spangler had uniformly resisted this doctrine. But latterly, however, the truth as proclaimed by Uncle Benny had been slowly working its way into his mind. He did not resist so stubbornly as at first. True, no one had ever offered to buy any portion of the farm, hence he had never been tried by the test of opportunity.

But the temptation to divide his hundred acres was now to be held out to him. Tony King's ambition extended only to thirty acres. He explained to his uncle what he intended to do with such a tract. He had made a rude sketch on paper of his plans. There was to be a great peach-orchard, a pear-orchard, and twenty acres were to be stocked with berries, leaving room for all vegetables for domestic use, and pasture for a cow.

There were thirty acres at one end of Spangler's farm which would exactly suit him. They embraced the famous brier-patch, from which so many hundred dollars had been annually realized; besides, it would produce them an immediate income. If his uncle would only buy this thirty-acre lot, and put up a small house, he would work the farm to his entire satisfaction. When urging the matter on his attention, the boy's enthusiasm became unbounded. He grew eloquent as he counted up the profit from his fruits, and finally infused into his uncle's mind some portion of his own sanguine fervor.

The contemplated purchase was of course no secret in Spangler's family. Under Uncle Benny's urgency, Spangler at last consented to sell; but though satisfied it was probably best for him, he gave up to it with stubborn reluctance,—it was hard to part with his land. Then it went hardest of all to give up the great brier-patch. The "old field," which, in the face of Spangler's ridicule and prophecies of failure, Uncle Benny had converted into a gold mine, he now prized as the most valuable part of his farm. But Tony refused to buy unless he could secure the brier-patch. This controversy was finally adjusted by Mr. King consenting to give three prices for what was once known as the "old field."

"Now," said Uncle Benny to Spangler, when the bargain had been concluded, "take this money and pay off your mortgage. When you laughed at me for undertaking the 'old field,' did not I tell you it could be made to pay your mortgage, and has it not turned out even better than I said?"

What reply could Spangler make to so searching a question? He did manage to smile, but said nothing.

No happier young farmer lives in New Jersey than Tony King. His thirty acres are all that he covets, and all that he now thinks he shall ever want. Setting out with moderate views, the hope is that moderation will continue to be his rule. His farm is fast becoming a pattern for his neighbors to imitate. But it was no light task to clear up and make good the long neglect of his predecessors.