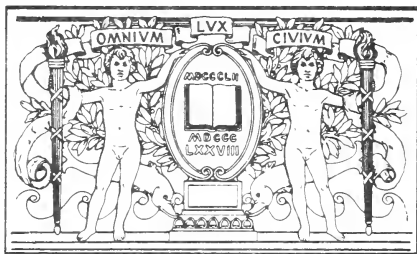


# YOUNG SALESMAN

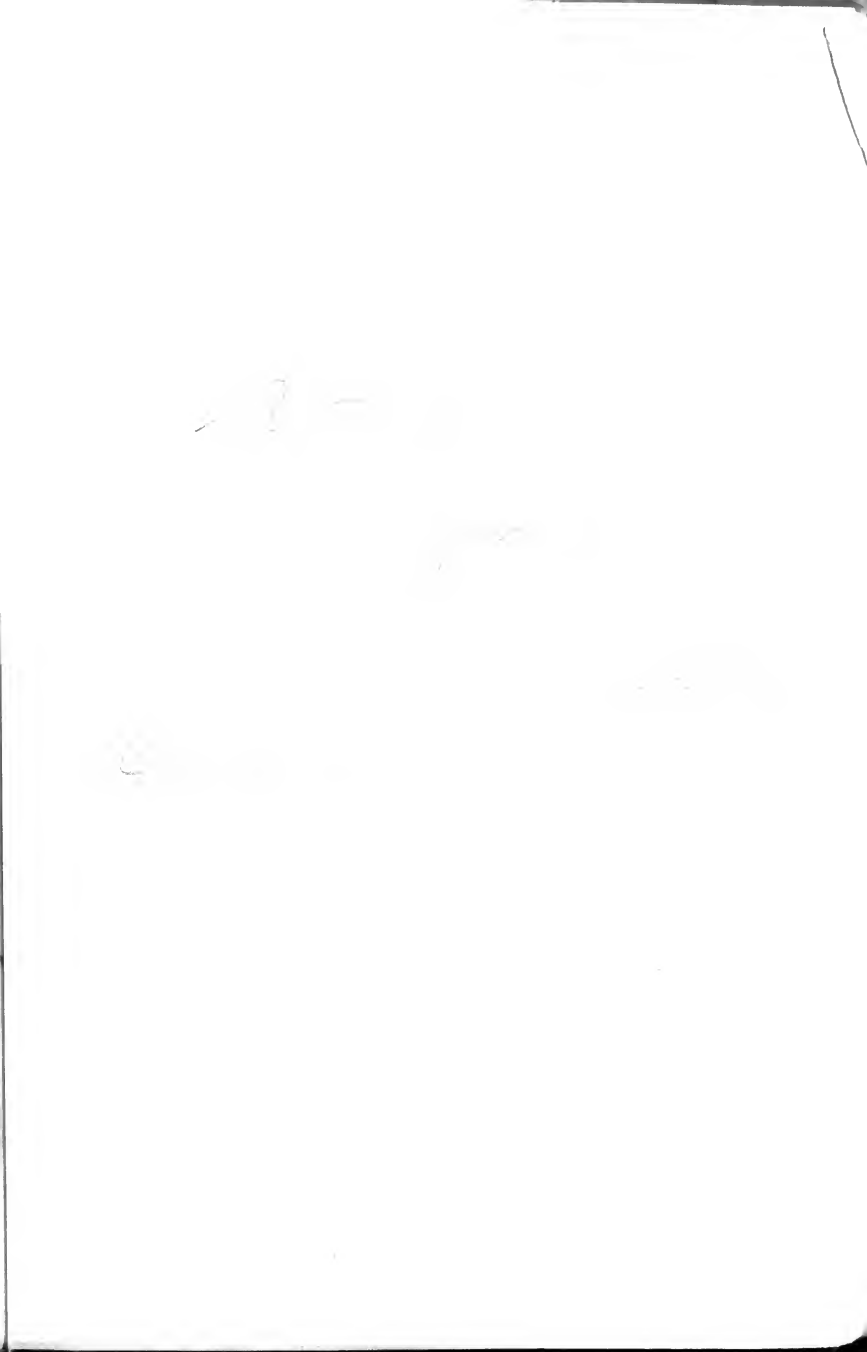


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# THE YOUNG SALESMAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ON BOARD THE "ARCTURUS."

HALFWAY across the Atlantic the good ship *Arcturus* was making her way from Liverpool to New York. She was a sailing vessel, and her speed by no means equaled that of the mighty steamships, more than one of which passed her, leaving her far behind.

While she was used chiefly for freight, she carried a few passengers, less than twenty in all.

I wish to call the reader's attention to the occupants of one of the small staterooms, a man and a boy. There was a great contrast between them. The man was thin and hollow-checked, and as he lay in his berth he looked to be, as he was, in the last stages of consumption.

The boy, who must have been nearly sixteen, was the picture of health. He was inclined to be dark, with black hair, bright eyes, and with considerable color in his cheeks.

He bent over the reclining figure, and asked,

with anxious solicitude: "How do you feel, father?"

"No better, Scott," and the father began to cough.

"Does it hurt you to cough?"

"Yes, but it won't trouble me long."

"You will be better?" said the boy, half inquiringly.

"No, Scott, I shall never be better. I am very near the end."

"You don't mean that?" exclaimed the boy, in pained surprise.

"Yes, I do, Scott, and you may as well know it. I doubt whether I shall live to see New York."

Scott Walton looked dismayed, for till now he had not suspected that his father's life was in danger. Yet, as he gazed at the fragile form, he was forced to believe that his father spoke truly.

"What will become of me," he said, with emotion, "alone in a strange land?"

"That is what I want to speak to you about." Here the man began to cough again.

"Don't talk, father. It makes you cough."

"I must, my son. Perhaps I may have no other chance. I am sorry that I must leave you almost penniless."

"I don't mind that, father. If you could only live——"

"Don't interrupt me, for there are some things I must tell you. You will find in my

wallet twenty pounds in English bank-notes, worth in America about one hundred dollars. This sum will support you while you are looking for a situation, for you will need to find work."

"I am strong and willing to work, father."

"Yes, you are strong. You don't take after me, but after your mother's family."

"Have you any relatives in America?"

"There is a cousin of your mother's in New York, Ezra Little. I believe he is well to do. I can't tell you what he is doing or where he lives, but you can look up his name in the New York directory."

"Is he the only relative we have in America?"

"No, there is a cousin of my own, Philo Walton, who went out to one of the Western States. He was a good-hearted fellow, and likely to make his way, but I have heard nothing of him, and I don't know whether he is still living or not.

"There seems a very small chance of your finding him, in so large a country, but you can probably find Ezra Little. Take down these names, Scott. They may be of importance to you."

Scott drew out a small memorandum book, and did as directed.

"I would not have started from England, had I supposed I should have become worse so rapidly," continued Mr. Walton. "I think

the sea air has aggravated my disease. There seemed nothing for us at home though, and no friends on whom we could call. I built my hopes on Ezra Little. I thought for your mother's sake he would help her boy. If I could live to see him, and commend him to you in person, I could die in peace."

He had hardly completed these words when he had a terrible fit of coughing, which seemed to rack his feeble frame.

"Don't talk any more, father!" said Scott, in alarm. "Can't I get you something to relieve you? I will go to the steward and ask for a cup of hot tea."

Without waiting for an answer he left the stateroom and sought the steward.

He was gone but ten minutes, but when he returned the bedclothes were stained with blood. His father had had a hemorrhage, and was lying with closed eyes, breathing faintly.

The ship doctor was summoned, and applied restoratives, but without effect. Before the morning dawned, Scott was fatherless.

It was a great trial to the lonely boy to see his father's body consigned to the deep. He wished he might carry it to the land which was to be his future home, and have it buried in some quiet cemetery; but it would be a week at least before the slow-going ship would reach New York, and the sailors would have rebelled at having a corpse on board for that length of time.

Scott secured the money of which his father had spoken, and a sealed packet inscribed :

*For My Son.*

*To be opened a year from my death.*

The boy's grief was so sincere that his curiosity was not aroused by this inscription. He put the packet in his traveling bag, and tried to prepare himself for the solitary life he must now lead.

There was a good deal of sympathy felt for the lonely boy on the ship, and more than one of the passengers proffered sympathy and companionship.

Scott received their advances politely, but showed by his manner that he preferred to be alone.

A week later, however, when the vessel was within a few hours of reaching her destination, he felt that it would be well to obtain some information about the new country that awaited him.

Among the passengers was a young man who looked to be about twenty-five. His name was Crawford Lane. He wore a light overcoat, a showy necktie, a low-cut vest, and was in appearance a very good specimen of the Bowery swell.

He joined Scott as he was standing on deck, trying to catch the first glimpse of land.

"Well, my young friend," he said, affably,

"I suppose that you, like the rest of us, are glad to be near port."

"I don't know," replied Scott, listlessly.

"Of course you miss your father."

"Oh, so much!" said the boy, the tears coming into his eyes. "For years we have lived together and been constant companions."

"Just so! My father died five years ago, and I often miss him."

"But you doubtless have other relatives, while he was all I had," explained Scott.

"Yes, I have other relatives. An uncle of mine is the present mayor of Chicago. Of course, you have heard of Chicago."

"Yes; it is one of your largest cities, is it not?"

"Yes, it's a smart place, Chicago is."

"Do you live there?"

"Not at present. I have relations in New York also. They are rich; live on Fifth Avenue, or near by."

"You are fortunate in having so many relations," said Scott, with a touch of envy.

"I don't know. One of my uncles tried to cheat me out of part of my inheritance. Relations are not always the best friends."

"I hope he did not succeed," said Scott, politely, though he felt very little interest in the fortunes of his fellow voyager.

"No. That is, he defrauded me of ten thousand dollars, but there was a good deal more, so that I was not inconvenienced."



Lane spoke carelessly, and gave Scott the impression that he was a rich man.

"Then you have a home to go to," said Scott, sadly.

"No," answered Lane. "You see my father and mother are dead, and I live at the hotels or in apartments of my own. I don't care to live with relations. Have you any relations in New York?"

"None that I have seen. There is a cousin of my mother, Ezra Little, who I am told is well to do. But I never saw him, and I don't know how he will receive me."

"Then you will probably go to a hotel?"

"I suppose so, but I know nothing of New York."

"I hope," said Lane, in an insinuating tone, "that your father left you in easy circumstances?"

"No, I shall have to make my own way."

"Surely you have some money."

"Yes, I have twenty pounds. I am told that amounts to a hundred dollars in American currency."

"Yes," answered Lane, brightening up. "Well, that will tide you over till you get something to do. But probably your relative will provide for you."

"No," said Scott; "I shall not ask him to do so. I prefer to earn my own living."

"Just so. Well, I can be of some service to you. I will find you a reasonable place to

stop, and when you get ready you can call on this Mr. Little."

"Thank you!"

Scott was disposed to accept the offer of his new acquaintance, as, of course, he himself knew absolutely nothing about New York.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FIRST DAY IN NEW YORK.

WHEN the *Arcturus* arrived in port, Scott placed himself in charge of Mr. Lane, and accompanied that gentleman on shore. He congratulated himself on having a competent guide.

He was struck by the bright and bustling appearance of the great American metropolis, and, English though he was, he was fain to admit that it was more attractive than London.

Scott had but one gripsack, but in this respect Crawford Lane was no better off.

"I just took a brief trip across the water," he explained, "and I don't believe in being hampered with baggage."

"Then you were not gone long?" said Scott.

"No; I just ran across in company with an old college friend. He will be absent several months, but I could not spare the time from my business."

"Have you anything which a boy of my age could do in your office?" asked Scott, who felt

that he must now be on the search for a place.

"Not at present. My business is of a peculiar nature. I travel for a large house. But I will keep my eyes open, and if I should hear of anything I will most certainly let you know."

"Do you expect any one to meet you at the pier?"

"No, I never say much about my movements. My friends can wait till I get fairly established in a hotel."

Scott was somewhat amazed when his new acquaintance conducted him to a very plain house on the Bowery.

"I don't care for style," remarked Lane, observing Scott's surprise, "and though I could afford to go to the most expensive hotel in the city, I know that your means are limited, and I wish to select one in which you can afford to remain with me."

"Thank you, Mr. Lane; you are very considerate. I haven't much money, and I must be economical."

"I will step up to the desk and arrange about rooms," added Lane.

"Thank you."

Crawford Lane left Scott sitting in the reading-room, but he returned in five minutes.

"I find," he said, "that the hotel is crowded. I have engaged a single room with two beds. Will that be agreeable?"

Scott felt that he would have preferred to room alone, but he did not know how to make objection, and acquiesced in the arrangement.

"I would like to go upstairs at once," he said, "so that I may wash, and change my underclothing."

"Very well."

They were shown up by a bell boy. The room on the third floor was rather small, but contained two single beds.

The place and its furnishings looked dingy, and even dirty, but Scott was not disposed to make any unnecessary complaint.

"I will take the bed near the door, if you don't object," said Lane.

"It is immaterial to me."

"Very well. By the way, didn't you say you had some Bank of England notes to exchange for American money?"

"Yes."

"While you are making your toilet, I might slip down to a broker's in Wall Street, and make the exchange. What do you say?"

Scott had his share of caution, and he remembered that his knowledge of Mr. Lane was very limited. Indeed, on reflection, it occurred to him that his sole knowledge of his acquaintance was derived from that gentleman himself.

"I think," he said, "that I will wait till tomorrow. I have a little silver with me that will do me till then."

“Oh, very well!” said Lane, in an indifferent tone, though his face expressed some disappointment. “I only thought that I might save you some trouble.”

“Thank you, but I don’t mind the trouble. I shall be interested to see Wall Street myself.”

“All right, I will go there with you tomorrow, or whenever you choose.”

“I should not like to take up your time. Probably you have business of your own to occupy you.”

“Oh, I can get through a good deal of business in a short time. When you are ready, come downstairs. You will find me in the office.”

Left to himself, Scott took a good wash and put on some clean linen, which he found refreshing. He divided his bank-notes into two parcels, one of which he put in his inside coat pocket, the other in an inside pocket in his vest.

He took the hint from his father’s custom.

In twenty minutes he was ready to go downstairs. He found Crawford Lane awaiting him in the office.

“Shall we go in to dinner now, Scott?” said his new friend, familiarly.

“Yes,” answered Scott, for, grieving though he did over his father’s loss, he had the appetite of a healthy boy.

The dinner was plain, and the table neither

neat nor attractive, but Scott felt that he had no right to be fastidious, and upon the whole ate heartily.

"Now, shall we go for a walk?" suggested Lane.

"If you like."

Lane led the way to Broadway, pointing out various buildings and objects of interest.

"What do you think of New York?" he asked.

"This seems a very lively street."

"Yes, there is but one Broadway in the world."

"But London is larger."

"Yes, but less attractive."

"I hope I can find something to do. Then I shall be contented."

"Don't borrow any trouble about that. I have influence, and will see that you find employment," said Lane, patronizingly.

"You are very kind, Mr. Lane."

"I mean to be. I hope you will look upon me as a friend—and a brother."

These words were kind, but Scott hesitated to respond. He had seen no occasion to distrust his companion, but for some reason, unaccountable to himself, he could not give him his confidence.

They sauntered up Broadway till they reached Waverly Place. Just at the corner they attracted the attention of a boy of perhaps fifteen, who seemed to recognize Scott's companion.

He was a dark-haired, pleasant-looking boy, whose face seemed to indicate German descent.

"Mr. Lane," he said, touching Scott's companion on the arm.

Crawford Lane wheeled round and eyed the boy as if disconcerted.

"What do you want, boy?" he demanded, haughtily. "I don't know you."

"Oh, yes, you do. My name is John Schickling."

"I haven't the honor of knowing you, Mr. John Schickling," said Lane, in a tone of sarcasm.

"You know me well enough," said the boy, persistently.

"Just as you like, but I have no time to spend with you to-day. Pass on and let me alone."

"I will as soon as you pay me what you owe me."

"Why, you impudent young rascal, how should I owe you anything?"

"You hired a room from my mother at three dollars a week, and you went off owing three weeks' lodging. If you will give me nine dollars I will give you a receipt."

"This is ridiculous nonsense. I never lived in three-dollar rooms."

"All the same you had a room at our house for several weeks at the price. I have been looking for you every day since you left us."

"Boy," said Crawford Lane, "I have just

returned from Europe, and therefore cannot have roomed in your house. If you have any doubt on the subject, my young friend here will tell you that we arrived in New York this morning on the ship *Victurus*."

"That may be," rejoined John; "but it is two months since you left our house. You have had time to go to Europe and back."

"I can't be troubled with you to-day, boy. Get out of my way!"

"Where can I find you? Where are you stopping?"

Crawford Lane drew a card from his pocket, and scribbling an address on it, passed it to the boy. While John Schieckling was trying to make it out, Lane hurried on with Scott.

"Fifth Avenue Hotel!" repeated Johnny. "Why, that's a very dear place. If Mr. Lane can afford to stay there, he can afford to pay mother's bill."

Later in the day John entered the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and went up to the desk.

He showed the card to the clerk.

"Is any gentleman of that name staying here?" he asked.

"No," answered the clerk, shaking his head.

"Has he ever stopped here?"

"No; I should remember the name if he had."

"Sold again!" said Johnny. "If I ever meet Mr. Lane now, he won't get off so easily."

"That is a very impudent boy!" said Lane, as he resumed his walk with Scott.



"I thought him a pleasant-looking fellow. Didn't you know him?"

"Never saw him before in the whole course of my life!"

"It is strange," mused Scott. "He called you by your name."

"Did he? I didn't observe."

"Yes."

"Then he must have overheard you addressing me."

"But he met us. He was not walking behind us."

"I can't undertake to explain it," said Lane, shrugging his shoulders. "The boy is evidently very artful. It is a put up job."

Scott made no comment, but he had been favorably impressed by John Schickling's open, frank face, and he felt some doubts about relying on Lane's explanation.

### CHAPTER III.

#### SCOTT LEARNS A LESSON.

SOON after supper Crawford Lane said: "Suppose we go to some theater this evening. It will pass away the time pleasantly."

Scott looked pained.

"Mr. Lane," he said, "you seem to forget that it is scarcely more than a week since my poor father died."

"Excuse me, Scott. I ought to have remembered it. Shall you miss me if I leave you to spend the evening alone?"

"No, Mr. Lane. On some accounts I should prefer to be alone."

"Very well. You need not sit up for me, as I shall return late. Go to bed when you feel inclined, and we shall meet in the morning. So bid good night."

Scott remained in the office of the hotel. He did not object to being left alone, but he was forced to acknowledge that he did not care much to be separated from Crayford Lane.

Crayford Lane had thrown them together, and Lane was in some service to him in his absence. In a corner of the city, John Scott resided, and he was away from him as soon as possible.

Looking to the evening, he inspected a copy of the New York edition.

That gave him an idea. He could pick up the name of Lane Lane, and make it worth the livid and wild lust of his eyes.

Turning over the pages of the book, he found the letter L. He found a list of names. Finally, he found Lane Lane, a good name. No. 819, Fifth Avenue, New York, 392 West 10th Street, New York.

"I will go to see Lane Lane," thought Scott, happily. "Some one has a son, he may hold a place for me."

Just off the ship, he found that walking about the streets had fatigued him, and he went to bed about nine o'clock.

Lane had requested him to leave the door unlocked, so that he might get in without difficulty on his return from the theater. Indeed, Scott was obliged to do this, as Lane had carried off the key, intentionally or otherwise.

It has already been mentioned that Scott had divided his small capital into two equal parts, one of which he placed in the original envelope in his coat pocket, the other in an inside pocket in his vest.

The coat he left covered a chair, but the vest he thought it prudent to place under a pillow.

It was not long before Scott was sound asleep. He felt in himself a restfulness that he had supposed.

Crawford Lane lived on the New York Times, where there was a small store and a copy which suited his taste. One's was ready, he stepped into a hotel, where he picked up a copy of the *New York Times*.

He looked it over listlessly, but all at once he started in surprise, not unmixed with dismay. In the list of passengers on the *Utah*, which had arrived very early the previous evening, he saw the name of Justin Wood.

There was nothing remarkable about the name, but it so happened that it had peculiar associations for Crawford Lane.

Seven weeks before, he had gone abroad with Justin Wood, a wealthy young man, as his companion. Wood was liberal, and he had taken a fancy to Lane to such an extent that

he offered to defray his expenses on a short European trip.

In London, Crawford Lane managed to rob his companion of a considerable sum of money, and, of course, disappeared directly afterward.

For three weeks he spent money profusely. At the end of that time, he had barely enough left to buy a ticket for New York by the ship *Arcturus*.

When he landed, his funds had dwindled to three dollars, but he expected to increase them by appropriating the Bank of England notes which he learned were in the possession of Scott Walton.

But the arrival of Justin Wood complicated matters. He must keep out of the way of the man he had robbed, and this would not be easy while both were in the same city.

"Suppose he had been at the theater this evening!" he said to himself, nervously.

As Justin Wood was an athlete, an encounter would probably have been far from pleasant for his faithless friend.

Crawford Lane pursued his way homeward in a very serious frame of mind.

"It is lucky," he thought, "that fate has thrown in my way this green boy. With his hundred dollars I will start to-morrow for Chicago, and stay there for the present. That will keep me out of the way of Justin Wood."

It was about midnight when Lane reached the hotel on the Bowery. He went upstairs at once.

As he lit the gas he turned his gaze on the bed near the window. Scott was fast asleep, with one arm thrown carelessly over the quilt.

"Sleeping like a top!" murmured Lane. "These young boys always sleep sound. I used to when I was a boy. I had an easy conscience then," he continued, with a half laugh. "I'm not quite so innocent as I was, but I know a lot more. Well, I must get to bed, for I must be up bright and early to-morrow morning."

He carefully locked the door, for he did not want any one else to anticipate him in his dishonest plans.

Crawford Lane slept rather later than he intended. When, upon opening his eyes, he consulted his watch he found that it was half-past seven o'clock.

"I ought to have been up an hour ago," he said to himself. "Suppose the boy is awake, all my plans would be upset."

He dressed in great haste, and then, with one eye upon the sleeping boy, tiptoed to the chair over which Scott's coat was hanging, and drew out the envelope from the inside pocket.

He would have examined the contents, but Scott stirred slightly, and Lane felt that it would be the part of prudence to leave the room at once.

He went downstairs and reported at the desk, valise in hand.

“I am obliged to take an early train for the West,” he said, “and will settle my part of the bill.”

“Will the boy remain?”

“Yes; his uncle will call for him during the day.”

“Very well, sir. Breakfast is on the table.”

“I shall not be able to stop, as I am already late. I left the boy asleep. If he inquires for me you may tell him I will write him from—Buffalo.”

“Very well, sir”

Lane went out and got breakfast on Fulton Street.

“I hope I have seen the youngster for the last time,” he said to himself.

There was one awkward thing in his way. He would have preferred to leave the city at once, but outside of the English notes, he had scarcely any money, and it would be necessary to wait till ten o'clock, when he could call at some broker's and exchange them for American bills.

Lane went into the Astor House and entered one of the small reading-rooms on the second floor.

Then, for the first time, he opened the envelope and examined his booty.

To his great disappointment, he found but half the sum he expected to find—but ten pound in place of twenty.

“Confusion!” he muttered. “Was the boy

deceiving me? He certainly said that he had twenty pounds."

The explanation of the discrepancy readily suggested itself. The boy had placed the balance of the notes somewhere else.

"I wish I had the sense to examine the envelope before I left the room."

But the boy might have waked up, and though he regretted not having taken all his money, Lane felt that he must make the ten pounds do.

Meanwhile Scott slept on till eight o'clock.

When he opened his eyes he looked over to the other bed. Evidently it had been slept in, but it seemed now to be unoccupied.

It occurred to Scott as singular that his companion, who must have got to bed late, should have risen so early, but no suspicion of wrong-doing entered his mind till he put on his coat. Then he discovered at once the disappearance of the envelope.

Scott was startled.

"He has stolen my money," he instantly decided.

He felt in the pocket of his vest. The other ten notes were there, fortunately, but Scott was by no means satisfied to give up the ten he had lost. He hurried down the stairs, and in some excitement went up to the hotel clerk.

## CHAPTER IV.

## TRACKING THE THIEF.

WITH some agitation Scott addressed the clerk. "Has the gentleman who came with me left the hotel?" he asked.

"Yes," was the answer, "about an hour since."

"Isn't he coming back?"

"No. He told me to tell you that he was called suddenly to the West. He will write to you from Buffalo."

Scott felt limp and helpless. He turned pale and clung to the counter for support.

He was only a boy, and he realized that with his companion went half his scanty means.

"Didn't Mr. Lane take breakfast here?" he asked. "Perhaps he is still here."

"No; he said he could not wait. He wanted to catch the early train. It is strange he didn't tell you he was going. You are young to be left alone."

"I don't mind that," said Scott, bitterly, "but he has robbed me."

"Eh?" returned the clerk, briskly. "What's that?"

"He stole ten pounds in English notes from my pocket while I slept."

The clerk whistled.

"Is he a relation of yours?" he asked.

"No; he was only a fellow passenger on the



ship *Arcturus*, which arrived in this port yesterday morning."

"Then you haven't known him long?"

"No."

"I am very much surprised. He seemed like a gentleman."

"What shall I do?" asked Scott, feeling that he needed advice from some one who knew the world better than he did.

"You might inform the police."

"But if he has already left the city, I am afraid it wouldn't do much good."

"Did he take all you had?" inquired the clerk, with the sudden thought that in that case Scott would be unable to pay his hotel bill.

"No; I divided my money into two parts. He only took half."

"That was lucky," said the clerk, relieved. "Perhaps he hasn't left the city yet," he added, after a pause.

"But he was going for an early train, you told me."

"That is what he said. He might wait till after ten o'clock to change the notes. Have you the number of them?"

"No, or—yes, I can tell what they would be from those I have left. Probably they would come directly before or directly after those."

"Then you stand a chance to recover them, or at any rate to have him arrested. It is too early to do anything yet. You had better eat

breakfast, and then go down to Wall Street. That is where the brokers have their offices, and you may meet him there."

"Thank you."

"Do you mean to remain here?"

"Yes, for the present. I shall probably stay till to-morrow, at any rate."

Scott went in to breakfast, and notwithstanding his loss he ate heartily. He was of a sanguine temperament and disposed to make the best of circumstances. So he congratulated himself on having retained a part of his money.

"When do the brokers' offices open?" he asked, when he again saw the clerk.

"At ten o'clock."

"I will walk leisurely toward Wall Street, then. If Mr. Lane comes back——"

"If he does, we will keep him. But I don't think there is any chance of it."

Scott walked down to the City Hall Park, and then proceeded down Broadway in the direction of Trinity Church, which, he was told, faced the head of Wall Street.

As he was passing the Astor House, he espied a familiar face and figure. It was the boy who had spoken to Crawford Lane the day before—John Schickling.

"Good-morning!" he said, touching the boy's arm.

John Schickling looked round with a puzzled expression, for he did not recognize Scott.

The day previous he had only taken notice of Crawford Lane, and not of his companion.

"I don't remember you," he said.

"I was walking with Mr. Lane yesterday when you spoke to him."

"Oh, yes. Where is he now?"

"That's what I want to find out. He and I stopped at a hotel on the Bowery last night. When I woke up this morning I found that he had stolen some of my money and disappeared."

"He's a rascal!" said John, warmly. "It is just like him. Had you known him long?"

"No; we met on board the ship that brought us over from Liverpool. I am a stranger in the city, and he agreed to act as my guide."

"You didn't expect you would have to pay so dearly for it?"

"No."

"What are you going to do?"

"The money he took was in English bank-notes, and the hotel clerk thought he might go down to Wall Street to exchange them at some broker's."

"Very likely. And you are going there now?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll go with you. I want to collect that money he owes mother."

"I will be glad of your company. I feel strange in America. I am an English boy."

"I'll help you all I can. I am on an errand

for my brother. He is a young man, and I work for him, but I know he won't mind my following up this fellow and trying to make him pay me. Say, how old are you?"

"Sixteen."

"I am fifteen."

"You are the first American boy I have met."

"I hope you will like me better than Mr. Lane. He is an American, but isn't much credit to the country."

The two boys reached Wall Street about ten minutes past ten. They turned the corner and entered the great financial artery of New York.

Soon they reached a broker's office, and went in.

Advised by John, Scott went up to a small window, behind which stood a clerk.

"I have some English notes which I would like to exchange for American money," he said.

"Hand them to me."

As he looked them over, the clerk's face showed surprise.

"I have just bought some," he said, "the numbers of which correspond very nearly with these."

Scott grew excited.

"What was the appearance of the man who presented them?"

The description was given.

“They were my notes,” said Scott. “The man stole them from me. Where did he go?”

“I can’t tell, but perhaps our messenger may know. Wait a minute.”

The messenger—William Doon, a boy of eighteen—remembered that Lane had gone as far as Broadway, and turned to go uptown.

“Come along,” said John, “we may catch him yet.”

Scott gave himself up to the guidance of his boy friend, and hurried up Broadway, but without much hope of finding Lane. He had not yet sold his notes, feeling that he must if possible catch the thief who had plundered him.

Just above Chambers Street, on the west side of the street, was a cut-rate railway ticket office.

“Suppose we go in there,” suggested John. “He may buy a ticket for some place out West. He wouldn’t dare to stay in New York.”

This seemed not unlikely, and Scott followed young Schickling into the office.

It was a lucky thought. No sooner had they entered than Scott recognized his faithless acquaintance at the counter inquiring the price of a ticket to Chicago.

“I can give you a ticket this morning for fourteen dollars,” said the agent. “It is a rare chance, but it will have to be used within three days.”

“I will take it,” answered Lane, drawing a roll of bills from his pocket.

It was the money he had received from the broker.

Scott was exasperated at the man's coolness. He was no milk-and-water boy, but a lad of spirit.

"Mr. Lane," he said, grasping the other's arm, "give me back that money you stole from me."

Crawford Lane turned and gazed at Scott in dismay. He had never expected to see him again, and could not understand how he had got upon his track. But he decided to brazen it out.

"What do you mean, boy?" he demanded, roughly. "You must be crazy."

"I mean this, that you stole some English bank-notes from me at the hotel where we slept, and——"

"That is absurd. I leave it to this gentleman whether these are English notes."

"Certainly not," said the ticket agent. "This is American money."

"If you don't leave this office and stop annoying me I will have you arrested," blustered Lane.

"No, you don't," interposed John Schickling, whom until now Lane had not noticed. "We're on to your little game. We've just come from the broker's office where you exchanged the money."

## CHAPTER V.

## AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

CRAWFORD LANE was considerably disconcerted.

"I will call later and buy the ticket," he said to the broker. "At present I have some business with this young rascal, who robbed me this morning of a considerable sum of money. Now he has the assurance to make a charge against me."

The broker looked from one to the other. He was bewildered, and could not decide which to believe.

Crawford Lane and the two boys went out into the street.

"Now, Mr. Lane," said Scott, in a resolute tone, "please hand over that money."

"So you are acting the part of a highway robber, are you? If you know what is best for yourself you will get away from here as soon as possible."

"I am ready to go as soon as you give me my money. If not——"

"Well, if not?"

"I will summon a policeman."

It chanced that a member of the Broadway squad was within hearing.

He stopped and said: "Am I wanted here?"

"Yes," replied Lane, quickly; "I want you to arrest that boy."

"On what charge?"

“Robbery. I took pity on him, and though I knew scarcely anything of him, I let him occupy the same room with myself at a hotel on the Bowery last night. He stole some Bank of England notes from my pocket while I was sleeping, and I want him arrested.”

Scott's breath was quite taken away by the audacious misrepresentation of his treacherous acquaintance.

“Well, what have you to say?” asked the policeman.

“Only that this man was himself the thief, and stole the notes from me.”

“You young rascal!” exclaimed Lane, in assumed indignation. “That is a likely story. I leave it to the officer which was more likely to have money to be taken—a gentleman like myself, or a boy like you.”

“I think you will have to come with me,” said the officer to Scott.

“But,” put in John Schickling, “that man has told you a lie. He owes my mother nine dollars for room rent.”

“I never saw the boy before in the whole course of my life,” said Lane, boldly. “He seems to be a confederate of the boy who robbed me.”

“You can tell your story at the police station,” said the policeman to Scott. “You, sir, can go with me and prefer a charge.”

“I am in a great hurry,” replied Lane, taking out his watch. “I will call at the police



station in an hour. Now I have an important engagement."

"You will have to come now," said the officer, beginning to be suspicious.

"Oh, well, if it is necessary," said Lane, determined to brazen it out.

Scott was considerably taken aback at the unexpected turn which matters had taken, and felt some anxiety.

"Will you come with me?" he said, addressing John Schickling.

"You bet I will," responded John, briskly. "I ain't goin' back on a friend. I'll tell you what I know about this man."

"You'd better clear out," said Lane, "if you know what is best for you, or you'll find yourself in hot water, too."

"I'll take the risk," rejoined John, not at all alarmed.

So they started for the station house in the City Hall, when something unexpected happened.

A young man, handsomely dressed, met the procession, as he was himself walking up Broadway. His eyes lighted up when they rested on Crawford Lane.

He darted forward, and grasped him by the arm.

"At last I have found you!" he exclaimed. "Officer, I call upon you to arrest this man."

The officer stared, surprised as he might well be.

Crawford Lane tried to release himself from the grasp of the speaker, and had he succeeded would have fled unceremoniously.

“What does this mean?” asked the policeman. “He is going with me to the station house to prefer a charge against this boy.”

“That’s a good joke! He prefer a charge!”

“He says the boy has robbed him.”

“Then you may conclude that he has robbed the boy. He robbed me in London, some weeks since, and I have just caught him.”

“This is all a mistake,” said Lane, hurriedly. “Officer, you may let the boy go.”

“Do you withdraw the charge?”

“Yes.”

“I prefer to go to the station house,” said Scott, quietly. “I wish to tell my story there. This man stole ten pounds from me in English money.”

At this moment there was a sudden excitement in the street. A man had been knocked over by a passing truck, and all eyes were turned toward the scene of the accident.

Justin Wood removed his hand from the arm of Crawford Lane, and the latter lost no time in taking advantage of his freedom. He darted down a side street, and when his companions turned to look for him he had disappeared.

Justin Wood looked annoyed.

“He has escaped this time,” he exclaimed, “but I will have him yet.”

“Then I shall not be needed,” said the officer, as he resumed his beat.

“How did this man get a chance to rob you?” asked Justin Wood, turning to Scott.

Scott briefly explained.

“Did he take all your money?”

“No, sir. I have ten pounds left.”

“Pardon me, but is this all you have?”

“Yes, sir.”

“But you have a home?”

“Only such a home as I may be able to make for myself.”

“Have you no relatives in this city?”

“Yes, sir, I have one. I am going to see him if I can, this afternoon.”

Mr. Wood took a card from his pocket.

“I am staying at the Gilsey House,” he said. “If you need help or advice, call there and send up your name. By the way, what is your name?”

“Scott Walton.”

“I shall remember it. Now I must leave you as, like your late friend, I have an important engagement.”

“I suppose I must be getting back,” said John, “as my brother will need me. I am sorry I didn’t collect the nine dollars from that jay.”

“He has got the best of all of us,” returned Scott. “Where do you live? I may want to look you up some day.”

“In West Thirty-sixth Street,” said John. “I haven’t got any card with me, but I can give you the number.”

“I won't forget it. You have been my first friend in New York, and I don't want to lose you.”

“I never thought I would like an English boy before,” said John, “but I like you.”

“Thank you. I hope we shall remain friends.”

When Scott was left alone it occurred to him that he had not yet exchanged his English money, and he returned to the broker's office, where he made the exchange, receiving about fifty dollars in greenbacks.

“This is all I have to depend upon,” reflected Scott. “It won't do for me to remain at the hotel much longer. My money would soon be gone.”

He had ascertained that the rates at the hotel were two dollars a day, including board.

This was not a large price, but Scott felt that it was more than he could afford to pay. It was absolutely necessary that he should begin to earn something as soon as possible.

He could decide upon nothing till he had seen his mother's cousin, Ezra Little. If that gentleman should agree to take him into his store in any capacity, he felt that his anxieties would be at an end. Hence, it was desirable that he should see Mr. Little as soon as possible. He had already ascertained that his relative was in the dry-goods business on Eighth Avenue, but he felt that it would be better to call upon him at his residence on

West Forty-seventh Street. Probably Mr. Little would have more leisure to talk with him there.

It was with a fast-beating heart that Scott, standing on the steps of a three-story brick house on West Forty-seventh Street, rang the bell.

The door was opened by a servant girl.

Just behind her was a boy who looked to be about Scott's age, and who listened inquisitively to what Scott had to say.

"Is Mr. Little at home?"

"He will be in in a few minutes. You can come in and wait for him."

"I should like to do so."

The servant opened the door leading into a small reception room to the left of the front hall, and Scott, entering, seated himself.

The boy already referred to entered also. He was a very plain-looking youth with light red hair.

"Did you have business with Mr. Little?" he asked, curiously. "I am his son."

"Yes."

"Do you come from the store?"

"No."

"Perhaps you are meaning to apply for a place there?"

"I should be glad if your father would give me a place. I have just come from England. My mother was a cousin of Mr. Little."

## CHAPTER VI.

## SCOTT FINDS A RELATIVE AND A PLACE.

LOAMMI LITTLE, for this was the name of the red-haired boy, regarded Scott with curiosity mingled with surprise.

"What is your name?" he asked, abruptly.

"Scott Walton."

"I never heard of you, though I have heard pa say that a cousin of his married a man named Walton. Where is your father?"

"He is dead," answered Scott, sadly. "He died on the voyage over."

"Humph!" said Loammi, in a tone far from sympathetic. "I suppose you are poor."

"I am not rich," replied Scott, coldly.

He began to resent the unfeeling questions with which his cousin was plying him.

"If you have come over here to live on pa, I don't think he will like it."

"I don't want to live on any one," said Scott, his cheeks flushing with anger. "I am ready to earn my own living."

"That's the way pa did. He came over here a poor boy, or rather a poor young man."

"I respect him the more for it."

"All the same I would rather begin life with a little money," said Loammi.

"I have a little money," rejoined Scott, with a half smile.

"How much?"

"I would rather wait and tell your father my circumstances."

"Oh, well, if you don't like to tell. Pa'll tell me all about it."

"That is as he chooses—but I would rather tell him first."

"How old are you?" asked Loammi, after a pause.

"Sixteen."

"So am I."

"Your father has a store on Eighth Avenue?"

"Yes; have you been in it?"

"Not yet. I only arrived in New York yesterday."

"Where are you living?"

"In a hotel on the Bowery."

"That isn't a fashionable street."

"So I judge; but I can't afford to board on a fashionable street."

"No, I suppose not. You are pretty well dressed, though."

"My father bought me this suit in London before we started for America. Are you working in your father's store?"

"No, I am attending school. I am not a poor boy, and don't have to work. Did you work any before you left the old country?"

"No, I was at school."

"Are you a good scholar?"

"That isn't for me to say. I stood very well in school."

"I am studying Latin and Greek," observed Loammi, proudly.

"I have studied them both," said Scott, quietly.

"How far were you in Latin?"

"I was reading Cicero's orations when I left school."

As this was considerably beyond the point to which Loammi had attained, he made no comment. He was considering what question to ask next, when his father entered the room.

There was a strong resemblance between father and son. Ezra Little was a slender man, about five feet ten inches in height, with hair of a yellowish-red, inclined to be thin toward the top of the head.

There was a feeble growth of side whiskers extending halfway down each cheek. His eyes were of a pale blue, and his look was shrewd and cold.

He gazed inquiringly at Scott.

"This boy says his mother was your cousin, pa," exclaimed Loammi.

"What name?" asked Ezra.

"Scott Walton."

Ezra Little nodded.

"I see. Your father was an artist?"

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"He died on the voyage over."

"Leaving you alone in the world?"

"Yes," answered Scott, sadly.



“Well, what are your plans?”

This question was asked coldly.

“My father died so lately that I haven't had time to form any plans. I thought I would like to consult you about them.”

“I suppose you haven't much money?”

“No, sir.”

“You have some?”

“About ten pounds.”

“Fifty dollars.”

“Yes, sir.”

“And that is all?”

“Yes, sir.”

“That won't keep you long,” said Loammi, disdainfully. “I s'pose you'll expect pa to take care of you.”

“Have I hinted anything of the kind?” demanded Scott, indignantly. “I am young and strong, and I am quite ready to earn my own living. I don't want anybody to support me.”

“Well spoken, lad!” said Ezra, in a tone of approval. “I'll think over your case. Loammi, tell your mother that Scott will stay to supper.”

“Thank you, sir.”

Mrs. Little was as plain in appearance as her husband and son, but Scott liked her better. She appeared to have a kindly disposition, and expressed sympathy for him when she heard of his father's death.

This was in contrast to Mr. Little and

Loammi, upon whom it seemed to make no impression.

“And where are you staying, Scott?” she asked, in a tone of friendly interest.

“At a hotel on the Bowery.”

“How much do they charge you?” inquired Ezra Little.

“Two dollars a day.”

“It is very extravagant for a boy with your small stock of money to pay such a price.”

“I know it, sir, but I only went there yesterday. I shall not think of staying.”

Scott had decided not to mention his loss to Mr. Little, as he felt sure that it would bring upon him a reproof for his credulity in trusting a man of whom he knew so little as Crawford Lane.

“Why couldn't he come here, Ezra?” suggested Mrs. Little, turning to her husband.

Mr. Little coughed.

“After supper I shall speak to Scott about business,” he said, “and that point will be discussed.”

Scott looked forward to the interview with interest and anxiety. For him a great deal depended on it.

He hoped that Mr. Little would give him a place in the store where he would be in the line of promotion, and be able to earn his living.

He followed Mr. Little from the dining-room into what might be called the library, though there were only about fifty books in a small

bookcase. There was a desk, however, used by Mr. Little for letter-writing, and for the keeping of his accounts. Here, too, he received business visitors.

"Well," he said, pointing Scott to a chair, "now we will discuss your plans. You want a chance to work?"

"Yes, sir."

"I may find a place for you in my store, but I warn you that you can't expect much pay to begin with."

"I don't expect much pay, sir. If I can earn enough to support myself it will satisfy me."

"Eh, but that would require high pay. It costs a good deal to support a boy in New York."

This rather alarmed Scott, for he felt that he must manage somehow to support himself on what he earned.

"We generally pay a beginner only three dollars a week," proceeded Mr. Little.

"Three dollars a week!" Why, Scott was paying two dollars a day for his board and lodging at the hotel.

He looked at Mr. Little in dismay.

"I shouldn't think I could support myself on three dollars a week," he said.

"We might strain a point and pay you three dollars and a half."

"Is there any boarding-house where I could live on three dollars and a half?"

"Well, no; perhaps not; but you have some money, you tell me."

“ Yes, sir, I have fifty dollars.”

“ Just at first you can use a part of that to supply deficiencies.”

“ I thought I might need that for clothes.”

“ Ahem!” said Mr. Little. “ I have thought a way out of the difficulty.”

Scott looked at him hopefully.

“ I think Mrs. Little can find a small room for you upstairs, and you can live here.”

“ Thank you, sir.”

“ Of course what you earn in the store won't pay for your keep, so I suggest that you hand me the fifty dollars to make up.”

Scott did not like that suggestion. He did not feel like giving up the money bequeathed him by his father. It would make him feel helpless and dependent.

Besides, when he wanted clothing, where should he find money to pay for it? Yet, if he declined Mr. Little's offer, he knew that the fifty dollars would soon be exhausted, and he might have no other place offered him.

“ When could I move here?” he asked.

“ To-morrow, and on Monday morning you can begin work at the store.”

“ Very well, sir.”

“ You can give me the money now.”

“ I will give you forty dollars, but I shall have to pay my hotel bill.”

“ You can keep five dollars for that. It will be sufficient.”

So Scott handed over forty-five dollars to

Mr. Little, who counted it over with evident satisfaction. Then the English boy started for the hotel.

He had secured a place, but somehow he felt depressed. His prospects did not seem very bright, after all.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

AFTER Scott paid his hotel bill and reached his new home, he found that he had just sixty cents left in his purse. To be sure, he would be at no more expense for meals, but it made him feel poor.

When he left the ship he had one hundred dollars. There certainly had been a great shrinkage in his resources.

He was taken by the servant to an inside room on the upper floor. Of course there was no window, and the only light that entered the room was from the transom.

It seemed gloomy, and bade fair to be very close. If it had only been an outside room with a small window, Scott would have been more content. As it was, he found that the two servants were much better provided for than he.

The bed, however, was comfortable, and this was a partial compensation. But he reflected with disappointment that the room would be available only at night. He could not very well

sit in it by day, as it was too dark for him to read.

“I shall be glad when I get to work,” he thought. “That will take up my time.”

Meanwhile, as it was but ten o'clock, it occurred to him that he would call upon Justin Wood at the Gilsey House. He easily found the hotel, which is on the corner of Twenty-ninth Street and Broadway.

He did not have to inquire for Mr. Wood, as he saw that gentleman through the window, sitting in the reading-room.

Justin Wood looked up from the paper he was reading and recognized Scott at once.

“I am glad to see you, my young friend,” he said, with a pleasant smile. “What luck have you had?”

“I have found a place, sir.”

“That is good. It hasn't taken you long.”

“No, sir.”

“I am afraid it isn't a very good place. You don't look in good spirits.”

“No, sir; I am afraid I shan't like it.”

“How did you obtain it?”

“Through the relation I was telling you about. He keeps a dry-goods store on Eighth Avenue, and he will give me a place in his employ.”

“Then he has treated you as a relation should.”

“I am not so sure,” said Scott, slowly. “He took all my money, and I am to board at his house.”

“Why did he take your money?”

“He said I could not earn my board, and that would make up the deficit.”

Justin Wood laughed.

“He seems to be a very shrewd man. Still, you will have a good home.”

Again Scott looked doubtful, and told his new acquaintance of the small, dark room which had been assigned him.

“Yet you say that Mr. Little has a small family.”

“He has one son of about my age.”

“Surely there ought to be a better room for you if he occupies a whole house.”

“I should think so.”

“He might have put you into the same room with his son.”

“I don't think I should like to room with Loammi.”

“Then you don't like him?”

Scott shook his head.

“We shouldn't agree,” he answered.

“Why not?”

“He feels above me because of my poverty.”

“The most prominent merchants in the city were once poor boys.”

“Then there is hope for me,” said Scott, smiling faintly.

“Have you been to your relative's store?”

“Not yet, sir.”

“I remember seeing it. It is quite a large one. I think he must be prosperous.”

"I shall be very glad to get to work. I don't know what to do with myself now. Besides, it makes me feel helpless to have only sixty cents in my pocket."

"You'll have no trouble from the tax collector, that is certain. It is rather a pity you told Mr. Little how much money you had."

"I wish I hadn't, now."

"I don't think I would have treated a poor cousin so if he had come across the Atlantic to put himself under my charge."

"I am sure you wouldn't, sir."

"What makes you say that? You don't know much about me," said Justin Wood, with a smile.

"I can tell by your looks."

"Looks are deceptive," remarked the young man, but he looked pleased with the compliment. "So you don't go to work till Monday?"

"No, sir."

"And I suppose you have nothing to occupy you to-day?"

"No, sir."

"Then be my guest. I will show you something of the city."

"You are very kind," said Scott, gratefully.

"Oh, I shall be repaid. I was wondering what to do with myself. Now the problem is solved. Wait here a minute till I go up to my room, and we will start."

They passed through Twenty-ninth Street, and boarded a Sixth Avenue car.



“You have never been to Central Park, I presume,” said Wood.

“No, sir. I have only been about in the lower part of the city.”

“We think Central Park a very pleasant place,” said the young man, “though in some respects it is not equal to the London parks.”

“I like parks. I like green grass and trees. I was born in the country.”

When they reached Fifty-ninth Street they entered the park, and walked leisurely to the lake. Scott’s eyes brightened, and his step grew more elastic.

“This is fine,” he said. “How large is the park?”

“It is about two miles and a half to the extreme northern boundary. We won’t try to see the whole. I will only show you the most attractive features. You will be surprised when I tell you that I haven’t been in the park for two years.”

“Yes, I am surprised.”

“I have no carriage, or I should drive here.”

“But it is pleasant to walk.”

“Yes, if you have a companion. Most of my friends are men of business, and have no time to spare for park rambles.”

“Mr. Wood, I wish you were in business, and I were in your employ,” said Scott, impulsively.

“Thank you, Scott. I do think we should get along well. So you think you would like me better than your new-found relatives?”

"Oh, ever so much!"

"Then I will try to foster the illusion," said the young man, smiling. "Suppose I adopt you as a cousin?"

"I wish you would."

"Very well! Then we will look upon each in that light."

"Do you live in the city, Mr. Wood?"

"I am not stationary anywhere. I have no fixed home."

"Why don't you go into business?"

"Partly because I am blessed with a sufficiency of this world's goods."

"But I should think the time would hang heavy on your hands."

"Well, you see I have something to do in looking after my property. Besides, I am literary."

"Are you an author?"

"I occasionally write for magazines and reviews. I am a graduate of Columbia College. If I had the spur of necessity, perhaps I might make some mark in literature. As it is, I don't have that motive for working hard. I am rather glad I don't, for I am afraid I shouldn't be able to live at the Gilsey House if I depended upon what I could earn by my pen. Well, have you seen enough of Central Park?"

"I am ready to go anywhere else, sir."

"Then I will go with you to the other end of the city and beyond. Have you ever heard of Staten Island?"

“No, sir.”

“It is a few miles to the south of the Battery. I own a small piece of property there—a couple of houses at New Brighton, which are let to tenants. They have sent me word that they need some repairs made, and I may as well go over and see them. I never like to travel alone, and as I have a companion I may as well utilize his company.”

Half an hour on the Sixth Avenue Elevated train brought them from Fifty-ninth Street to South Ferry. Close beside it the Staten Island boats started from their pier.

Scott and his companion went on board, and ascended the stairs to the upper cabin. Here they found seats in front, and sat enjoying the fine breeze which is almost always to be found on this trip. Mr. Wood pointed out Governor's Island, the Statue of Liberty and other notable sights.

Arrived at Staten Island, they took cars to New Brighton. Mr. Wood attended to his business, and then took Scott on an extended ride around the island. But first he stopped at a hotel and ordered dinner. This they both enjoyed.

When they left the dining-room and went out on the piazza they were treated to a surprise. In an armchair, tilted back, with his feet on the balustrade, sat Crawford Lane, evidently enjoying the fine breeze.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SCOTT RECOVERS PART OF HIS MONEY.

JUSTIN WOOD smiled as he saw how unconscious Lane was of his presence. Then he walked forward quietly and laid his hand on Lane's arm.

"Mr. Lane," he said, "this is an unexpected pleasure."

Lane turned quickly, and looked very much disconcerted when he saw who it was that accosted him.

"I—I didn't expect to meet you here," he stammered.

"No, I presume not. Don't you recognize this boy?"

"Scott Walton?"

"Yes; I am glad you have not forgotten him. He is here on business."

"On business?"

"Yes; in a fit of absence of mind you relieved him of fifty dollars, or the equivalent in English bank-notes. I don't say anything about the considerably larger sum which you took from me in London, for I can stand the loss, but this boy is poor and wants the money back."

"I can't give it to him," said Lane, desperately.

"Why not?"

"Because I have spent most of it."

"So you have spent nearly fifty dollars in one day?"

“Yes; I bet on the races.”

“That was foolish. If you had lost your own money it would have served you right. But you had no business to squander the boy’s money in that way. How much money have you got left?”

“I—don’t know.”

“Out with your pocketbook, man, and find out,” said Wood, impatiently.

As Lane still hesitated, Justin Wood added, sternly: “Do as I tell you, or I will arrest you myself and march you to the station house.”

The young man looked as if he were quite capable of carrying out his threat, and Lane very reluctantly took out his pocketbook.

“I have twelve dollars,” he said.

“Then give ten dollars to the boy, and keep two dollars for yourself.”

“It is all the money I have,” whined Lane.

“That is no concern of mine. The money doesn’t belong to you.”

“I am a very poor man.”

“You are smart enough to make a living by fair means. If you keep on as you are doing now, you will obtain your board at the expense of the State.”

Lane, very unwillingly, handed two five-dollar bills to Scott.

“We are letting you off very easy,” said Justin Wood. “We will give you a chance to reform, but if ever I catch you trying any of

your tricks elsewhere, I will reveal what I know of you."

Crawford Lane rose from his chair and with a look of chagrin made haste to leave the hotel. He had already taken dinner there, and intended to remain until the next day, but now he felt unable to do so.

"I am glad to get some of my money back," said Scott, in a tone of satisfaction. "I was reduced to sixty cents. Ten dollars will last me for a good while."

"Take care not to let your worthy relative know you have so much money, or he will want you to give it up to him."

"But for you I should not have recovered it," said Scott, gratefully.

"I am very glad to have been the means of your getting it back. I have a personal grudge against that rascal."

"Of how much did he rob you?"

"I can't tell precisely, for I am rather careless about my money, and seldom know just how much I have. To the best of my knowledge he must have taken between two and three hundred dollars."

"That is a good deal of money."

"It was much less to me than the sum he took was to you. It did not especially inconvenience me. But it is getting late, and we had better take the next boat back to New York."

This they did. On the same boat, though they were unconscious of it, was Crawford

Lane. He saw them, however, and reflected bitterly that the fifty dollars which he had taken from Scott was nearly all gone, though it was only the second day since he got possession of it.

It was half-past four when they reached the Gilsey House.

"I think I must be getting back to my new home," said Scott. "Thank you very much for your kindness to me."

"You have given me a pleasant day, Scott," replied the young man, genially. "Call and see me again when you have time."

"Thank you, sir."

When Scott reached the house in West Forty-Seventh Street, he found Loammi already there. He had returned from school at about half-past two, and wondered what had become of his new-found cousin.

"Where have you been?" he asked, abruptly.

"First, I went to Central Park, and afterward I went to Staten Island."

Loammi looked surprised.

"What could take you to Staten Island? You seem to have plenty of money to go about with."

"It didn't cost me anything."

"How is that?"

"I went with a gentleman who lives at the Gilsey House."

"What made him take you?" Is he a friend of yours?"

“ Yes, he is a friend of mine, though I haven’t known him long.”

“ Is he rich? ”

“ He seems to be.”

“ You might introduce me.”

“ I may have an opportunity to do so some time.”

Scott felt obliged to say this, though he was convinced that Justin Wood would not care to make his cousin’s acquaintance.

“ Ma told me you were not at home to lunch. Where did you eat? ”

“ We dined at a hotel on Staten Island.”

“ Upon my word, you are getting to be quite a swell for a poor boy.”

Scott smiled.

“ I don’t think I shall have much chance to be a swell,” he said, “ after I have begun work in the store.”

“ No, I guess not. It was a great thing to have pa take you up and give you a home.”

“ I hope to show my appreciation of it,” said Scott; but under the circumstances, his gratitude was not as deep as if he had had a better room, and had not been obliged to give up all his money to his relative.

“ How do you like your room? ”

“ The bed seems comfortable. Where is your room? ”

“ On the second floor. Follow me and I will show it to you.”

Scott followed his cousin upstairs. Loammi



opened the door and led the way into a large chamber about eighteen feet square, very neatly and comfortably furnished.

There was a bookcase in one corner containing over a hundred volumes. Near it was an upright writing-desk. Through an half-open door Scott saw a closet well filled with suits of clothes. Certainly, there was a great contrast between this apartment, with its comforts and ample accommodations, and his own small, stifling room on the floor above. Scott could not quite suppress a feeling of envy.

“You have a fine room.”

“Haven’t I? My room is as nice as pa’s.”

Alongside of it was another room not as large, but perhaps two-thirds the size.

“Who occupies that room?” asked Scott.

“No one. We have two spare rooms on this floor.”

It naturally occurred to Scott to wonder why he had not been given one in place of the poor room that had been assigned him.

He found afterward that Mrs. Little had proposed giving him the room next to Loammi, but the latter had objected, saying that it was too good for a penniless boy. In this he had been backed up by Ezra Little, whose ideas agreed with those of his son.

At six o’clock the family assembled for supper.

“You will sit down to meals with us when we are alone,” said Ezra Little. “When we have company you can eat in the kitchen.”

Scott said nothing, but his face flushed. It was evident that his relatives did not look upon him as a social equal.

Yet Justin Wood, who, as Scott suspected, stood higher socially than the Little family treated him like a brother. Though in no way related to him, Scott felt a greater regard for him than for any of the family with whom he had found a home.

"To-morrow is Saturday," said Ezra Little, as he rose from the table. "I had not intended to have you enter the store till Monday, but there is a little extra work to be done, and you can come in to-morrow."

"I should like to do so," said Scott, promptly.

"So you like to work," said Loammi, with a sneer.

"Yes; at any rate, I like it better than being idle."

"That is a very proper feeling," observed Ezra, approvingly.

"Yes," put in Loammi. "You ought to do all you can to pay pa for his kindness to you."

Scott did not answer, but he thought his young cousin about the most disagreeable boy he had ever met.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### BUSINESS EXPERIENCE.

SCOTT went with his uncle to the store the next morning. It was rather an humble imi-

tator of the larger stores which keeps everything for sale.

In any city but New York it would be considered a big store, but it could not, of course, compare with Macy's, Ehrich's, Simpson & Crawford's, and other large bazaars, equally well known. It followed the methods of these stores, however, and generally had some article in which special bargains were offered.

When Mr. Little led the way into the store, where from twenty-five to thirty salesmen were employed, besides cash boys and girls, Scott, who was not used to American shops, thought it a very large one, and his respect for Mr. Little increased, as a merchant on a large scale.

Ezra Little, followed by Scott, walked through the store and paused as he reached a tall man of about forty, with pretentious side whiskers.

"Mr. Allen," he said, "I have brought with me a new clerk. His name is Scott Walton, and he is a distant relative of mine. I suppose he has no experience, and I don't know whether he has any business capacity, but we will try him. Where can you make room for him?"

"In the handkerchief department, I think," replied the superintendent. "We have a drive in there, and there is more doing in that department than usual."

"Very well, give him the necessary instructions."

"Follow me, my boy," said the superintendent.

He led the way to the lower end of the store, where there was a large display of handkerchiefs, at prices ranging from five cents up to fifty.

"You can take your place at this counter," said Allen. "All the handkerchiefs are marked, so that you will have no trouble about the price. Take care that the different grades don't get mixed. It would not do, for instance, for a twenty-five-cent handkerchief to get among the fifteen centers, or vice versa. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will give you a book, in which you will mark sales. When you have made one, call a cash boy and send the goods and money by him to the cashier's desk. It is rather lucky that Mr. Little brought you, as we are one clerk short. Mr. Cameron is absent on account of sickness."

Scott listened to these instructions with interest. He had never acted as salesman, but he felt instinctively that he had a taste for the work. He had a little feeling of exhilaration, as he felt he had been raised at once to a position of responsibility.

With mind alert and eyes on the lookout for customers, he began his work. He also watched his fellow clerks to see how they acted, and copied them as far as as he was able.

Two things helped him. He had an agreeable, well-modulated voice and a very pleasant face, which seemed to attract customers. He soon found himself full of business, and bustled about like an experienced salesman.

From time to time the superintendent passed Scott's counter and glanced approvingly at the young salesman, who seemed so busy.

Meeting Mr. Little about noon, he said: "That boy is going to make a good salesman."

"Is he?"

"Yes; I have watched him carefully, and I can judge. He is a relation of yours, you say."

"Yes; his mother was my cousin."

"Indeed! Is he an American?"

"No, he is an English boy."

"And you say he has never been in a store before?"

"Never, so he says."

"Then he is a born salesman."

"I am glad to hear it," said Ezra Little, indifferently. "He is penniless, and has his own way to make."

At twelve o'clock his uncle came up to the counter.

"Here is some money," he said. "You can go out and buy some lunch. We can't spare you to go home."

"Very well, sir."

"Mind you are not away more than half an hour."

"I suppose I shan't have to go far?"

"No, there is a place on the next block where you can buy what you need."

Scott put on his hat and left the store. He looked to see the amount of his lunch money. It was fifteen cents. This was not liberal, but he felt that he could make it do.

He joined another clerk, who guided him to a small place where, with his money, he was able to buy a cup of coffee, a sandwich and a piece of pie. His companion, who was a man of twenty-five, allowed himself a larger margin.

"Are you a new hand?" asked Mr. Sturgis, his fellow clerk.

"Yes, I only came in this morning."

"What are you in?"

"Handkerchiefs."

"They usually put beginners in that department. How'd you get the place?"

"Mr. Little is a cousin of my mother."

"Ah, that's it. Where do you live?"

"At his house."

"How do you like him?"

"I don't know him very well yet."

"I know him very well, for I have been here three years. There are not many who stay here so long—that is, in the store."

"Why not?"

"If you wasn't a relative, I'd tell you."

"I don't think that need prevent," said Scott, smiling.

"Well, Little has the reputation of paying

very mean salaries. He is a very close-fisted man. How much does he pay you?"

"I get my board."

"How will you manage for clothes?"

"I don't know yet."

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. You look pretty well now, but Ezra Little won't clothe you in purple and fine linen."

"How it is you stay so long if the salaries are so poor?" was Scott's natural question.

"Well, I am well known and have a considerable trade of my own. I was once junior partner in a firm on Sixth Avenue, but we failed. By the way, how do you like your cousin, Loamm?"

"I am not in love with him," answered Scott, with a smile.

"We all dislike him here. He sometimes comes to the store, and puts on the airs of a boss."

At six o'clock the store closed for the day. On Saturday evenings it was kept open later. Scott did not accompany his uncle home, as Mr. Little had a little business that detained him.

It was about a mile to Forty-seventh Street, but Scott did not object to walking. It was pleasant for him after spending the day indoors to have a walk in the open air.

We will pass over a period of six weeks. Scott was no longer in the handkerchief department. He had been promoted to a more important position.

He still liked the business. The days passed quickly for him when trade was good. It was only when the weather was unpleasant and business dull that he found the time hang heavy on his hands.

He did not see much of Loammi. Though they lived in the same house they were not often together, except at meals.

Usually after supper, Loammi took a walk, but he never invited Scott to go with him. Once when Scott proposed to do so, his cousin declined the companionship curtly.

"I have a special engagement," he said. "I don't care for company."

After that Scott, who had his share of pride, kept to himself. He saw that Loammi looked upon him as a poor relation.

One evening when he returned from the store, he was surprised to have Loammi meet him just outside the door.

"I am glad you have come," he said. "There's an old frump inside who says he is a cousin of pa's. He is old and shabby, and I expect he wants to live on pa. It looks as if he would be overwhelmed with poor relations."

"I suppose he is a cousin of mine, too."

"Yes; for Heaven's sake, go in and keep him company. I'll introduce you."

"If he is a cousin of mother's, I shall be glad to know him."

"You can have him all to yourself. Goodness knows I never want to see him again."



Scott followed Loammi into the house, and into the reception-room.

There on a sofa sat a small old man, whose clothing, though scrupulously clean, was worn and shabby. His face was wrinkled, but the expression was pleasant.

"I think I shall like him better than Mr. Little," thought Scott.

The time was coming when he would need a friend, and this old man was destined to play an important part in his future experiences.

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## CHAPTER X.

### SETH LAWTON.

"MR. LAWTON," said Loammi, "this boy is Scott Walton. His mother was a cousin of ours. Pa has given him a place in the store, because he hasn't any money."

Seth Lawton looked at Scott eagerly.

"My boy," he said, grasping Scott's hand, "your mother was my favorite cousin. Poor Lucy, when I last saw her she was just married to your father. Is she—is she dead?"

"Yes, sir," answered Scott. "She died when I was but five years old."

"Poor Lucy, poor girl!" said the old man, sighing. "And your father?"

"He is dead, too. He died but a few weeks since on the ship that brought us over from Liverpool."

"And there were no other children?"

“No, I was the only one.”

“Mr. Lawton,” said Loammi, who had been listening impatiently, “you must excuse me, as I must go upstairs and prepare for dinner.”

Mr. Lawton scarcely noticed Loammi’s unceremonious exit, he was so occupied with Scott.

“So you are my cousin, too,” he said in a softened voice. “I never saw you before, but I know I shall like you. You have a look like your mother.”

“I was thought to look like mother,” said Scott.

“How old are you?”

“I shall be sixteen in a few weeks.”

“You are young to be an orphan. I judge from what your cousin says that you were left poor.”

“Yes, father was unfortunate. He was so honest himself that he allowed people to cheat him.”

“There are too many such cases. But I am glad that Cousin Ezra has opened his heart and given you a home.”

“Yes,” said Scott, briefly.

He was not disposed to be ungrateful, but it did not seem to him that he owed a very large debt of gratitude to Mr. Little, who had taken all his money and merely gave him his board in return for his services in the store.

“Do you find your cousin—what is his name?—a pleasant companion?”

“Loammi and I do not see much of each other, Mr. Lawton.”

Seth Lawton looked at Scott shrewdly.

“I am not surprised to hear it,” he said. “Loammi reminds me of his father very strongly.”

“He looks upon me as a poor relation,” continued Scott, smiling.

“Do you mind that much?”

“A little. I don’t mean to be poor always.”

“A wise determination. So you have a place in the store?”

“Yes, sir.”

“How do you like that?”

“Very much. I like business. I don’t have much to do with Mr. Little there, but the superintendent, Mr. Allen, is just, and encourages me to do my best.”

“I am glad to hear that. Do you think Ezra is prosperous?”

“I should think so. He seems to be doing a good business.”

“Does he strike you as a good manager?”

“He keeps down expenses. The clerks say that he pays poorer wages than one in the trade.”

“That isn’t always the sign of a good manager,” said Seth Lawton, slowly. “Clerks will always work better for a generous employer. So, on the whole, Ezra may be considered well to do?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I am always glad to hear that my friends—and relatives are prospering.”

“You don’t look as if you were very prosperous yourself,” thought Scott. “I suppose you, too, are a poor relation.”

“How much does Ezra pay you?”

“My board.”

“That wouldn’t be bad if you were a stranger. But how do you manage about clothes?”

“My father left me fifty dollars. Mr. Little took charge of it, and I suppose he will buy me clothing out of it.”

“Humph!” said Seth Lawton, dryly. “He seems to put everything on a business basis.”

Just then the door opened, and Ezra Little entered the room. He was prepared to see Mr. Lawton, Loammi having apprised him of his arrival.

He came forward, eyeing Mr. Lawton closely.

“He’s as poor as poverty!” he said to himself. “He doesn’t seem to have made much of a success.

“This is a surprise, Seth,” said he, offering his hand coldly. “I had almost forgotten you.”

“Very natural, Cousin Ezra,” said the old man, smiling.

“Where have you been all these years?”

“I have been a wanderer, Ezra. I have been in America for the last few years. I came from Michigan last.”

"Have you married?"

"No; I am alone."

"Perhaps it is just as well. You have been at less expense."

"True. You, however, have married, and, as I judge, are prosperous."

"Yes, I have a good business on Eighth Avenue," said Ezra Little, complacently. "I haven't been a rolling stone."

"Like me?"

"Well, yes, like you."

"And so you have gathered some moss."

"Yes; I think it a duty to succeed."

"If possible."

"A man can succeed if he goes to work the right way," said Ezra, dogmatically.

"Well, perhaps so," admitted Seth Lawton, slowly.

"How long have you been in New York?"

"I arrived last week."

"From Michigan?"

"Yes."

"Do you plan to stay here?"

"Well, I have not quite decided. I took a little while to get settled, and then I looked you up in the directory. But I have found more than I bargained for. I did not know that any of Lucy's family were in America," and he nodded in the direction of Scott.

"Yes," answered Ezra, with a slight frown; "Scott's father took it into his head to come to America when he was in the last stages of

consumption. He died on the passage leaving his son to the cold mercies of the world."

"And you kindly took him into your home?"

"Well, I couldn't see him starve," said Mr. Little, ungraciously. "So I gave him a place in my store."

"I hope he is doing well there."

"Oh, yes, he is doing well enough. The work is not hard."

"So that you receive some equivalent for your kindness."

"Oh, I could get a boy to do the same work for three dollars a week."

"Well, Ezra, I think you won't lose anything by your kindness to an orphan relative."

"I will do what I can for him, but I can't undertake to help any more poor relations."

His tone was significant, and Seth understood it, but his feelings did not seem to be hurt.

"Possibly you were thinking of me, Ezra," he said, mildly.

"Are you a poor relation?" asked Ezra Little, bluntly.

"That is hard to tell. Ideas of poverty are comparative. I have always supported myself, and I hope I shall continue to do so. In a great city like this I can surely find something to do."

"I think you would better have remained in Michigan. What were you doing there?"

"I kept books for a man in the lumber business," answered Seth.

"You couldn't get a chance to keep books here. Your age would be against you, for one thing."

"I am only fifty-six, Ezra."

"That is old when you are seeking a position. I hope you have some money to fall back upon."

"I have a little, and then I was always able to live frugally."

"That is wise. You might, perhaps, expect that I would give you a place in my store, but you would not do for the dry-goods business."

"I don't think I should," said the old man, candidly. "I have never been accustomed to very close confinement."

"Pa, supper's ready!" announced Loammi, opening the door.

"Will you walk out and take supper with us, Seth?"

"Thank you, Ezra. It will be pleasant to sit down with relations. It is many years since I have done so."

Seth Lawton was introduced to Mrs. Little, who greeted him kindly, though, like her husband and son, she looked upon him as a poor relation. She had a better disposition than they, and was not so worldly minded.

Seth Lawton was seated next to Scott on one side of the table. Opposite sat Loammi.

"Put the two poor relations together, ma," he had said to his mother, beforehand. "Pa'll have his hands full if any more come to the city."

“They are not to blame for their poverty,” returned Mrs. Little.

“I should hate to be poor,” said Loammi, emphatically.

“Your father and I were poor once.”

“But you got bravely over it. That’s because pa was smart. This old man—Seth Lawton—looks as if he wasn’t worth a hundred dollars, and he must be ten years older than pa.”

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## CHAPTER XI.

### SCOTT CALLS ON HIS POOR RELATION.

EZRA LITTLE asked a good many questions of his new-found relative, but Seth Lawton’s answers were vague.

“I don’t see why you ever came to New York,” said his host.

“I feel repaid already,” replied Seth. “It does me good to see my relations. I am glad especially to find you doing so well.”

“I wish I could return the compliment,” said Ezra, pointedly.

“Oh, I don’t complain,” responded Mr. Lawton.

“Don’t you ever consider what would become of you if you should get sick?”

“I am in pretty fair health, thank you, Ezra. I am not likely to injure my health with rich living.”

Loammi indulged in a boisterous laugh. He evidently thought this a good joke.



Seth Lawton eyed his young relative with a glance of curiosity. Scott flushed, for he felt that Loammi was disrespectful.

"Loammi thinks it a joke to be poor," he said to himself.

When they rose from the table, Ezra Little said: "You will have to excuse me, Seth. There is a meeting this evening of some bank directors, and, as I am one of them, I ought to attend."

"Oh, don't mind me, Ezra. I can call again."

"Of course we expect you to do so," said his wealthy relative, but there was no cordiality in his tone.

"Perhaps the boys will take a walk with me," suggested Seth. "I shall be glad to have them call at my room."

"Where is your room?" asked Loammi.

"In West Sixteenth Street."

"I have an engagement," said Loammi, brusquely.

"How is it with you?" asked Mr. Lawton, turning to Scott.

"I shall be happy to go with you, Cousin Seth," answered Scott, pleasantly.

Seth Lawton looked pleased.

Mr. Little had gone off in a hurry, followed by Loammi. Mr. Lawton and Scott remained a short time in conversation with Mrs. Little; then they, too, went out.

"I invited your cousin out of politeness,"

said Mr. Lawton, "but I am quite as well pleased to have you alone. I don't think Loammi will ever care much for me."

"He doesn't like poor relations," observed Scott. "He takes very little notice of me."

Seth Lawton smiled.

"Then if I were rich you think Loammi would be more polite?"

"I am sure of it."

"I am afraid it can't be helped then. I am too old to start in to make a fortune; but you are young. You may be a rich man in time."

"It doesn't look much like it now."

"Most of the rich men in New York and other American cities were once poor boys."

"I don't think my chances will be very good while I work for Mr. Little. I hope you will remain in New York."

"That will depend on circumstances. As Ezra Little said, a man of my age doesn't stand a good chance to get a position."

"I think you said you kept books in the West?"

"Yes, a part of the time."

"Shall you try to get a bookkeeper's place here?"

"I have not decided. I think I must call at Ezra's store to-morrow. I have some curiosity to see it."

"I wish it were your store instead of his."

"He would not join you in the wish. Besides, I don't think I should care to be in the

dry-goods business. I suppose you mean that you would rather work for me than for him?"

"Yes."

"Thank you for the compliment, Scott. It doesn't look likely at present that I shall ever be your employer. I hope, however, that our friendship will continue and become more intimate."

They had walked to Broadway, and sauntered slowly down that brilliant thoroughfare. As they were passing the Fifth Avenue Hotel a fine-looking man, who had just left it, espied Scott's companion.

"How are you, Mr. Lawton?" he said, cordially, offering his hand.

"Very well, thank you, Mr. Mitchell."

"I didn't expect to see you here."

"I haven't been here for a good many years, but I took a fancy to make a brief visit, and see how the city has changed. I suppose you are here on particular business?"

"Well, perhaps so," laughed the other. "I am staying at this hotel. Call if you have time. I shall be here three days. That is not your son?"

"No; I am not married. It is a young cousin, Scott Walton."

"I am glad to make your acquaintance, my boy," said Mr. Mitchell, pleasantly.

"Thank you, sir."

Here the conference ended.

"That is a member of Congress from

Michigan," explained Seth Lawton, in response to a look of inquiry. "I suppose he has run on from Washington for a few days."

"Is he a smart man?"

"Yes, he may be governor some time. He is a rising man."

Scott was somewhat surprised to find that his poor relation had such a prominent acquaintance; it seemed to indicate that even if he were poor and dressed shabbily, he held a good social position in his western home.

At length they reached West Sixteenth Street, and stopped at a plain three-story house. Mr. Lawton took out a night key and led the way inside and upstairs.

He occupied a front room on the second floor. It was of good size and well, though plainly, furnished.

Scott was agreeably surprised. He thought his cousin would probably occupy a small hall bedroom, for he had been long enough in New York to know that lodgings were expensive. Everything looked comfortable. There was a lounge in one corner with the head toward the window.

"I lie down here when I feel lazy," said Mr. Lawton.

"Do you board here also, Cousin Seth?"

"Partially. I breakfast in the house, but it is more convenient to take my other meals outside."

Mr. Lawton's trunk was on one side of the

fireplace. It was a substantial-looking trunk, somewhat the worse for wear.

"I have in my trunk, somewhere," he said, "a picture of your mother, taken at the age of twenty. Would you like to see it?"

"Very much," answered Scott, eagerly. "I have one taken a few months before she died, but she was in ill health then."

Seth Lawton opened the trunk and soon found a small photograph album. The second picture represented the attractive face of a young woman of twenty.

"Do you recognize it?" asked Seth.

"Yes," answered Scott, the tears coming to his eyes. "I wish I had one like it."

"I will have it copied, and you shall have one of the copies."

"I don't like to put you to expense, Cousin Seth."

"The expense will be small. In return, you must show me the later picture of your mother. She was my favorite cousin."

"I will be glad to do so. You have a very comfortable room."

"Yes. I hope you have a good room at Mr. Little's."

Scott shook his head.

"I don't want to complain, but I should like it better if there were a window in it."

"No window?" repeated Seth, puzzled.

"No. It is an inside room on the third floor."

“ Small, I suppose? ”

“ Yes; I don't think it is more than eight feet by ten.”

“ It must be close.”

“ It is. Still, the bed is comfortable.”

“ What sort of a room does your cousin Loammi have? ”

“ A fine room on the second floor, large and handsomely furnished.”

“ Is there no larger and better room which you could occupy? ”

“ Yes, there are two, but they consider my little room good enough for me.”

Seth Lawton looked thoughtful.

“ I am sorry you are not more comfortably accommodated,” he said. “ There may be better things in store for you, however. By the way, I see your trousers are frayed about the bottoms.”

“ Yes; they are getting shabby.”

“ You ought to have a new pair.”

“ Yes; but I don't like to speak to Mr. Little.”

“ You need feel no hesitation. He has fifty dollars of yours, you told me.”

“ Forty dollars.”

“ Enough, at any rate, to provide you with new clothes. Your coat is beginning to show signs of wear.”

“ Yes; I am as careful of it as possible, but it will wear.”

“ Take my advice and ask Mr. Little at once to give you some new clothes.”

“ I will if you advise it.”

“ I do; and let me know how your application is received. This is Tuesday. Call on me again Thursday evening if you can.”

“ I will, Cousin Seth.”

The rest of the evening was spent in talking of old times and scenes. Scott was much interested in what Mr. Lawton told him of his mother's early days. When he left the house Seth Lawton accompanied him as far as the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

“ I will go in and see if Mr. Mitchel is in,” he said. “ Good-night, Scott.”

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE SECOND-HAND SUIT.

WHEN Scott reached home he found Loammi still up.

“ Did you go to Mr. Lawton's room?” the latter asked.

“ Yes.”

“ What sort of a place does he live in—a tenement house?”

“ No; he has a very good room in West Sixteenth Street.”

“ He will soon be out of money if he lives expensively.”

“ How do you know that?”

“ Because he is evidently poor. Didn't you notice his clothes?”

“ Yes, but I don't think he cares much about dress.”

"I guess you're right there. Pa thinks he was a fool to come to New York. If he expects to fall back on pa when he has spent all his money, he'll be disappointed."

"I don't think he has any such expectation. He seems like an independent man. He fell in with an acquaintance from Michigan who is staying at the Fifth Avenue Hotel."

Loammi looked surprised.

"Who was it?" he asked.

"Quite a nice-looking man. He is a member of Congress."

"Then how does he happen to be in New York?" asked Loammi, incredulously.

"He is here on a little business. He goes back to Washington in two or three days."

"Did Mr. Lawton seem to know him well?"

"Yes; the congressman was very cordial."

"Politicians have to know everybody," remarked Loammi, after a pause. He found it difficult to conceive of "Cousin Seth" having any high-toned friends.

Scott took his lamp and went to bed. In his small chamber there was no gas jet, but this he did not mind. In England gas is not used as extensively as in the United States, and he was more accustomed to lamps or candles.

As he slowly undressed, he felt more cheerful than usual. It seemed pleasant to have found a relative who appeared to like him. He could not feel toward Ezra Little or Loammi as if they were relations.



"I am very sorry Cousin Seth is not better off," he said to himself. "If he can't get a place in the city, I suppose he will have to go back to the West. I hope not, for I shall miss him."

The next day Seth Lawton came to the Eighth Avenue store, and found his way to the department where Scott was a salesman.

"What are you selling, Scott?" he asked, with a smile.

"Socks, Cousin Seth."

"I think I shall have to buy some, just to say that I have bought from you. What do you charge?"

"Here are some merino socks that we sell three pairs for a dollar."

"Pick me out three—No. 9½."

Scott did so, and Mr. Lawton handed him a five-dollar gold piece.

A cash boy was called, the goods and money were handed to him, and in due time the bundle and change were brought back.

Just then Mr. Little, who had been out to lunch, came back, and passing by the sock counter recognized Mr. Lawton.

"Good-morning, Ezra," said Seth. "You have a fine store."

"Quite fair, but not so large as some," returned Ezra Little. "I am cramped for room. I think of taking in the adjoining store next year."

"I suppose you are getting rich."

“Not so fast as I should like. Expenses are very large. How would you like to run a store like this, Cousin Seth?” he added, in a complaisant tone.

“Not very well. I might like to own it, but I don’t think dry goods are in my line.”

“I fancy not.” said Ezra, in a tone of calm superiority. “It takes some business ability to run a large store.”

“No doubt you have the necessary ability,” observed Seth, with a smile.

“Well, I manage to do it.”

“I hope Scott will be as successful as you have been.”

“It isn’t every one who works in a dry-goods store who rises beyond a salesman,” returned Ezra Little, with a cold glance at Scott.

As the proprietor of the store passed on to his office, Seth Lawton said: “Have you been out to lunch, Scott?”

“Yes, Cousin Seth.”

“I am sorry. I would have invited you to lunch with me.”

“Thank you. Perhaps I can go some other day.”

“Good-afternoon, then. Remember to-morrow evening.”

“I won’t forget.”

On the way home from the store, Scott took the opportunity to speak of a new suit.

“Mr. Little,” he said, “I am afraid I shall have to ask you for some new clothes.”

“What’s the matter with those you are wearing?” asked Ezra Little, coldly.

“The trousers are frayed around the bottoms, and the coat is getting faded.”

“You seem to have high notions for a poor boy,” continued his employer, in a tone of displeasure.

“I like to look neat,” Scott answered, with spirit.

“You are as well dressed as most of the boys who work in the store.”

“They are cash boys, while I am behind the counter. Besides, I don’t ask you to pay out of your own pocket.”

“That is just what I will have to do if I comply with your request.”

“You have forty dollars of mine, Mr. Little; the money I handed you when I went into the store.”

“You seem to forget that this is to pay the difference between what you receive—a home—and what you would get in any other store like mine.”

“Don’t you think I earn my board?” asked Scott, mortified.

“No, of course not. Did Mr. Lawton put you up to asking for new clothes?”

“He said he thought I needed some new ones.”

“Just as I thought. It won’t be long, probably, before he wants you to borrow money on his account.”

“ I don't think he will ask for any.”

“ You seem to know him well. On what do you base this opinion? ”

“ He seems to be too independent.”

“ In feeling, yes; but I don't think he has independent means.”

“ Then you are not willing to buy me new clothes, Mr. Little? ”

“ I will think it over, and let you know what I decide.”

It was a trial to Scott to prefer his request, though it seemed to him necessary. Though his father had been poor, he had always been neatly dressed, and in a store he was subject to an unusual amount of scrutiny. He felt that his own money ought to be expended for what he needed.

Then, as to not earning his board, he knew that no salesman who sold as much as he did received less than eight dollars a week. It certainly did seem mean in Ezra Little to pay him less than his board.

What he should do if his application was denied he did not know. To be sure, he had enough left of the ten dollars he had recovered from Crawford Lane to buy a pair of trousers, but a new coat would be beyond his means.

During supper no reference was made to the subject, but as they were rising from the table, Mr. Little turned to his son and said: “ How do you compare in size with Scott? ”

“ We are of about the same size.”

In reality, Scott was two inches taller than his cousin, and probably as much larger in chest measure.

"So I thought," returned Mr. Little. "Scott thinks he needs some new clothes. Look over your suits, and see if you haven't one you can give him."

"Why should I give him my clothes, pa?"

"I will make it up to you."

"All right! Will you buy me a new suit?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then, I'm willing."

"You can go upstairs with Loammi," said Mr. Little, "and he will pick you out a suit that he has laid aside."

Scott flushed indignantly. He was not without pride, and it galled him to have his cousin's clothes turned over to him.

"Excuse me, Mr. Little," he said, "but I am taller and stouter than Loammi. I could not wear any of his cast-off suits."

"You mean you are too proud to do so," said Ezra Little, sharply.

"Perhaps I am, but at any rate they would not be large enough for me."

"That is an excuse."

"I will try on a suit, and let you see."

"Do so."

Scott went upstairs with his cousin, and put on a suit selected for him by Loammi, the poorest he had, and came downstairs.

The trousers were nearly two inches too

short, and the coat was evidently too narrow across the shoulder.

“It seems to fit very well,” said Ezra.

“Why, Mr. Little,” exclaimed his wife, “it doesn’t fit Scott at all.”

“Then we will send it to a tailor and have it altered,” said her husband.

Scott made no comment, but he made up his mind that he would get along with his old suit rather than wear his cousin’s.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### A CASH BOY’S TROUBLES.

THE next day Mr. Little asked: “Did you take that suit to my tailor for alterations, Scott?”

“Thank you, sir,” said Scott, coloring, “but I think I will get along for the present with the suit I am wearing.”

“What does that mean?” demanded Ezra Little, quickly.

“I don’t care to wear Loammi’s clothes.”

“Oh, you are proud, are you?” sneered Mr. Little.

“If it were necessary I would do so, but I think I am entitled to a new suit.”

“On what do you base your claim?”

“On the money which I handed you, Mr. Little,” replied Scott.

“We will not discuss this question,” said Ezra Little, coldly. “I have already told you

that this money will be needed to pay your expenses."

Scott did not reply.

"Well, what have you to say to that?"

"Nothing, sir."

"You have no just cause of complaint. I have offered you a suit which, when altered, would be almost as good as new. If you change your mind about accepting it, you may let me know."

"Very well, sir."

On Thursday evening Scott made a call at Seth Lawton's boarding house.

"I am glad to see you, Scott," said Mr. Lawton, cordially. "But you look sober."

"I feel so, Cousin Seth."

"Why is that? Anything unpleasant happened?"

"I applied to Mr. Little for a new suit. He declined to buy me one, but said I could have an old suit of Loammi's altered over for me."

"Didn't you mention the money you had placed in his hands?"

"Yes, but he said I was not earning my board, and this would make up the deficit."

Seth Lawton rose from his chair and paced the room. It was his habit to do so when he was disturbed.

"I didn't think Ezra Little would be so mean, though I knew he was far from liberal. What did you say to his proposal?"

"I declined it. Loammi is not as large as I

am, and, besides, I didn't feel like wearing his second-hand clothes when Mr. Little had money of mine in his possession."

"What do you think of his claim that your services do not pay for your board?"

"Judging from what I have found out about the pay of other salesman, I think that I earn more than my board."

"I think so, too. So you are to have no new suit?"

"No, sir."

"Perhaps you will be luckier than you imagine. You must remember that I am your relative as well as Ezra Little. I will buy you a suit."

"But, Cousin Seth, I don't want to put you to that expense. You will need all your money yourself."

Seth Lawton smiled.

"I will promise not to put myself to any inconvenience," he said. "Will that satisfy you? Will you now refuse a favor at my hands?"

"I would rather receive a favor from you than from Mr. Little, if you really feel that you can afford it."

"You need not be apprehensive on that score. At what time do you go out to lunch?"

"At twelve o'clock."

"I will call at that time to-morrow, and we will manage to get time to stop at a tailor's and leave your measure."



“But, Cousin Seth, a ready-made suit will answer.”

“As this is the first present I have given you, I will make it a good one. Probably we can find a tailor near your store.”

“Yes; Mr. Little’s tailor has a shop only three blocks away. Here is his card.”

“The very thing.”

When the suit was finished Scott put it on at once, and left his old one to be cleaned and repaired.

It was hardly to be supposed that it would escape the observation of Loammi and his father. As a matter of fact, it was handsomer than any his cousin wore.

“Where did you get that suit?” asked Loammi, in amazement.

“It was a present,” answered Scott.

“From whom?”

“Cousin Seth.”

Loammi was not slow in carrying the news to his father.

“Pa,” he said, “see the new suit Mr. Lawton has given Scott.”

Mr. Little put on his glasses and closely examined his young relative.

“Did you ask Mr. Lawton to buy you a suit?” he asked, abruptly.

“No, sir. I did not wish him to go to such an expense.”

“It must have cost at least twenty-five dollars.”

“ I think it cost twenty-eight.”

“ Seth is a fool. He is probably poor, and could not afford such an extravagant outlay.”

“ He told me he could afford it, and I had to take his word.”

“ It is better than my best suit, pa,” complained Loammi.

“ You shall have as good a one when you need it. It is only three weeks since I bought you a suit.”

“ Was it a ready-made suit? ” asked Loammi of Scott.

“ No; it was made to order by the tailor your father mentioned to me.”

“ You will soon get it shabby wearing it every day.”

“ I don't intend to do so. I left my old suit to be cleaned and repaired.”

“ Well, you are provided for, for the present, thanks to Seth Lawton's folly. I don't wonder he is poor if that is the way he manages. Do you know if he has got work yet? ”

“ He told me part of his time was occupied.”

“ I suppose he has got a little job to do at bookkeeping. Possibly it will pay him twenty-five dollars. On the strength of that he has bought you a suit at twenty-eight dollars. Seth always was a fool. When he finds himself in need, it won't do him any good to apply to me.”

It was clear that Mr. Lawton had not raised

himself in the estimation of his rich relatives by his kindness to Scott.

Among the cash boys who worked in the store was a pleasant-faced boy, named William Mead. He was two years younger than Scott, but the latter had taken special notice of him, and without knowing much of him, had come to feel an interest in him.

Usually Willie, as he was called, was bright and cheerful, but one day he appeared with a sad countenance.

"What is the matter, Willie?" asked Scott, when the two boys went out together at the noon hour.

Scott bought his lunch at a neighboring restaurant, but the cash boy brought his with him from home.

"I don't like to annoy you with my troubles," answered Willie.

"But they won't annoy me. Please think of me as a friend."

"Then I will tell you. I have a brother three years older than I am, who earns six dollars a week. He has been sick for two weeks, and my mother misses his wages. You know I only get two dollars and a half a week."

"That is very small."

"Some of the stores pay more, but Mr. Little never pays more than that to a cash boy. Next week our rent comes due, and as we have a strict landlord, I am afraid he will

put us out when he finds mother is not ready with the rent."

"I am sorry for you, Willie," said Scott, in a tone of sympathy. "Have you no friend you can call upon for a loan?"

"Our friends are as poor as ourselves."

"When does your rent come due?"

"Next Saturday."

"I will think whether I can do anything for you. I will see you again to-morrow."

"But you are poor yourself. Mr. Little's son was at the store one day, and I overheard him telling one of the salesman that you were a poor relation."

"He is not likely to let me forget that. I am not sure that I can do anything for you, Willie, but if I can I will."

"You have already done me good by speaking kindly to me."

"Come in to lunch with me, Willie. A cup of coffee will do you good."

That evening Scott had arranged to call on Mr. Lawton. He decided to tell him of the young cash boy's troubles. Seth Lawton's face showed his sympathy.

"It is really a hard case," he said. "We must see if we can't do something for your friend."

"I hope you don't think I was hinting this to you, Cousin Seth."

"I don't, but still you won't object to my doing something for the boy."

“Mr. Little says you are foolishly generous, and this is why you keep poor.”

“He will never make himself poor by his generosity. If you have the boy’s address we will call upon him.”

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## CAPTER XIV.

### A HELPING HAND.

THE cash boy and his mother lived in a west-side tenement house.

Just in front of the house, Scott met Willie Mead with a loaf of bread which he was bringing home from a neighboring bakery. His eye lighted up with pleasure when he saw Scott.

“Do you live here, Willie?” asked Scott.

“Yes, we live on the fourth floor.”

“I have brought a gentleman with me who may be able to help your mother. We will follow you upstairs.”

“You may not like to climb so high, sir,” said the cash boy, turning to Mr. Lawton.

“I think I can stand it for once,” rejoined Seth Lawton. “I am a little more scant of breath than when I was a young man, but I am still good for a climb.”

Willie started ahead, and the two visitors followed him.

“We will stop here on the landing till you

have told your mother she is to have visitors," said Seth, considerately.

The boy opened a door and entered a rear room. He reappeared in a short time, and said: "Come in, please."

The room was neat, but the scanty and well-worn furniture showed evidences of dire poverty.

Mrs. Mead, a woman of forty, though poorly dressed, had a look of refinement, though her face was sad and anxious.

As she watched the entrance of the visitors her eyes seemed riveted upon Seth Lawton. She took a step forward.

"Surely," she said, "I cannot be deceived. This is Seth Lawton."

"You know me?" said Seth, in amazement.

"Yes, and you ought to know me. We were born in the same village."

"Mary Grant!" ejaculated Seth, after a brief scrutiny.

"That was my name. Now I am Mary Mead. I married, but my husband is dead. But sit down. It does me good to see an old friend."

"It seems incredible," said Seth, as he took the proffered seat. "We met last in England, and now again under strange and unexpected circumstances."

Seth Lawton seemed moved, but his tone was one of satisfaction.

“Yes, Seth, much has happened since we parted.”

“How long have you lived in America?”

“Ten years.”

“And when did your husband die?”

“Three years since. He left me nothing but the children, and it has been a sad and sorrowful time. We have lived, but there have been times when we have been on the verge of starvation. And you, how has it been with you?”

“I have no right to complain. I have lived comfortably. You know Ezra Little?”

“Yes, it was at my request that he took Willie into his store. But the two dollars and a half a week, which he pays him, seems very small.”

“I should think so. Didn't he know how poor you were?” asked Seth, indignantly.

“Yes, but he said he could not favor one cash boy more than the rest.”

“Then he might have made you a present.”

“I don't think it ever occurred to him, Seth. But how did you find me? Did he give you my address?”

“No, that was not likely. Scott Walton—you must have known his mother, my cousin Lucy—works in the same store. It was he who heard of your trouble and reported it to me. Now tell me how you are situated.”

“We are likely to be turned out of these poor rooms, because we cannot pay the rent. My eldest boy, Sam, had been sick, and as he

earned six dollars a week, it took most of our income from us. Next week I think he will be able to go to work again."

"This is a poor place for you, Mary."

"We are glad of even this shelter. We are too poor to be particular."

"Your income consists only of what the two boys earn?"

"I earn something by sewing, but I have no sewing machine, and the prices paid are very low. Still, every little helps."

"If you had a whole house and kept lodgers, you could make a better income."

"No doubt, and I think I could do it if I had the means. But with no capital, that is out of the question," she finished, with a sigh.

"I have a proposal to make to you. I have a room in a house on West Sixteenth Street. It is a moderate sized house, and is to let furnished. My present landlady is desirous of giving up the house, as she wishes to be with her mother in the country, but she is tied by a lease. Suppose you take it off her hands?"

"I should like nothing better, but you can judge whether an offer from one so poor as myself would be accepted."

"Don't trouble yourself about that," said Seth Lawton, quietly. "I will arrange it all, and will retain my room. I may say that the rooms are all taken, so that you would be sure of an income at once."

"I should like the arrangement very much,



and I should like especially to have you with me, Seth; but it seems like a dream."

"We will make it a reality. I will see Mrs. Field this evening, and call on you again tomorrow. When does your month here expire?"

"In three days."

"The time is short, but it is sufficient. You will hear from me very soon. Meanwhile accept this small favor."

He drew from his pocket a ten-dollar note, and handed it to the widow.

"You are too kind, Seth," she said, gratefully. "You look poor yourself, and——"

"I never was in the habit of dressing very handsomely," said Mr. Lawton, smiling, "and just at present I look shabbier than usual. Perhaps I have an object in it. At any rate, it is a fact. The help I offer you will not embarrass me in the least."

"What a difference between you and Ezra Little," said Mrs. Mead. "He has never offered me a dollar, though he knew me as well as you."

"He acts according to his nature, Mary. Scott is an orphan—his father died on the ship that brought them over from England—but Ezra treats him as meanly as he has treated you and your boy. He makes him work for his board, and has refused him a suit of clothes, though he stood in need of it."

Mr. Lawton remained for half an hour.

Then he rose, and went downstairs, followed by Scott.

“It is strange you should have met an old acquaintance, Cousin Seth,” said Scott.

“More than an acquaintance, Scott. It may seem strange to you that an old fellow like me should ever have been in love, but the time was when I was in love with Mary Grant, and asked her to be my wife.”

“And she refused you?”

“Yes, Scott; I was fifteen years her senior, and she liked the man, whom she soon after married, better. It was this disappointment chiefly that led to my leaving England. I am very glad to have met Mary again. Though years have passed I have not lost my attachment for her. I am glad indeed that I can do the poor woman a service.”

His voice softened as he spoke, and it was clear that his early romance was not dead.

“Mr. Mead was a handsome man,” continued Seth. “You can judge of that, for the boy Willie looks like him. He made a good husband, I presume, but he had not the knack of succeeding in life.”

“Like Mr. Little.”

“Yes, like Ezra Little.”

It occurred to Scott that the same thing might be said of Seth Lawton himself, but he would not, of course, speak of it. He was beginning to have a sincere respect and regard for Cousin Seth.

What matter if he were poor—at least compared with Ezra Little—he evidently had a kind heart, and was inclined to be generous beyond his means.

“All cannot become rich,” said Scott. “I wish you had Mr. Little’s money, though.”

“Don’t wish that, Scott, for without that Ezra would be poor indeed. It is all that he has to boast of.”

“I am afraid it will be the same with Loammi.”

“With this difference: Ezra, with all his faults, is enterprising and industrious, and I don’t think his son will be either. In the race of life you may eclipse him, after all.”

“It doesn’t seem much like it now.”

“No, but you are young yet, and time often works wonders.”

“Won’t it cost a good deal to set up Mrs. Mead in her new business?” asked Scott, thoughtfully.

“Not very much. She will enter into a house fully furnished and equipped, and with a sure and prompt income from a good set of lodgers.”

“I hope she will succeed.”

“I think she will. If Ezra would pay you wages, in place of giving you a home in his house, you might take a room there, too.”

“I wish I could.”

“Well, it may come about some time. But look, there is Loammi.”

Yes, it was Loammi, sporting a light cane, and evidently on very good terms with himself.

“ Good-evening, Loammi,” said Cousin Seth.

“ Good-evening, Mr. Lawton,” responded Loammi, patronizingly. “ Are you and Scott taking a walk? ”

“ Yes, and you? ”

“ Oh, I have been to call on a schoolmate. His father’s awful rich.”

“ We, too, have been to make a call—on the mother of one of your father’s cash boys.”

Loammi turned up his nose.

“ You keep fashionable company,” he said.

“ We are not fashionable, like you, Loammi,” said Scott, smiling.

“ No, of course not,” answered Loammi, in a matter-of-course tone. “ Well, ta, ta! ”

“ I wonder how that boy will turn out! ” said Cousin Seth, thoughtfully.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CASH BOY’S PROMOTION.

COUSIN SETH arranged everything as he had planned, and Mrs. Mead’s landlord, when he called, learned to his surprise that his poor tenant was intending to move.

“ Have you found cheaper rooms? ” he asked.

“ No, but I am going to take a whole house.”

The landlord looked astonished.

"Where?" he asked.

"On West Sixteenth Street."

"Yet you have always been pleading poverty, and only last month I had to wait two days for the last dollar of the rent."

"That is true; but an old friend has found me out, and will give me a helping hand."

Of course, no more was to be said.

The removal was soon made, for Mrs. Mead had little to move, and with Seth Lawton's efficient help, the widow found herself in possession of her new establishment, with everything running smoothly.

"Now," said Mr. Lawton, "I must see if I can't do something for Willie. How much does Ezra Little pay him?"

"Two dollars and a half a week."

"That is too little."

"I don't think Mr. Little will pay more."

"Let him ask."

"I am afraid in that case he will lose his place. The last time Willie asked for a raise he was angry."

"Very well, if he loses his place I will find him another. Or, stay, I will ask Ezra myself."

"That will be better."

So Seth called the next evening on his rich relative. He was not received with open arms, for Mr. Little was under the impression that he wanted to borrow money.

"I can't give you much time to-night, Seth,"

said the merchant. "I have a business engagement. Have you found anything to do?"

"I think I can see my way clear to a place as confidential clerk and bookkeeper in a small office downtown."

"How much salary?"

"Possibly fifteen dollars a week."

"You had better accept. You are extremely lucky at your age to get such an office."

"You wouldn't be satisfied with it, Ezra," returned Seth, with a smile.

"I? You are dreaming. What, a well-known and long-established merchant to think of such a salary! You must be insane."

"Yet you are within five years as old as I am, Ezra."

"What does that matter? I take it there is considerable difference between your position and mine."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"To tell the truth, I didn't think you would be able to get any position at all. I hope this won't slip through your fingers."

"Then you advise me to accept it?"

"Of course. You would be crazy not to do so. Remember, you will have to depend upon yourself. The fact that you are a relation will not justify you in asking help from me."

"I have a favor to ask, however, Ezra."

"I cannot lend you money, if that's what you mean," said Ezra, brusquely.

"It isn't. I find that one of your cash boys

is the son of an old friend of ours—Mary Mead, formerly Mary Grant.”

“Yes; I gave the boy a place in order to help her.”

“You pay him two dollars and a half a week. There are only two boys, and this is very small.”

“It is all I pay any of the boys.”

“But Willie is a well-grown boy, of fourteen. Surely, out of old friendship, and to help his mother, you can pay him more.”

“Have you been talking to Mrs. Mead, and encouraged her to think that I will increase her boy’s wages?”

“Yes.”

“Then you have done a foolish thing. I decline. I am half inclined to discharge the boy.”

“It won’t be necessary. He will leave the store at the end of the week.”

“What does this mean?”

“That I will undertake to find him a better place.”

Ezra looked annoyed and angry.

“You can’t do it,” he said. “You have no acquaintances in the city. You are not even sure of employment yourself.”

“So it seems you have sized me up, Ezra,” said Seth Lawton, mildly.

“That is easy enough. You were born to be an unsuccessful man. You are fifty-six years

old, and I suppose you haven't saved enough money to keep you going for three months."

"I don't owe a cent, Ezra."

"That is something. But I can't remain here talking. Don't forget what I said about making sure of the place you spoke of."

"Just as I expected," thought Seth. "Ezra seems to be a thoroughly selfish man. It is lucky for me that——" but he did not finish the sentence.

Mr. Little did not think of the matter again till the superintendent told him on Saturday night: "One of the cash boys has resigned his place."

"Who is it?"

"William Mead."

"It is all the bad advice of Seth Lawton," he reflected. "He is a perfect meddler. Probably his mother will be here in a day or two to beg me to take him back."

But no such application came. Willie had obtained a place on Grand Street at four dollars a week.

Scott continued to enjoy the companionship of Seth Lawton, but sometimes cousin Seth was out of the city for days at a time, in which event Scott was thrown back on the company of Loammi, but this gave him very little satisfaction.

One evening Loammi happened upon his cousin coming out of a store on Sixth Avenue.



“Have you been buying anything?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“What?”

“A couple of neckties.”

“Where did you get the money?”

Scott said, quietly: “That is my business, Loammi.”

“I thought you gave pa all the money you had.”

“I gave him forty dollars.”

“How much have you got left?”

“I don’t care to tell.”

This was enough for Loammi, who saw a chance to do his cousin an ill turn. Accordingly he said to his father that evening: “Pa, did you know that Scott had money?”

“What do you mean?”

Then Loammi told the story.

“I asked him how much he had, and he wouldn’t tell me. It seems to me he ought to have handed it to you.”

In this Mr. Little agreed with his son.

“Call Scott,” said he.

Scott was in his small chamber, and there Loammi found him.

“Pa wants to see you, Scott.”

Scott went downstairs and into Mr. Little’s presence.

“Did you wish to see me, sir?”

“Yes. Loammi tells me you have some money.”

“Yes; I have a little money.”

“I thought you gave up all you had when you came here.”

“So I did, all but sixty cents, but I have regretted it since.”

“Why?”

“Because I understood that it was to be used for my clothing, and it was not.”

“I told you in what light I considered it. But I won't dwell upon that now. You deceived me in letting me think you had given up all your money.”

“No, I did not, sir.”

“Then how do you explain your having money at present. Was it given you by Mr. Lawton?”

“No, sir.”

“Where, then, did you get it?”

“It was money that I was swindled out of by a fellow passenger. I induced him to return a part of it.”

“How much have you now?”

“About five dollars.”

“You may give it to me.”

“I prefer not to do so, Mr. Little; I need it myself.”

Scott spoke respectfully, but firmly.

“Do you refuse?” demanded Ezra, angrily.

“Yes, sir.”

“Do you think this is a suitable return for all I have done for you?”

“You have given me a home, but it is in

return for services in your store. As for this money, it was given me by my father and I prefer to keep it."

Ezra Little was taken aback by the boy's resolute tone. On the whole, he decided not to press the demand.

"Be it so," he said; "but understand that I shall, hereafter, give you nothing but your board and lodging. When you require clothing or anything else, you must buy it yourself."

"I understand, sir."

"Seth has been talking to that boy," reflected Ezra Little. "It would serve him right for me to discharge him."

But Ezra Little knew that Scott was an excellent salesman, and that he could not supply his place at less than eight dollars a week, so he did not care to dismiss him.

"I'll bring him to terms yet," he said to himself.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### LOAMMI'S TEMPTATION.

LOAMMI had a high idea of his personal qualities and social standing. But he had one grievance.

He received an allowance from his father, but it was much less than he thought he needed. Ezra Little was not a liberal man. He gave

Loammi a dollar every Saturday night, and obstinately refused to give him more.

"It is very hard to get along on a dollar, pa," complained Loammi.

"When I was your age I had no allowance at all, my son."

"You were a poor boy. You were not expected to keep up appearances."

"You have no clothes to buy. I provide for you in that respect, and I think you are as well dressed as most of the boys you associate with."

"I don't complain of my clothes, but a boy wants to keep up his end with his school friends. Yesterday afternoon, Henry Bates proposed to me to go in and get an ice cream, but I couldn't, for I had no money."

"Have you spent all your weekly allowance?"

"Yes, every cent."

"Yet it is only Wednesday."

"And I must scrimp till Saturday night."

"Then you should manage better. If you limited yourself to ten cents a day for the first five days, you would be able to spend twenty-five cents on Friday and Saturday."

"That's easier said than done, pa."

"I am afraid you are getting extravagant, Loammi."

"Even Scott goes around with more money in his pocket than I do."

"How much money has he got?"

“About five dollars.”

“He will have to spend it for clothes. He won't be able to buy ice cream with it.”

“Still, it makes a fellow feel good to have as much money as that in his pocket.”

“Then I advise you to save up money for a few weeks till you have as much.”

“Pa,” suggested Loammi, insinuatingly, “couldn't you let me have a five-dollar bill to carry round with me, so that I could show it to my friends? They would think more of me.”

“How long do you think it would remain unbroken?” asked his father, shrewdly.

“Oh, ever so long.”

“I don't wish to try the experiment. Your friends will respect you without that. They know that you are the son of a man who is well off.”

“No, they don't think so, when they see that I am always short of money and hard up.”

“Then let them think what they please. If they thought you had money they would want to borrow it, or urge you to spend it on them.”

So Loammi failed in his effort to obtain a larger allowance.

One day—it was Friday—he particularly wanted to use some money, and was without a penny. Under these circumstances it occurred to him that his despised cousin was well supplied with cash, and might be induced to accommodate him with a loan.

Scott was rather surprised when, as he was going out after supper, Loammi joined him.

"Are you going out for a walk?" he asked, in an unusually gracious tone.

"Yes, Loammi."

"I will join you if you don't mind."

"Certainly. I shall be glad to have your company."

"Have you called on Mr. Lawton lately?"

"No; he is out of town just now. I think he has gone to Philadelphia."

"Has he got a place?"

"He is doing something, but I don't know what it is. He doesn't seem to say much about his affairs."

"I hope he won't spend all his money."

"So do I. He seems to be generous, even beyond his means."

"I wish he'd be generous to me," thought Loammi.

They walked down Broadway, Loammi chatting pleasantly.

"Oh, by the way," he said, suddenly, "I find I have left my purse at home. Could you lend me a dollar?"

Then it flashed upon Scott what was the meaning of his cousin's agreeable manner. He was of an obliging disposition, but he knew Loammi well enough to be certain that he would never see his money back.

"I am sorry, Loammi," he said, "but I am afraid I can't lend you any money."

“Haven't you got any?”

“Yes, but I have to buy my own clothes, as you know, and I need some underclothing.”

“That won't cost much.”

“True, but there are other things I need, also.”

“I don't ask you to give me the money. Tomorrow evening I shall get my allowance from pa, and then I can pay you back.”

“You must excuse me, Loammi, but I have so little money that I have to be very careful of that little. If I had some one to buy my clothes for me, as you have, it would be different.”

“Oh, well,” said Loammi, offended, “do as you like. You seem to forget that but for pa you would be in the poor-house.”

“I don't think I should.”

“Of course you would. Doesn't he give you your living?”

“No. I earn it.”

“All the same. He gave you a place in his store.”

“I think I could have got work somewhere else. However, I don't deny that your father gave me employment.”

“And you repay him by refusing a slight favor to his son.”

“I wish I were differently situated, Loammi, but——”

“Oh, you needn't go on. You have refused me a small favor. Good-evening!” and Loammi left his cousin, and went off in a huff.

“Now, I suppose Loammi will dislike me more than ever,” thought Scott. “Well, I must put up with it. I am not rich enough to lend him money which he won’t pay back.”

Meanwhile, Loammi went home in a very unsatisfactory frame of mind. He was disgusted with himself now because he had humiliated himself so far as to ask his cousin for a loan.

“I’ll get even with him if I get a chance,” he reflected, angrily.

He was destined to another mortification.

Before he reached home he met a school-mate named Paul Granger. He wished he could have avoided him for a reason that will immediately appear, but Paul met him as he turned in from the corner of West Forty-fourth Street.

“I am glad to meet you, Loammi,” said Paul. “You are owing me a dollar, you know. I should like it back, as I want to go to a picnic to-morrow.”

“All right,” said Loammi, and he put his hand in his pocket.

“By Jove!” he exclaimed, in apparent astonishment. “My purse is empty. I shall have to make you wait a day or two.”

“But I have been waiting already for three weeks,” protested Paul.

“I am sorry, but I really can’t do anything for you to-day. About the first of next week.”

“Why don’t you ask your father for some money? He is a rich man, isn’t he?”



“Yes, but he would be angry if he knew that I had borrowed money. He is very strict about such matters.”

“Then you ought not to have borrowed money of me,” said Paul.

“Oh, I’ll make it all right in a day or two,” said Loammi. “Good-evening, I am in a little of a hurry.”

Paul Granger walked away, pretty well assured that he would never get back his dollar.

“I suppose that fellow will be annoying me every day,” said Loammi to himself. “Heigh-ho! it’s awful inconvenient to be so poor. Pa could make it all right if he’d open his heart and give me five or ten dollars.”

Loammi entered the house fully convinced that he was very ill used, and that his father was a very selfish man.

He walked upstairs slowly, and as he passed through the upper hall he saw the door of his mother’s chamber open. He went in, thinking that he might be able to borrow from her, when as his eyes glanced around the room he saw something that made his heart beat quicker.

On the bureau lay a small pocketbook which he recognized as his mother’s.

Under present circumstances the sight of a pocketbook affected him powerfully.

Without any definite idea of what he would do, he walked softly to the bureau, and taking the pocketbook in his hand, opened it.

It contained two bills, a five-dollar note and a one.

“This would just get me out of my trouble,” he thought. “I wish this money was mine.”

It was a strong temptation. With the one dollar he could pay Paul Granger, and the five would last him some time, supplementing what he called his miserable allowance.

He put the pocketbook in his pocket, and slipping downstairs stealthily, went out again into the street.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### SUSPICION FALLS UPON SCOTT.

As he reached the street, Loammi paused, for a thought came to him. It was a mean, despicable thought, worse than the theft. But it struck him favorably, and he decided to act upon it.

He opened the front door—for he had a latchkey—and went upstairs again. But not to his mother's room. Instead, he went one floor higher, and opened the door of Scott's little chamber. Then he took the two bills from the pocketbook and thrust them into his vest pocket.

Next he looked about his cousin's chamber, and after some deliberation lifted the lid of a

small box that stood on a shelf and dropped the pocketbook inside.

Then, with a look of satisfaction, he closed the door of the room and went into the hall. As he did so another door opened upon the landing, and Ellen, the servant, came out of her own room.

She looked with some surprise at Loammi, who did not often show himself upon the third floor.

Loammi was somewhat disconcerted by this sudden encounter. He felt that it might prove awkward for him.

He must try to account in some way for his being there.

"Do you know if Scott is in the house?" he asked.

"I don't think so."

"I thought he might be in his room, and so came up. But he doesn't appear to be there."

"I think he went out after supper," said Ellen, accepting the explanation.

"Well, it doesn't matter. I shall see him tomorrow morning, at any rate."

Loammi went downstairs and out into the street once more.

"It is well I had my wits about me," he thought, complacently. "That was a pretty good explanation. Ellen won't suspect anything. She will think it is all right."

Loammi walked briskly. He was in good

spirits, for it made him feel comfortable to think he had six dollars in his pocket. He could not remember the time when he had so much money in his pocket at once.

"An ice cream would taste good," he thought.

Like many young people, Loammi had a weakness for ice cream.

He walked over to Sixth Avenue, and entered a small ice cream saloon. Just at the door he met Paul Granger. He was already entering the saloon, when he caught sight of Paul.

Had he seen him sooner he would perhaps have walked on, and put off the ice cream. As it was, he made the best of the situation.

"How are you, Paul?" he said, cordially. "Come in and have an ice cream."

"I thought you didn't have any money," replied Paul, surprised.

"Oh, well, my ship has come in," said Loammi, lightly.

"Then I hope you will be able to pay me the dollar you owe me."

"I will. Now let us sit down and enjoy the ice cream."

They sat down at a small table, and the ice cream was brought, with a plate of cake besides.

Paul Granger began to think Loammi was a nice fellow, after all—especially when he received back the dollar a little later on. In

paying for the ice cream, Loammi got the five-dollar bill changed.

"Whew! I should think your ship *had* come in," exclaimed Paul. "You'll be in funds now."

"Yes, for a little while."

As the two boys left the ice-cream saloon they came upon Scott, who was just passing. This annoyed Loammi, who didn't care to have his cousin know that he had been spending money.

"Good-evening, Loammi," said Scott, politely.

"Who is that boy, Loammi?" asked Paul, when Scott had gone on.

"A cousin of mine. He is poor, and pa gave him a place in the store."

"He seems like a nice fellow. Why didn't you introduce me?"

"He isn't in our set," said Loammi. "I didn't think you'd care to know him."

"Oh, I am not so snobbish as that. Besides, he is a cousin of yours."

"That is true. I suppose we all have poor relations."

"Yes; the boy I like best is a poor relation of mine—a cousin."

The two boys walked as far as Bryant Park and sat down on a bench. They talked about such subjects as interest schoolboys, till Paul, looking at his watch, said: "It is time for me

to go home; mother has a bad headache, and I promised I wouldn't stay out late."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Little had a call from her seamstress, who brought home some work upon which she had been engaged.

"What is the charge?" asked Mrs. Little.

"Two dollars."

Mrs. Little felt in her pocket for her money, and didn't find it. She looked puzzled at first, then her brow cleared up.

"I remember, I laid my pocketbook on the bureau in my room," she reflected.

"Wait here a moment," she said. "I will bring you the money."

But when she reached her chamber she looked in vain for the pocketbook.

"That is strange," she soliloquized. "I distinctly remember laying it down on the bureau."

She summoned the servant.

"Ellen," she said, "have you by chance been into my chamber within an hour or two?"

"No, ma'am. Is anything the matter?"

"My pocketbook is missing. I laid it down on the bureau and forgot to take it up again."

"I am very sorry, ma'am; was there much money in it?"

"Two bills, a five and a one."

"That is too much to lose."

"It is a little awkward. Miss Green, my seamstress, is here, and I want to pay her two

dollars. Do you happen to have any money with you?"

"Yes, ma'am; I can let you have the two dollars."

"Thank you. I will give it back to you when Mr. Little comes in."

"Who can have taken the money?" thought Mrs. Little. "It can't be Ellen for she is an old and trusted servant, and there doesn't seem to be any one else. It is certainly mysterious."

Mrs. Little did not so much care for the money; it was the mystery that perplexed her. She was sure she had placed the pocketbook on the bureau, and it could not have got away without hands.

A few minutes later Scott entered the house.

"Have you been at home this evening, Scott?" asked Mrs. Little.

"No; I went out directly after supper."

"And Loammi also?"

"Yes; we went out together."

"Did you remain with him?"

"No; we soon separated."

"Oh, well, never mind. I suppose he hasn't come in yet."

"I will go to his room and see."

"If you please."

Scott reported that his cousin was not in.

"Really," thought Mrs. Little, "if the amount were larger, I might think it necessary to call in a detective."

Possibly the pocketbook had fallen on the carpet. She instituted a search, but it proved unsuccessful.

Fifteen minutes later Loammi came in.

"I wonder whether the loss has been discovered?" he said to himself. "I'll find ma, and then I shall learn."

"Good-evening, ma," he said.

"Where have you been, Loammi?"

"Oh, walking round with Paul Granger. Has Scott got home?"

"Yes."

"I am rather tired. I guess I'll go up to my room."

"Stop a minute, Loammi. Perhaps you can help me solve a mystery."

"Now it is coming!" thought Loammi.

"What is it, ma?" he inquired, carelessly.

"I have met with a loss."

"What have you lost—your watch?"

"No, my pocketbook."

"You don't say!" ejaculated Loammi, in innocent surprise. "I hope there wasn't much money in it."

"There were six dollars—a one and a five."

"Is that so? I wonder——" and then he stopped short.

"What is it you wonder?" asked his mother, quickly.

"Oh, I'd rather not tell."

"But I insist upon your telling, if it will throw any light on my loss."



“Well, it may not mean anything, but I know that Scott has a five-dollar bill. I saw it to-night. But, of course, there are plenty of five-dollar bills.”

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

## TRAPPED.

“I DON’T think Scott would take my money,” said Mrs. Little.

“I don’t like to think so myself,” rejoined Loammi, “but some one must have taken it.”

“You say that Scott has a five-dollar bill?” said his mother, doubtfully.

“Yes, I saw it.”

“When did you see it?”

“This evening. I was surprised, for I knew he was poor.”

Mrs. Little began to think that Scott might have yielded to sudden temptation.

“Won’t you call Scott?” she said. “He is in his room.”

Loammi obeyed with alacrity.

He knocked at Scott’s door, and it was opened to him.

“Scott,” he said, “ma wants to see you. Can you come downstairs?”

“Certainly.”

Scott was somewhat surprised, but he went down at once.

Mrs. Little looked embarrassed. She was a kind-hearted woman, and she shrank from charging Scott with theft.

“Did you wish to speak with me, Mrs. Little?” asked Scott.

“Yes; I have met with a loss. My pocket-book, containing a sum of money, has disappeared.”

“I am sorry to hear it.”

“I thought possibly you or Loammi might have seen it.”

“I have not seen anything of a pocket-book. When did you miss it?”

“I have not seen it since three o'clock this afternoon.”

“Do you remember whether you laid it down anywhere?”

“Yes; I laid it on the bureau in my room.”

“Then how could I have seen it? I don't go into your room.”

“Nor I,” put in Loammi.

“I hope you don't suspect either of us of stealing it,” said Scott, gravely.

“I don't know what to think. Loammi tells me that you have in your possession a five-dollar bill. The pocketbook contained a five-dollar bill.”

“Yes, Mrs. Little; I have a five-dollar bill of my own, I have had it for some time. This Loammi knew, and also where I got it.”

“I don't know anything about that. But it

seems very strange what can have become of the money."

"Ma," put in Loammi, "tell me in what sort of a pocketbook you kept the money?"

Mrs. Little gave a description of it.

"I have something to propose. Suppose you search my chamber and Scott's, to see if there is any such pocketbook in either."

"I don't like to do that. It would be acting as if I thought you dishonest."

"I have no objection for one," said Loammi. "Have you, Scott?"

"None whatever."

"Then suppose we go about it. Go to my chamber first."

The three went into Loammi's room. Of course the search revealed nothing of the lost pocketbook.

"Now, let us go upstairs."

So they proceeded to Scott's room.

Scott sat down on a chair.

"Don't mind me," he said. "Look wherever you see fit."

Loammi lifted the pillow, then the bed-clothes, peered behind the table, and under the bed.

"Of course, I haven't the slightest idea of finding it here, Scott," he said, "but it is just as well to look thoroughly."

"You can't please me better."

With a nonchalant air Loammi went to the shelf, and raised the cover of a small tin box.

“What is this?” he asked, drawing from it the pocketbook.

“That is my pocketbook,” said Mrs. Little, quickly. “Oh, Scott, how could you have taken it?”

“I wouldn’t have believed it,” said Loammi, trying to look surprised.

“Let me see that pocketbook,” said Scott, quickly.

It was placed in his hand.

“Is this the pocketbook you lost?” he asked, turning to Mrs. Little.

“If it is not, it is exactly like it. Did you have one of this kind?”

“No, and I never saw this before.”

Loammi looked significantly at his mother.

“I hope what you say is true,” said Mrs. Little, looking troubled.

“It is true. What else was there in the pocketbook except a five-dollar bill?”

“A one-dollar note.”

“I know nothing of either. Open this, Loammi, and see if either is in it now.”

Loammi did so, but of course the pocketbook was empty.

“Do you think I took this pocketbook from your room, Mrs. Little?” asked Scott.

“What am I to think?”

“I can’t tell you. I can tell you what I think.”

“What is it?”

“That the person who stole the pocketbook

took out the money and placed it where it was found."

"Oh, of course," sneered Loammi, "but who was it?"

"I don't know, but I mean to find out."

He gazed fixedly at Loammi, who flushed a little, for he saw that he was suspected.

"Ma," he said, "I hope you'll forgive Scott. Probably he will be willing to give up the money."

"I consider that remark an insulting one, Loammi. I don't want to be forgiven, nor can I give up money that I didn't take."

"Haven't you got a five-dollar note in your pocket?"

"Yes, but it's my own."

"We won't continue the discussion," said Mrs. Little, sadly. "I would a great deal rather have given away the money than lose it in this way."

"So you think me guilty, Mrs. Little?"

"I shall have to, if you don't explain how the pocketbook came to be in your room."

"That I can't do. Of course it was placed there, but I can't tell who did it."

"Of course I must report the matter to Mr. Little."

"Do so, madam. Perhaps he can think of some way to find out the real thief."

"Ma, I am sleepy. I think I will go to bed," said Loammi.

Mother and son rose, and left the room.

It will readily be supposed that Scott did not sleep much that night. He saw the awkwardness of his position.

He felt convinced that Loammi, if he had not taken the money, had secreted the pocket-book in his room with the design of throwing suspicion upon him. But how could he prove this?

That was the question, and one that baffled him.

Of course it was a despicable thing to do, but he believed that his cousin was quite capable of it.

The next morning Scott shrank from going down to breakfast. It was embarrassing for him to be looked upon as a thief, even though he were supported by the consciousness of innocence.

As soon as he entered the dining-room, he saw by Mr. Little's cold and frigid expression that he had been told.

Still, nothing was said until the meal was over.

When Scott rose from the table, Mr. Little said: "Stay behind a minute, young man. I have something to say to you."

"Yes, sir."

"Mrs. Little has told me of the discovery that was made in your chamber last evening."

"Very well, sir."

"But it is not very well. It looks very bad for you."

“Mr. Little, do you think I took your wife’s pocketbook?”

“The evidence is pretty conclusive.”

“All I can say is that I am as innocent as you are.”

“The pocketbook contained a five-dollar bill. I learn that you have a five-dollar bill.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I think that settles it.”

“I beg your pardon, Mr. Little, but you yourself probably have a five-dollar bill in your pocket. It proves nothing.”

“You are very plausible, but I am not easily fooled. I have just one thing to say. Give up that five-dollar bill, and we will overlook the theft.”

“And if not?”

“Then you must leave my house and consider yourself discharged from my store.”

Scott was pale but composed.

“You are treating me with great injustice,” he said. “My innocence will some day appear. In the meantime I shall leave your house at once.”

“That is for you to decide,” said Mr. Little, coldly, as he rose from the table.

Scott walked up slowly to his little chamber. His heart was heavy within him.

He was innocent, yet adjudged guilty. His home and situation were taken from him, and he was turned out into the street.

He resolved to go around to see Cousin Seth. Of his sympathy he felt assured.

He rang the bell, and Mrs. Mead opened the door in person.

“Good-morning, Scott,” she said, pleasantly.

“Is Mr. Lawton in?” asked Scott.

“No; he left last evening for the West, to be absent about a month. He asked me to say that he would write you in a day or two. He was called away suddenly by a telegram.”

Scott’s heart sank within him. He seemed to have lost his only friend.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### A NEW HOME.

“DID you wish to see Mr. Lawton about something important?” asked Mrs. Mead.

“Yes, I wish to ask his advice. I have lost my place.”

“At Mr. Little’s store?”

“Yes.”

“I never liked Mr. Little. I am glad Willie has another position.”

“Have you a small room vacant, Mrs. Mead? I have left Mr. Little’s house also, and I must find a room somewhere.”

“I have a small hall bedroom on the third floor.”



“What rent do you charge?”

“Two dollars a week, usually, but to you I will make it a dollar and a half.”

“Then I will take it. Can I go up at once and leave my valise?”

“Yes; I will show the way.”

The room was small, as Mrs. Mead had described it, but it was scrupulously clean. Scott felt that he would be very well satisfied with it, if only he could continue to pay the rent. It was certainly pleasanter than the room he had occupied at Ezra Little's.

“You must dine with us to-night, Mr. Walton,” said Mrs. Mead, hospitably. “Willie will be glad to see you, and then you can tell us how you came to leave the store.”

As soon as he was settled, Scott went out and began to look for a position. He bought a morning paper, and looked over the advertisement of “Help Wanted.”

He took down several names, and began to call in rotation. In several instances he found the places already filled. In one place he was offered two dollars and a half a week, which he knew it would be idle to accept, as it would do little more than pay his room rent.

In one place he was asked where he had worked last.

“At Little's dry-goods store on Eight Avenue,” he answered.

“Why did you leave?”

“Because of a disagreement with Mr Little.”

“I don't think we shall require your services,” said the merchant, coldly.

He turned away, as if to intimate that the conference was at an end.

Scott was depressed. He saw that any explanation he might give of his leaving his former place would only injure him. Yet, almost everywhere the question would be asked.

This made him feel all the more that he had been very unjustly treated by Ezra Little. He had been required to plead guilty to a theft which he had not committed, and to replace the money lost with money of his own. He had very properly declined to do this, and now he was thrown out of employment, with very little chance of securing another place.

Several days passed, and Scott must have made application for a hundred situations. But his luck did not improve. One obstacle was a general business depression which made employers averse to hiring new employees.

And all the while his scanty funds were diminishing. He sought out cheap restaurants and limited his orders to the barest necessities, but still his money melted away till at length he was reduced to fifty cents. Besides, his week was about out and he would be called upon to pay a second week's rent.

This was, of course, out of the question. Poor Scott was deeply perplexed. He began to

think it would have been better if he had complied with Ezra Little's demand for the five-dollar bill. It was about gone now, and he was without an income.

He chanced to be passing the Gilsey House at four o'clock in the afternoon, when he heard his name called.

Looking up, he recognized the familiar face of Justin Wood, whom he had not met for some weeks.

"I am glad to see you once more, Scott," said the young man, cordially. "Why haven't you called upon me?"

"I did call once, but I did not find you in."

"It must have been when I was making a short visit to Philadelphia. But now come in, and give an account of yourself. How does it happen that you are in the streets at this hour?"

"Because, Mr. Wood," answered Scott, gravely, "I have lost my place."

"Then you have a story to tell. Come in, and tell me all about it."

He led the way into the hotel, and Scott followed him into the reading-room.

"Now take a seat at the window," said Justin Wood, pointing to an armchair, "and tell me why you were discharged?"

Scott told the story in as few words as possible.

"This money which Mr. Little wished you to give up was a part of what you recovered

from that swindler at Staten Island, I presume?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I could certify to its belonging to you. Do you wish me to do so?"

"I don't want to go back to Mr. Little's if I can find another place. Besides, it will still be said that the pocketbook was found in my room."

"Have you any idea who put it there?"

"Yes, I think it was put there by Loammi."

"That is my own conclusion."

"But I don't see how I can bring it home to him."

"There will be a difficulty. If you could get evidence of his having changed a five-dollar bill about that time, now——"

"I don't see how I can do that. It happened a week since."

"Where are you living now?"

"I have a room on West Sixteenth Street, at the house of a Mrs. Mead, but I shall have to leave it to-morrow."

"Why?"

"Because I have no money to pay the rent for a second week."

"How much is it?"

"A dollar and a half."

"I might be willing to lend you as much as that," said Justin Wood, smiling.

"Thank you sir, but I shall need money to buy my meals besides."

“Then I think I shall have to come to your assistance.”

Justin Wood put his hand in his pocket, and drew out two five-dollar bills.

“That will tide you over for the present,” he said.

“But,” said Scott, “ought I accept so much? I don’t know when I shall be able to repay you.”

“Then we had better consider it a gift.”

“It is hardly worth mentioning,” he said. “If it will do you good I am glad. Now, you must come in and take some dinner with me. I have eaten nothing since breakfast, and am almost famished.”

The young man ordered a plain, but most appetizing dinner, to which Scott and himself did equal justice. Scott, too, had eaten nothing since breakfast, and that breakfast had been a meager one.

After dinner the two friends hailed a car and went uptown. They spent an hour in Central Park. Mr. Wood proposed to walk back, and Scott accompanied him.

“Would you mind if I called at Mr. Little’s house?” asked Scott. “There may be a letter for me from Cousin Seth.”

“Do so, by all means, Scott.”

Scott rang the bell, and the door was opened by Ellen. Her eye brightened when she saw Scott, whom she liked much better than Lommi.

"I am glad to see you, Scott," she said.  
"And where are you living, now?"

"I am boarding on West Sixteenth Street."

"And have you got another place?"

"Not yet. I suppose you heard why I left the house."

"Yes, I did, and it's a shame."

"Did you hear that Mrs. Little's pocket-book was found in my room?"

"Yes, I did, and I know who put it there."

"Who was it?" asked Scott, eagerly.

"Only an hour before, I myself saw Loammi coming out of your chamber. He pretended that he went there expecting to see you."

"Did you tell Mr. Little that?"

"No; but I will if you want me to."

"I may ask you to do it some time. Do you think Loammi took the money?"

"I do that. All this week he's been unusually flush of cash. It's easy to guess where it came from."

"And I have had to suffer for his theft. Oh, by the way, Ellen, has any letter come here for me?"

"There was one came this morning. I'll get it for you."

Scott looked at the postmark of the letter, and saw that it was from Chicago.

## CHAPTER XX.

## SCOTT IS VINDICATED.

SCOTT opened the letter, which proved to be brief. It was dated at the Sherman House, Chicago, and ran thus:

“I am called away suddenly on business, and may be absent for a month. Should you need to consult me on any subject, direct to me here, as letters will be forwarded if I am absent from the city.

“COUSIN SETH.

Scott showed the letter to Mr. Wood.

“I shall be glad to make the acquaintance of Mr. Lawton,” said Justin. “He is evidently a good friend of yours.”

“If he were here now he might get me a place. I don’t stand much chance by myself.”

“I must see if I can’t find some temporary work for you to do. Suppose we take an ice cream. Do you know any good place near by?”

“There is one on Sixth Avenue.”

“Very well, we will go there.”

Scott led the way to the place already referred to, frequented by his cousin, Loammi. When they entered, Scott saw Loammi seated at a table in the rear part of the saloon.

He espied the new arrival, and was evidently surprised to meet Scott in such a place.

"Hello, Scott!" he called out.

"Good-evening Loammi," returned Scott, coolly.

"Goin' to take an ice cream?"

"Yes."

"I say, are you working yet?"

"Not yet."

"Then how can you afford to buy ice cream?" Loammi was about to ask, but the presence of Justin Wood checked him. Mr. Wood was handsomely dressed, and looked like a man of means.

"I wonder where Scott picked him up," thought Loammi. He wished to be introduced, but Scott did not give any encouragement in that direction.

Loammi, having no good excuse to stay, rose and left the saloon.

"So that's your cousin?" remarked Justin Wood.

"Yes."

"He looks sly. I am something of a judge of faces, and I don't like his."

"I suppose I am prejudiced against him," said Scott. "I don't think I could ever like him."

Scarcely had Loammi left the saloon, when Scott was surprised to see Ezra Little and his wife enter.



Mrs. Little first caught sight of Scott, and spoke in a low tone to her husband.

Ezra Little, turning his glance in the direction of Scott, eyed him severely.

“So this is where you spend you ill-gotten money,” he said, not noticing that Scott was in the company of the fashionably dressed young man sitting on the opposite side of the table.

“I beg your pardon, sir,” said Justin Wood, “but it is my money that is being spent.”

“I was not aware that you were in the boy’s company,” said Ezra Little, respectfully, for he saw that Mr. Wood was a gentleman of social position. “I must explain that your companion left my house a week since under discreditable circumstances.”

“He told me the circumstances. You assumed that the money he had in his possession was stolen.”

“There can hardly be a doubt of it. There was a five-dollar bill—and the missing pocket-book contained a five-dollar bill.”

“I am personally cognizant of the fact that the money was his own. Indeed, I helped to recover it for him from a swindler who had robbed him of it.”

“This does not explain the pocketbook being found in his chamber.”

“Where your son put it.”

“This is a strange charge to make, sir. Have you any grounds for making it?”

“Scott and I called at your house this even-

ing. The servant said that an hour before the discovery of the pocketbook your son was seen by her coming out of Scott's room."

Ezra Little looked startled, and Mrs. Little looked distressed.

"Moreover, I think if you inquire, you will find that some of the stolen money was disposed of in this saloon. Your son only went out ten minutes since. Suppose you inquire whether he has changed a five-dollar bill here recently."

"I will do so."

Ezra Little went up to the cashier.

"I understand," he said, "that my son comes in here frequently."

"Yes, sir, he was here this evening."

"Can you call to mind whether you have ever changed a five-dollar bill for him?"

"I did so about a week since. Was there anything wrong about the bill?"

"I only asked out of curiosity."

Ezra was a hard man, but he was not altogether unjust.

"Scott," he said, "I think there may have been some mistake about your taking the pocketbook. If you will call at the store tomorrow, I will see about taking you back."

Scott bowed, but did not speak. He felt that he could never again be contented in Mr. Little's employment.

When they left the saloon he asked: "What

do you advise me to do about going back, Mr. Wood?"

"Don't go," said Justin Wood, promptly. "I will stand by you, and see if I can't get you something better."

"Thank you, sir. I don't want to go back if I can help it. But I am glad my innocence has been proved."

"I fancy your cousin will find himself in hot water."

Loammi was already at the house when his father and mother came in. He had no suspicion of trouble, but was eager to tell his father that he had seen Scott.

He did not observe the unusual sternness on Mr. Little's face.

"Pa," he said, "I saw Scott to-night."

"Where did you see him?"

"At an ice-cream saloon on Sixth Avenue. His money seems to have lasted him pretty well."

"What were you doing there?" was his father's unexpected question.

"Getting an ice cream," answered Loammi, in surprise.

"So your money seems to have lasted pretty well also," said his father.

"An ice cream costs only ten cents, pa."

"How many times have you been there within a week?"

"Once or twice, I believe," answered Lo-

ammi, wondering what his father meant by his strict cross-examination.

“Are you sure you have not been there every evening?”

“I don't think so.”

“Have you ever had a bill changed there?”

“I don't know what you mean, pa.”

But Loammi began to fear that he did understand, and he turned pale.

“Where,” asked his father, sternly, “did you get the five-dollar bill that you got changed there a week ago to-day?”

“I don't know anything about any five-dollar bill.”

Loammi looked frightened.

“Wasn't it the money you found in your mother's pocketbook?”

“But Scott took that, pa. You know the pocketbook was found in his room.”

“Yes, by you. You knew just where to look for it, for you concealed it there.”

“Oh, pa, who told you any such wicked story about me?”

“Go downstairs and ask Ellen to come up here.”

Loammi would willingly have been excused from doing this, but he knew there was no alternative.

When Ellen appeared, Mr. Little said: “Do you remember the evening when the pocketbook was found in Master Scott's room?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Had Scott been in his room that evening?”

“I think not, sir.”

“Had any one else been in the room?”

“I saw Loammi coming out from the room about half-past eight.”

“Oh, what a story!” ejaculated Loammi, in perturbation.

“It is true, sir,” said Ellen, firmly.

“I have no doubt of it. That will do, Ellen.

“Now, what have you to say?” demanded Ezra Little, addressing his son. “Did you or did you not take the pocketbook?”

“Yes, sir,” answered Loammi, reluctantly.

“And you had the meanness to throw suspicion on your cousin. I am ashamed of you.”

Loammi made no reply for the very good reason that he had nothing to say.

“I have myself seen Scott this evening, and I also learned from the keeper of the ice-cream saloon that you changed a five-dollar bill there a week since. I have told Scott to come back to the store. As for you, you deserve to be punished. I shall therefore reduce your allowance from a dollar a week to fifty cents till the sum you stole has been made up. Now, you can go upstairs to bed.”

Loammi shed tears of vexation.

“Now Scott will be crowing over me,” he thought to himself. “I can’t stand it; I think I will run away.”

But he was spared this humiliation.

Scott went into Mr. Little's store the next day and sought the proprietor.

"You can come back to work on Monday morning," said Ezra, "and you can go round to the house this evening."

"Thank you, sir; but I have got another place."

"Another place? Where?"

"With Tower, Douglas & Co."

Ezra Little was very much surprised, for the firm mentioned was in the wholesale line and stood very high.

"Mr. Wood, the gentleman that was with me last evening, recommended me."

"Very well," said Mr. Little, curtly. "You will bear in mind that I offered you your position back. Of course, if you lose your new place I can make no promises."

"Then I will try not to lose it."

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### A NEW PLACE.

THE house of Tower, Douglas & Co. occupied a very high position in New York, and was known by reputation all over the country. The firm was liberal and considerate, and there were plenty of boys and young men who sought to enter their establishment.

Rich men sometimes offered the services of their sons, but Mr. Tower was never willing to accept them.

“A boy who works for nothing,” he said, “is worth only what he receives. He loses his self-respect, and has no ambition to rise.”

Generally, however, the wages paid to beginners were small, not over three or four dollars a week.

Of course it was impossible for Scott to live on such pay. Justin Wood was a relative of Mrs. Tower, and being personally liked by her husband, was the better able to secure favors.

When he obtained Scott's engagement he said: “Now as to the rate of compensation, Mr. Tower; how much are you willing to pay my young friend?”

“We usually pay three dollars a week. We will stretch a point and make it four in the case of young Walton.”

“I want you to pay him ten dollars a week.”

Mr. Tower looked amazed.

“Impossible!” he exclaimed. “You must be crazy.”

“The boy is wholly dependent on what he earns.”

“That may be; but I am under no obligation to support him.”

“True,” said Justin Wood, smiling, “but you may charge the extra six dollars to me.”

“That will make a difference; but suppose

our other employees find it out; then there will be dissatisfaction."

"Then let him understand that he is only paid ten dollars as a special favor to me, and that the arrangement must be kept strictly secret."

"That will do; but suppose he does not meet our expectations?"

"He will. You need be under no apprehensions. I am something of a judge of boys, and I can assure you that he has a talent for business."

"I will take your word for it until I have a chance to judge for myself."

When Scott was informed that he would receive ten dollars a week he was delighted, and thanked Mr. Tower warmly.

"I am afraid I can't earn that sum, sir," he said.

"I know you can't," said the merchant, "but Mr. Wood is a cousin of my wife, and it is on his account that I pay you so liberal a salary. I expect you to work zealously so that you may deserve it."

"Thank you, sir; I will."

Scott spoke confidently, and Mr. Tower was pleased with his modest self-assurance.

"I don't think Justin is deceived in the boy," he said to himself. "At any rate, I will give him a fair chance."

Six months later, when Justin Wood called and asked how Scott was progressing, Mr.



Tower said: "He is a born salesman. He is quick, shrewd, intelligent, and, above all, he inspires confidence in customers. We will hereafter pay him ten dollars a week on our own account, and will not ask you to reimburse us. But we will not raise him above that till the end of the year."

"That is perfectly satisfactory. I have only one favor to ask."

"What is that?"

"Send him on the road as soon as you consider him competent. I think he will make a successful drummer."

"That is my intention. Some of my salesmen can never go outside the store. Young Walton will make a good record outside."

Scott had been with the new firm for a month, when Seth Lawton returned from Chicago. He was much pleased at Scott's success, but understood very well that he was indebted for it to the friendly offices of Justin Wood.

"Do your best, Scott," he said. "You are at the bottom of the ladder, but you must climb. Your future depends on yourself. Do you ever see anything of Loammi?"

"I have met him two or three times. He seems surprised, and I think a little disappointed, at my success."

"Does he know how much you receive?"

"No; I promised to keep that secret. But he knows that I live in a comfortable boarding-

house on Lexington Avenue, and have a good room. If he knew I was paid ten dollars a week he would want to borrow money. His father has reduced his allowance to fifty cents a week, and he complains that he might as well be a newsboy. 'Don't you think the old man is mean?' he asked me yesterday?"

"And what did you reply?"

"I told him that I didn't care to criticise his father."

"Good! I see you are discreet. What is Ezra going to do with his son? Will he train him up to business?"

"Loammi says he is going to Columbia College, or perhaps to Yale."

"He will never get there. He won't study hard enough."

"So I think, Cousin Seth. I wish I had the chance."

"Would you really like to go to college, Scott?" asked Seth Lawton, thoughtfully.

"No, I think not as I am at present situated. I could not enter before I am eighteen, and by that time I shall be well advanced in the knowledge of business."

"I think you are right, but I advise you to study, and read instructive books in your leisure hours."

"I am doing that, Cousin Seth, and I am thinking soon of taking a commercial course in some business college."

"Do so, and I will pay the bill for tuition."

“I can afford to pay that myself, cousin. You are too generous. That is what keeps you poor.”

Seth Lawton smiled.

“Oh, I am not so unselfish as you suppose,” he said. “I make enough to live comfortably.”

“Yes, Cousin Seth, but you ought to be saving up money. You are no longer a young man.”

“I should think not, at fifty-five.”

“And suppose you get sick, how are you to live?”

“Don’t you think Ezra Little would take care of me?”

Scott laughed.

“I am afraid not,” he answered, “but you have another relative who would be glad to help you.”

“Meaning yourself.”

“Yes.”

“Good boy!” said Seth, and he looked moved. “Yes, I think you would be willing to help me if I were in need, but at present you have only enough for yourself.”

“I am saving a little money, cousin.”

“What! Out of ten dollars a week?”

“Yes. Ten dollars a week is quite a liberal salary.”

“You are right. It will do you no harm to be economical. By the way, has Ezra Little

never returned to you the forty dollars you placed in his hands?"

"No."

"You should ask him for it."

"I would rather not," said Scott, shrinking.

"But it is rightfully yours. He has no excuse for keeping it."

"I don't think I would like to speak to him on the subject," said Scott, thoughtfully.

"Then I will."

In fact, Mr. Lawton lost no time in doing as he proposed. He called at Ezra Little's house and broached the subject.

"Ezra," he said. "I understand that you have forty dollars belonging to Scott."

"I don't look upon it in that light," said Mr. Little, coldly. "I gave the boy a place in my store."

"And all you gave him was his board."

"True; but that was more than he earned."

"I don't agree with you. It strikes me, Ezra, that it is small business to take the boy's small capital and appropriate it to your own use."

Ezra Little looked incensed.

"Mr. Lawton," he said, "it strikes me that your interference is impertinent."

"On the contrary, as Scott has no one else to speak up for him, I consider that, as his near relative, it is my duty to do it."

"If you had attended to your own affairs,

instead of meddling with others, you would not be in danger of going to the poor house, as you are at present."

"Am I?" asked Seth, looking amused. "You seem to know a good deal about my affairs."

"I don't suppose you have a hundred dollars in the world. If you should be in need you mustn't expect me to help you."

"I shall not. You are pretty safe on that score, Ezra."

"I see you are poor and proud. However, I am glad to hear it."

"Then suppose we return to Scott's money. Are you prepared to give it back?"

"No, I am not."

"I don't think it will do you any good. Robbing the orphan——"

"Mr. Lawton, I will not submit to such insinuations. If Scott should lose his position, as he is likely to do if he is guided by your advice, I will help him out of the money in my hands."

"Very well; I will hold you to that. However, I don't think he is likely to be placed in that predicament."

"How much does he receive from Tower, Douglas & Co.?"

"More than you paid him. However, I will not occupy any more of your time. If you become ashamed of your meanness, you can let me know."

“Seth Lawton, I won’t stand any more of your impertinence. You appear to forget who I am.”

“I am not likely to forget who and what you are, Ezra. Good-evening!”

“The beggar!” soliloquized the merchant. “He need never expect any favors from me. He will yet repent his impertinence.”

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE POOR INVENTOR.

HAD Scott spent all his salary he could not have been charged with extravagance, for ten dollars a week in a large city melts away, but he made it a matter of principle to save two dollars weekly. So at the end of a year he had one hundred dollars, and was fairly well clothed.

It was on the last day of the year that he received a summons to the office.

He answered it with some little trepidation, for it was possible that the firm had decided to dispense with his services.

“Take a seat, Scott,” said Mr. Tower, pleasantly, when he entered the office. “I believe you have been with us for a year.”

“Yes, sir.”

“We are quite satisfied with you. You have shown ability as a salesman, and have taken an intelligent interest in the business. For this reason we are disposed to promote you.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Scott, much gratified.

“Though you are unusually young, we are disposed to try you on the road. How would you like that?”

“I should like nothing better.”

“Your compensation, if you are successful, would be considerably greater than you are now paid. How much, will depend on your success.”

“I should be quite content with that arrangement, sir.”

“We shall start you out probably within a week. One of our salesmen is sick, and we shall put you on his route. You will go to Cleveland and intermediate places. You will receive your instructions in due time.”

“Thank you, sir.”

Scott left the office much elated. He knew that there was no drummer employed by the firm less than twenty-three years of age, while he was barely eighteen. He resolved to succeed if success were possible, for he felt that this would give him an important position and an excellent income.

“How fortunate I did not stay with Cousin Ezra,” he thought. “If I had, probably I should not be receiving more than six dollars a week now.”

Scott, as has already been said, boarded on Lexington Avenue. He occupied a small room, and paid but five dollars a week, but those who occupied the larger rooms paid in proportion to the accommodation enjoyed.

In the room just opposite to his lived a man of about forty, whom Scott had met more than once on the stairs, but did not feel well acquainted with.

Just after supper he was preparing to go out, when there was a knock at the door.

Opening it, he found that the caller was his opposite neighbor. He was looking pale and depressed.

"Can you lend me a few matches?" he asked.

"Certainly, Mr. Babcock; won't you step in and sit down?" said Scott, cordially.

The visitor hesitated, then said, slowly: "I will do so, but I shall not be very good company."

"I am glad of the chance of making your acquaintance," said Scott. "I have only seen you on the stairs heretofore."

"I don't think you will see much more of me," said the visitor, soberly.

"Why not? Are you intending to move away?"

"It is not exactly a matter of choice," said Babcock.

Scott could guess why, for his visitor was very poorly clad. His suit was frayed and



rusty, and there were unmistakable marks of poverty about his whole appearance.

Scott felt delicate about speaking of this. He contented himself with saying: "I am sorry to hear it."

"The fact is," went on Babcock, with a sigh, "I am a failure, and have just begun to realize it."

"If you wouldn't mind telling me about it," said Scott, gently, "I can at least sympathize with you."

"Sympathy will be welcome. It is long since I have had any."

He paused, and presently continued:

"You must know that I am an inventor. I need say no more to satisfy you that I am a visionary and unpractical man."

"I don't know about that. There have been many successful inventors."

"And I might be one but for one unfortunate circumstance."

"What is that, sir?"

"I have used up all my money, and though the invention is perfected, I am unable to reap the benefit of it."

"Would you mind telling me the nature of your invention?"

"It is a window fastener. You may think it a trifle, but it is the small inventions which from their nature come into common use, and thus pay the best."

“I can understand that. How long have you been at work on your invention?”

“A year. I had a little money when I began, and it has supported me while I was at work. Now that the invention is perfected, I am without funds. I may as well be plain, and say that I cannot pay my next week’s board.”

“Couldn’t you get some man with money to help you?”

“It is what I have been hoping for. In fact, I called yesterday on a prominent merchant, and laid the matter before him.”

“Who was it, Mr. Babcock?”

“Ezra Little.”

Scott looked surprised.

“He is a relative of mine,” he said. “How did he treat you?”

“He listened to what I had to say, and promised to write to me. He did so. Shall I show you the letter?”

“If you are willing.”

The inventor drew from his pocket a type-written letter, and showed it to Scott. It ran thus:

“MR. HENRY BABCOCK.

“DEAR SIR: I have thought over the small invention you showed me yesterday. I doubt if there is any money in it, but as I presume you are in want, I will give you thirty-five dollars for it. I can stand the small loss, and it

will tide you over till you can get a position that will support you.

Yours truly.

“EZRA LITTLE.”

“Mr. Little is not very liberal,” said Scott, smiling.

“No,” answered the inventor, bitterly. “Think of the year’s labor I have spent upon it, and the prospect before me if I accept this paltry sum. With economy it would last me a month, and then what would become of me?”

“True, but there are other men besides Mr. Little, who might perhaps deal with you more generously.”

“You are right, but I don’t think you understand my position. My available funds are reduced to two dollars. Sometimes in my desperation I have thought I would go down to Brooklyn Bridge, and end it all. I think I should have done so but for one thing.”

“What is that?” asked Scott, beginning to show a strong personal interest in his unfortunate visitor.

“I have a little daughter—four years old. I must live for her.”

“Yes, you must live for her, and yourself, too. You may yet be successful.”

“Do you perhaps know of some capitalist?” asked the inventor, eagerly.

“I know of a gentleman who is well supplied with money, and I will lay the matter before

him. Meanwhile, as you need money, accept this loan."

Scott drew from his pocket two-five dollar bills and tendered them to Mr. Babcock.

"You have given me new life and new hope," said the inventor, his pale face brightening. "Who is the gentleman?"

"A Mr. Wood—Justin Wood. He lives at the Gilsey House, and he has been very kind to me. In fact, I owe the position I hold to him."

"Is he—a practical man? Would he see the possibilities of my invention?"

"I can't say, but out of regard to me he would give it consideration."

"When can we see him? Excuse my impatience, but you can understand how much it means to me."

"I do, Mr. Babcock, and I will therefore go with you to his hotel this very evening, though we may possibly not find him in."

"If you will be so kind, I will get ready at once."

In five minutes they were on their way to the Gilsey House.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## EZRA LITTLE'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

ARRIVED at the Gilsey House, Scott went into the reading-room, thinking he might find Mr. Wood there. But he failed to see him.

"Whom are you looking for?" asked Edward Stripling, the telephone boy, who occupied one corner of the room.

"Mr. Wood."

"Perhaps you are the one he wanted to see. He told me to tell any one inquiring, that he would be back in fifteen minutes."

"Then we shan't have to wait long, Mr. Babcock."

The inventor took up a paper from the table, but he was so nervous that he could not concentrate his attention upon it.

Ten minutes later Justin Wood entered the room.

"I am glad to see you, Scott," was his cordial greeting.

"Thank you, Mr. Wood. I come on business. Let me introduce Mr. Babcock."

"Glad to see you, Mr. Babcock," said Wood, courteously.

"Could we go up to your room? We won't keep you long."

“Certainly. Follow me.”

Mr. Wood had a front room on the third floor—a pleasant apartment, for which he paid a high rent.

“Now, Mr. Wood,” began Scott, “I am going to ask your attention for ten minutes.”

“I will give you fifteen, if necessary,” said Wood, smiling.

Thereupon Scott told the story of the inventor, to which Justin Wood listened attentively.

“Have you a model of your invention?” he asked, turning to Babcock.

“Here it is, sir.”

The young man asked various questions, which Babcock answered satisfactorily.

“I think well of your invention,” said Mr. Wood, in conclusion. “Now, what do you want me to do?”

Scott answered.

“Mr. Babcock has exhausted all his means and is penniless,” he said. “The invention is perfected, but he is not in a position to put it before the public. He has, to be sure, received offers of assistance from a gentleman whom we both know.”

“To whom do you refer?”

“Ezra Little.”

“Indeed! Is that liberal gentleman willing to help him?”

“He offers me thirty-five dollars for the invention,” said Babcock, bitterly. “I have

spent a whole year in perfecting it, and this is to be my compensation."

"I think you had better not trouble Mr. Little," observed Justin, quietly. "How much money do you need to put it before the public?"

"If I had one hundred and fifty dollars," said the inventor, hesitatingly, "I think I could manage. I would be willing to sell a one-half interest for that sum."

"That would not be enough," said Wood, decidedly.

"With it I should stand some chance of success."

"I will tell you what I will do. I will give you five hundred dollars for one-third interest, on condition that you work zealously to make it a success."

"Oh, sir, you are too generous," said Babcock, with emotion. "With that money I see my way clear."

"What would be your plan?"

"I can make arrangements with a responsible party to manufacture it, and will myself travel and put it before the public."

"I will risk it."

"I am sure, sir, that you will get your money back several times over."

"I hope so. I am not buying it for myself, but for a friend of mine."

Scott looked at him inquiringly.

"The friend is Scott Walton," he said, smil-

ing. "Should it pay, I shall deduct the five hundred dollars from the first money received in the way of profit, and then make over the whole investment to you, Scott. I hope it may make you rich."

"How can I thank you, Mr. Wood?" said Scott, gratefully.

"Wait till you see whether you have anything to be grateful for."

"There is no doubt about that," said the inventor, confidently. "You will excuse me for saying, Mr. Wood, that I shall work even harder for my young friend Walton than I would for you."

"That is just what I wish. I am already rich, while Scott has his fortune yet to make."

"I will help him to make it."

"Come around to-morrow, Mr. Babcock, at ten o'clock, and I will have the money ready. We will also have papers regularly drawn up, so that Scott's share of the investment may be secured to him. And now, I shall have to bid you good-evening, as I have an engagement with a friend at the Union League Club."

The two went out.

The inventor was fairly radiant.

"Mr. Walton," he said, "you don't know what you have done for me. You have given me a new lease of life. When I came to your room to-night I was in a mood that might have led me to throw myself from the Brooklyn Bridge. Mr. Little's cold-blooded letter had



much to do with bringing on that mood. I felt that there was no hope for me."

"And now?"

"Now I have hope—and confidence. I have a presentiment of success. I shall make myself rich and you also."

"I hope your presentiment will prove prophetic," said Scott, smiling. "I can assure you that a fortune will be welcome. At present I have only accumulated one hundred dollars."

"That's not bad for a young man of your age."

"Say a boy. I am not ashamed of being a boy."

"Remember I am speaking of my partner. I must speak of him with respect."

"Did I tell you I was going to leave the city for a time?"

"No. Why is it? You have not lost your place, I hope."

"No, I am going to travel for the firm. If I am lucky I shall soon earn an excellent income."

"You are sure to do that."

"How can you tell that I will succeed?"

"I was not referring to your regular position. I was thinking of your interest in my invention."

"You are confident, then, of success?"

"I am quite confident of it."

"I hope you are right; mostly, however, on

your account, for I think my future is tolerably secure."

"I see you have no idea of the value of your interest in my enterprise."

"I shall not think seriously of it, but I will welcome any good that may come to me from it."

"My life will be changed," said Babcock. "I shall at once send for my little Molly."

"Is that your little daughter?"

"Yes."

"Where is she now?"

"In the country. Now, I shall feel justified in bringing her to the city. She is a sweet little girl."

"I am sure you will be happier for having her with you."

"Yes, you may well say that."

"By the way, have you answered Ezra Little's letter?"

"No; I shall answer it in person to-morrow, after I have concluded arrangements with your friend."

About two o'clock the next day, the inventor took his way to Ezra Little's dry-goods store on Eighth Avenue. He sent in his name and was admitted.

He was a welcome visitor, for Mr. Little, who was a practical man, had a fair conception of the value of his invention, and meant to make a fortune out of it—for himself. As for the poor inventor, he cared little for him.

Henry Babcock entered the merchant's presence, and was bidden to take a seat.

"I received a letter from you, Mr. Little," he said.

"Yes. I offered you thirty-five dollars for your invention."

"That seems to me very small."

"Probably it is more than I shall make out of it, but you seemed to be in need, and I am willing to help you."

"Don't you think, however, you could let me have more? Thirty-five dollars would not support me a month."

"It would give you time to look for a place."

"But, Mr. Little, think of the time I have spent—and the money!"

"That does not concern me," said the merchant, coldly.

"I think I shall have to decline your offer."

"That is foolish. However, I will strain a point, and give you fifty dollars."

Henry Babcock shook his head.

"Mr. Little," he said, triumphantly, "I have sold a one-third interest in my invention for five hundred dollars."

Ezra Little looked amazed and disappointed. It was a chance of his life lost.

"What fool gave you that sum?" he asked, roughly.

"A Mr. Wood, to whom your cousin, Scott Walton, introduced me."

“Why didn't you tell me that at first?” snarled Ezra Little. “Wood must have been a fool to be influenced by that boy. Good-morning!”

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### LOAMMI HEARS GOOD NEWS.

ON the Monday succeeding, Scott started on his trip with a supply of samples and full instructions. His route extended as far as Cleveland, including Albany and the principal towns in New York State, besides some in Ohio.

He traveled slowly, having been told to make a thorough canvass of the places he visited.

He was everywhere well received. His bright, pleasant manner made friends, and though sometimes his youth proved at first an obstacle, in a short time he won the confidence of customers. It became clear that he understood his business.

“You are rather young to represent such a large firm as Tower, Douglas & Co.,” said a careful Scotch merchant in Syracuse.

“I think so myself,” answered Scott, good-humoredly.

“Have they any other drummers as young?”

“I don't think so. In fact, I know they have not.”

"How did they come to make an exception in your case?"

"I don't know, unless it was out of kindness."

"Then you don't think it was because you were extra smart?" asked the merchant, pointedly.

"Time will show whether I am or not," said Scott, smiling.

"Well, I will ask you a few questions, and then I can judge for myself."

Scott answered these questions freely and intelligently. He seemed to understand the different qualities of the goods he carried, and would not allow himself to make any claims for them that could not be substantiated. As a result, Mr. Cameron bought a large order.

"I begin to understand why you were selected," he said.

"I hope you think the firm was justified."

"I do. You understand your business, and you make no misrepresentations."

"Thank you, sir."

"If ever you leave your present place I will give you a position."

"Thank you still more. I will remember it."

At Elmira, Scott received the following in a letter from Mr. Douglas, the junior partner: "You are doing finely. You are beating the record."

This pleased Scott. He did not know

whether he had done as well as was anticipated, but this reassured him.

Two days after Scott started on his mission, Loammi entered the store on a visit instigated by curiosity. It was partly also at the suggestion of his father, who thought through Scott's influence he might redeem his error and obtain an interest in the invention, which he believed would be very profitable.

Entering the store, Loammi looked about him, and finally spoke to a young man near the door.

"Is a boy named Scott Walton employed here?" he asked.

The clerk addressed was a friend of Scott, and guessed who it was that was inquiring about him. He was tempted to play a joke on Loammi.

"There was a clerk here by that name," he answered, slowly.

"Isn't he here now?"

"He left us two or three days since."

"Has he got another place?"

"I don't think so."

Loammi brightened up. It seemed too good news to be true. His despised cousin had been discharged.

Loammi could not have heard anything that would have pleased him more.

"Do you know why he was discharged?" he asked, eagerly.

“No, I don’t,” answered the other, with a twinkle in his eye. “Do you know him?”

“Yes; he is a distant relation of mine.”

“Then perhaps you can judge better than I why he did not give satisfaction.”

“I am not at all surprised. He was too fresh. That was the matter with him.”

“Dear me! How unfortunate!”

“Yes; he’ll never stay long anywhere. Pa had him in his store for a while—Ezra Little’s store, Eighth Avenue—but he was obliged to send him away.”

“And are you Mr. Little’s son?” asked the young clerk, with mock deference.

“Yes; I am his only son,” answered Loammi, loftily.

“Dear me! I am proud to know you. And I suppose you will some time own the store?”

“Probably, though I am not sure but I may become a lawyer. Do you know where Walton lives?”

“No. There are so many in the store that I know the residences of very few.”

Loammi took his departure in a very complacent frame of mind. He had always been jealous of Scott, and the intelligence that he had lost his place was very agreeable to him.

It so happened that on Broadway he met Seth Lawton, whom he had not seen for a good while. Under ordinary circumstances he would have taken no notice of him, but now he had an object in speaking to him.

“Good-morning, Mr. Lawton,” he said, condescendingly.

“Oh, good-morning, Loammi,” rejoined the old man, who was short-sighted, when he realized who it was that had addressed him.

“Where do you think I have been?”

“I am sure I cannot tell.”

“I have been to the store of Tower, Douglas & Co., to call upon Scott.”

“Indeed! That was very kind of you.”

“And you can imagine my surprise to find that he had been discharged.”

“Is it possible?” ejaculated Seth, who at once guessed how Loammi had been misled.

“Yes.”

“That is a great pity. Perhaps your father will take him back into his store.”

“I don’t think he will. If he don’t do for Tower, Douglas & Co., he won’t do for pa.”

“But the poor boy must live.”

“Oh, well,” said Loammi, carelessly, “he can get a chance to sell papers or—black boots.”

“Surely your father would not allow his young cousin to sink to that employment.”

“Pa wouldn’t interfere. I have heard him say that he has washed his hands of Scott. If he had behaved himself it would have been different.”

“Poor boy! I must see what I can do for him.”

“You’d better not, Cousin Seth. You are a



poor man, and it will be all you can do to look after yourself."

"Still, Loammi, consider Scott's position."

"He must look out for himself. I advise you not to call round and ask pa to take him back."

"I must think what I can do for him."

"The old man feels pretty bad," thought Loammi. "Well, they are a good match. For my part I don't think much of personal relations."

Loammi hurried home to impart the welcome news to his father.

"What do you think, pa?" he burst out. "Scott's lost his position."

"Is this true, Loammi?" asked his father, in some surprise.

"Yes, pa; I went to the store this morning, and one of the clerks told me."

"Do you know what was the matter?"

"Oh, I suppose he was too fresh. Now, I suppose, he will be trying to come back to you."

"I might agree to take him if he would come back on the old terms."

"You don't mean it, pa! After he has lost his place, too!"

"Oh, well, I could look after him. He would be worth his board."

"One thing, he couldn't put on any airs after his disgrace. By the way, I met Mr. Lawton on Broadway."

"Cousin Seth?"

“Yes.”

“Did he have anything to say about Scott’s discharge?”

“He didn’t appear to know anything about it till I told him.”

“Do you know where Scott boards?”

“No.”

“Oh, well, he will probably be coming around to see me after a while. I should like to have him, as I want to get at that inventor through him.”

“Do you think there’s money in it, pa?”

“As I should manage it there might be,” said his father, cautiously.

Mr. Little looked for Scott from day to day, but three weeks passed and he heard nothing from him.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### AT NIAGARA FALLS.

ON his way back from Cleveland, Scott, having the necessary leisure, stopped a couple of days at Niagara Falls. He registered his name at the Clinton House, on the Canada side.

He lost no time in visiting the objects of interest connected with the falls, and at the close of the first day sat on the piazza, with the falls in sight.

A blond-bearded young man of perhaps twenty-five, evidently an Englishman, sat near by. He looked at Scott once or twice, as if tempted to speak, but a certain reticence characteristic of his countrymen appeared to prevent.

Scott observed this, and made a remark by way of opening a conversation.

"Yes," answered the young man, "you are right. The falls are grand. You Americans ought to be very proud of them."

"But," said Scott, smiling, "I am not an American."

The Englishman looked surprised, for Scott, though he had only been in America a year, had come to resemble the people among whom he had cast his lot.

"What, then, are you?" inquired his new acquaintance, looking puzzled.

"I was born in England."

"Indeed!" said the other. "Then we are countrymen."

"I am glad to know it," said Scott, courteously.

"How long have you been in America, if I may ask?"

"A little more than a year."

"And do you live in Canada?"

"No, I live in New York."

"You are not—in business?" queried the Englishman, noticing his youthful appearance.

“Oh, yes, I am employed by a New York firm.”

“But how do you happen—excuse my asking—to be here? But perhaps it is your vacation.”

“No, I am traveling for the firm. I am a traveling salesman for the house of Tower, Douglas & Co.”

“That is a large firm, I have heard.”

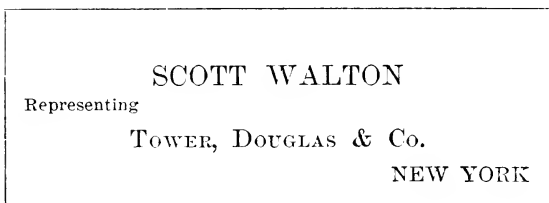
“One of the largest in New York.”

“I confess I am puzzled. You occupy such a responsible position, and yet you are so young.”

“I believe my case is exceptional. I am the youngest traveler for our house.”

“I rejoice in your success, since you are an English boy. May I ask your name?”

Scott handed his new acquaintance a card like this:



“Thank you,” said the other.

He took from his pocket a card, from which Scott learned that he was Lord Cecil Grant, Earl of Windermere.

“I am honored in making your acquaint-

ance," said Scott. "May I say that you seem young to be an earl? I fancied all earls were at least fifty years of age."

"I wish that I had waited till fifty for my title," said the young Englishman, gravely; "but my poor father died suddenly, six months ago, and partly to dissipate my grief I came to America."

"Have you been here long, my lord?" asked Scott, not knowing exactly how to address his distinguished companion.

"Never mind the title," said the earl, smiling. "It comes awkwardly to an American to use it, and you are already half an American."

"What shall I call you, then?"

"You may call me Mr. Grant, if you like. If you come to know me better, you may call me Cecil. I shall take the liberty, since you are a boy, to call you Scott."

As he spoke there was a winning smile upon his face, and Scott felt that he should like him.

"I will try to forget that you are an earl," he said, "and then I shall feel more at home with you."

"What do you say to a walk, Scott? The evening is too fine to spend here."

"I shall be delighted."

He put on his hat, and the two sauntered off together. They were both good walkers, and had covered several miles before they returned to the hotel.

“I wish I had met you before, Scott,” said the earl, familiarly. “Won’t you tell me something about yourself, and your history? I am sure you have one.”

Almost before he knew it, Scott had told the story already familiar to the reader. The earl listened with evident interest.

“Really,” he said, “it is worthy of telling in book form. That uncle of yours——”

“My mother’s cousin,” corrected Scott.

“No matter. We will say relative. He must certainly be a mean, disagreeable fellow, don’t you know, and as to your cousin with the peculiar name——”

“Loammi.”

“Yes, I never heard the name before. Well, he must be a cad.”

“I think he is,” said Scott, smiling; “but I assure you he considers himself infinitely above me.”

“I shall not ask you for an introduction.”

“He would like nothing better than to become acquainted with you, Mr. Grant.”

“You compliment me. Well, here we are at the hotel. What are your plans for to-morrow? I hope you do not leave in the morning?”

“No; I shall spend another day here.”

“Why not spend it together?”

“I should like nothing better,” said Scott, sincerely.

“Then we will do so. I will secure a car-

riage in the morning, and we will make a day of it."

He was as good as his word, and Scott had a delightful time. He almost succeeded in forgetting his companion's rank, and found him a congenial companion.

Just after supper, when the earl had gone up to his room, a pretentious-looking man of middle age, who seemed to be continually trying to assert his claim to superiority, came up to Scott.

"Boy," he said, "I understand there is an English earl staying at the hotel?"

"Yes, sir. It is the Earl of Windermere."

"Have you seen him? Could you point him out to me?"

"He has gone up to his room, but will probably be back almost immediately."

"How shall I know him?"

"He will come up and speak to me, and then we shall probably go out to walk together."

"Are you a friend of the earl?" asked Mr. Burton, in surprise.

"I think I may call myself so. We have been together all day."

Mr. Burton regarded Scott with new respect. He had unceremoniously called him "boy," but it was before he knew that he was a friend of an earl.

"Would you kindly introduce me?" he asked, eagerly.

"I am not quite sure whether he would be willing," returned Scott, with hesitation.

“Would you mind asking him?”

“If you will let me know your name, sir.”

“I am Nathan Burton, of Albany. I have been an alderman,” said the other, consequentially.

“I hope you may yet be mayor,” answered Scott, amused.

“Stranger things have happened,” rejoined Mr. Burton, complacently. “Did you come over with the earl?”

“A year earlier,” returned Scott, gravely.

From this Mr. Burton inferred that they had been friends on the other side.

“And your name is——”

“Scott Walton.”

“An aristocratic name!” thought the Albany alderman. “Are you related to the earl?”

“No, sir. We are only friends.”

At this moment the earl entered the room, and at once went up to Scott.

“Are you ready for a walk, Scott?” he said, familiarly.

“Yes, but first——” And here in a low voice Scott communicated Mr. Burton’s request.

The earl looked around at the alderman and seemed amused.

“Very well,” he said, smiling.

At a signal, Mr. Burton approached.

“My lord,” said Scott, formally, “allow me to present Mr. Alderman Burton, of Albany.”



Mr. Burton bowed profoundly.

"I am glad to become acquainted with a representative American," said the earl, in a dignified voice, quite different from his tone in talking with Scott.

"My lord earl, I feel very much honored to make your acquaintance," said Mr. Burton, with another profound bow.

"I believe you Americans have no titles," said the earl.

"No, my lord; but I should be in favor of having them."

"In that case, you might become Earl of Albany."

"You do me proud, indeed you do, my lord," said the gratified alderman.

"I am sorry to leave you so soon, but my young friend and I propose to have a walk."

"Don't let me detain you, my lord. If I might dare to ask one favor——"

"What is it, sir?"

"If you would favor me with your card."

With a smile, the earl produced the coveted bit of pasteboard and handed it to the alderman.

When they were fairly out of the hotel, both laughed merrily.

"Do you want me to be as respectful as Mr. Alderman Burton?" asked Scott.

"No, be yourself, Scott. That will suit me better."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## AN ADVENTURE.

SCOTT intended to start on his homeward journey the next morning, but an hour before he was to leave he received a telegram to the following effect :

“ Wait for letter. TOWER.”

Scott understood at once that the letter would contain instructions from the firm, and therefore informed the earl that he would remain a day longer.

“ That will suit me admirably,” said the earl. “ If you are at leisure, we will take a long drive.”

“ I shall have nothing to do till I receive my letter,” answered Scott.

“ Then you can join me? ”

“ I shall be glad to do so.”

It turned out that the earl wished to ride across the country to a point some twenty miles distant. What the attraction was it is not necessary here to state. Probably the trip was undertaken chiefly for the drive.

At the end of twenty miles a village was reached, which contained a passable hotel. Here the two tourists dined, and did not leave on their return till about six o'clock.

"We shall be rather late," said the earl.  
"Still, our horse is a good one, and we ought to reach the hotel in two hours, or little more."

"That won't be very late."

"Then we can stop on the way somewhere."

When the travelers had proceeded half a dozen miles on their way, the horse suddenly showed signs of lameness. What had occasioned it neither could tell, but as he appeared to be in pain, it was decided, upon consultation, to stop at the next house and make arrangements to pass the night. It would be easy to start again on the following morning with the horse they had, or, if necessary, a substitute. Neither felt in haste, and the time lost would not be serious.

The next house proved to be situated on the edge of the woods. It occupied a lonely location, and seemed in rather a dilapidated state. Everything about it bore an aspect of neglect.

Scott jumped from the carriage, and went to the door.

It was opened, after he had knocked two or three times, by a careworn woman of middle age. Her face was lined, and she wore a look of depression and discouragement.

"What's your will?" she asked.

"Our horse has fallen lame, and we would like to stop here overnight, and let the horse rest. I see you have a barn."

"I don't know," said the woman, slowly.  
"We don't keep a hotel."

"I am quite aware of that, and we must apologize for intruding. We shall give you some trouble, but we are willing to pay for it. If five dollars will compensate you we will be glad to pay that sum for supper, lodging and breakfast for ourselves, and accommodation for our horse."

The woman seemed surprised by the liberality of the offer. In such a household five dollars was a good deal of money.

"You can come in," she said, "and I will get you some supper. My man will soon be home, and if he is willing you can stay all night."

"I hope he will soon be back, as we would like to know what to depend upon."

"He'll be here in an hour, likely."

"May we put the horse in the barn?"

"Yes, if you can do it yourself. There ain't no men folks 'round."

"Oh, yes, we will attend to it."

"I'll go right to work getting supper. I've got some eggs and bacon in the house, if that will do you."

"That will do very well, I think. You can give us some tea, too, I presume?"

"Yes, or you can have some whisky. My man always wants some."

"Thank you, but I think we should prefer tea."

"That's just as you like. I have tea for

myself. My man won't drink it. He says it's only fit for women."

"Consider us women, then," said Scott, laughing. "I will go and tell my friend that you will receive us."

"If my man agrees."

"That is understood."

"What is your friend's name?"

"Mr. Grant," answered Scott, knowing that the earl would not care to have his rank known in such a place. It might have led to extravagant terms for the accommodation rendered, and Scott considered that he had already offered liberal compensation.

He communicated to the earl the result of his mission.

"Do you think we shall get decent fare?" the earl inquired.

"I think so, but we may have to rough it a little. It won't be equal to our hotel."

"Oh, well, it will be an adventure. I have roughed it before."

"I thought earls always fared luxuriously," said Scott, smiling.

"Earls, as well as other men, are subject to circumstances, and can rough it, if necessary. Some time I will tell you how I fared in Italy last winter. I confess that my appetite has been sharpened, and I am exceedingly hungry."

"So am I. We are to have bacon and eggs. I hope you have no prejudice against such a dish."

"No, it is a favorite with me. My only apprehension is, that they won't have enough to satisfy me."

In the barn the visitors found stalls for two horses, both of them unoccupied. They unharnessed their horse, or rather Scott did, for the earl, who had always had this work done for him, seemed awkward and inexperienced.

"I am sorry to put all the work upon you, Scott," he said.

"Never mind. It is no trouble."

"I suppose I ought to be ashamed of my awkwardness."

"I can easily understand that you never had to do it. In England, father for a time kept a horse, and I had the care of him."

When the horse was safely stalled, Scott and the earl came out into the yard.

"Shall we go into the house?" asked Scott.

"No, we might be in the way. Here is a fence rail. We can sit upon that."

"You are making yourself very democratic," Scott said.

"Why should I not be?"

"Our new acquaintance, Mr. Alderman Burton, would be surprised to see you sitting on a fence rail."

"I shouldn't do it before him. I should keep up my dignity, or he might be shocked."

"What do you think he asked me last evening, when you were out of the room?"

"What was it?"

“He asked me if you ever dined with the queen?”

“What did you answer?”

“Only when you were invited.”

“Quite correct. As a matter of fact, I don't think I ever was honored by such an invitation, or, as we consider it, a command.”

“He also asked me to inquire of you whether the queen wore her crown at the dinner-table.”

“Poor old lady; I should pity her if she were obliged to do so.”

Half an hour later the woman came to the door, and looking toward them, called out:

“Supper's ready.”

“And so am I,” said the earl, in a low voice. “I hope our hostess has made a liberal provision for us.”

On entering the kitchen, where the table was spread, they found she had done so. A dozen eggs, flanked by several slices of bacon, were on a dish in the center, and there was an ample supply of butter and corn bread.

An expression of profound satisfaction lit up the faces of the two travelers.

“Thank you, madam, for kindly complying with our request. We appreciate it the more because we know you do not keep a hotel.”

“I hope you'll like it,” replied the woman. “I misremember what the boy said your name was.”

“Mr. Grant,” said Scott.

“Is he your brother?”

“No; my name is Walton.”

“Be you in any business, Mr. Grant?” asked the woman, who began to show curiosity.

“No, madam, not at present. I am an Englishman. Possibly my friend and I might buy out a store in Buffalo.”

Scott could scarcely forbear smiling. It seemed a great joke to him to think of going into a business partnership with an earl.

They ate supper with evident enjoyment. They had about concluded it, when a heavy step was heard outside.

“That is my man,” said the woman, nervously.

Scott and the earl looked up with curiosity to see him enter.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### RED RALPH.

THE man who entered was of medium height, thickset, and his hair and beard were red. His face was far from prepossessing.

He looked at the visitors, and then at his wife, inquiringly.

“So you have company?” he said.

“Yes, Ralph,” answered the woman, rather nervously. “I told them we didn’t keep a hotel, but they offered me five dollars to take care of them and the horse till morning.”



The man's face lost its scowl. The sum offered made an impression.

"You did right," he said. "I am willing to accomodate. Where's the horse?"

"We put him in the barn."

"All right. And where may you be from?" he asked, addressing the earl.

"I am an Englishman."

"Are you in any business?"

"Not at present."

"But you have money?"

This remark was accompanied by a look of keen curiosity.

"I have some," answered the earl, cautiously.

"He is going to buy out a store in Buffalo," put in the woman.

"What sort of a store?"

"I haven't decided yet," replied the earl, who did not choose to take the man into his confidence.

"It takes a power of money to buy a store."

"It depends on the nature of the business, I should think."

"About how much do you mean to invest?"

"Really, the fellow is getting impertinent," thought his guest.

"I don't think I can answer that question," he answered.

Their host took from a shelf a dirty clay pipe, filled it with tobacco, and began to smoke. The fumes were far from pleasant, and the

earl, rising from his chair, signaled to Scott to go outside with him.

"Where are you going?" asked the red-haired man.

"We are going to take a walk."

"Has he paid you the five dollars?" asked the man, addressing his wife.

"No."

"Then you may as well hand it over," said the host.

"Certainly, if you wish it now."

"That is safest. You might take your horse and give us the slip. Then we'd be so much out."

"What do you take us for?" demanded the earl, indignantly.

"I don't know anything about you. You may be gentlemen, or——"

"This will settle the question," and the earl took out his wallet, and from a thick roll of bills picked out a five-dollar note, and handed it to the woman.

"Give it here, Sarah," said her husband, sharply. "I take charge of the money."

With meek obedience she passed the bill to him.

He scrutinized it closely, but the result of his inspection seemed to be favorable, and he put it away in his vest pocket.

Scott noticed that he had regarded the roll of bills with a covetous glance, and he felt

that the earl had been imprudent in making such a display of his money.

"It's all right," their host said, slowly. "You're an honest man. You pay your bills."

The earl smiled, and opening the outer door, went out, followed by Scott.

"What do you think of our host, Scott?" he asked.

"I distrust him, Mr. Grant. I am sorry you showed him that roll of bills."

"It may have been imprudent, but I don't think there is any danger of his attempting to rob me."

"He was curious to learn your business. I wonder what his is."

"To-morrow we shall leave the house, and we are never likely to meet him again," said the earl, indifferently. "So it is hardly worth thinking about."

They strolled along in a leisurely way, and sat down under a tree, about a mile distant from their home. Under the same tree reclined a young man who looked like a farmer or farmer's assistant.

"Good-evening," said the earl, courteously.

"Good-evening, sir."

"Do you live hereabouts?"

"Yes, I am working for my uncle, who owns a farm not far from here. You are a stranger, are you not?"

"Yes, my friend and myself are staying at Niagara. We were taking a long drive, but

the horse went lame, and we engaged lodgings for the night about a mile from here."

"At what house?" asked the young man.

"I will tell you, and you can perhaps tell me something of the man who occupies it."

The young man listened to the description, and when it was finished shrugged his shoulders.

"I shouldn't care to be in your place," he said.

"Why not?"

"Red Ralph doesn't have a very good reputation," he explained.

"Is that what he is called?"

"Yes. You noticed his profusion of red hair. His real name is Moody, I believe, but everybody calls him Red Ralph."

"How long has he lived in this neighborhood?"

"About three years."

"What is his business, or, rather, how does he make his living?"

"That is hard to tell. I believe he trades in horses to some extent."

"Is nothing known of his history before he came here?"

"It is reported that he has been in jail. A man who saw him here said that he was quite confident he had seen him in a visit to Joliet prison."

"Is his life reputable? Has he ever been in any trouble since he came here?"

"Nothing has been proved against him, but

more than one rough-looking man has been seen in his house."

"Decidedly, Scott," said the earl, "we have not been fortunate in our selection of a lodging house. However, it is only for one night."

"Have you much money with you?" asked their new acquaintance.

"A tolerably large sum," answered the earl.

"Then, I advise you to bolt your door when you retire."

"I shall do so. Without knowing anything of our worthy host, I had formed an unfavorable opinion of him before I spoke with you."

"He will bear watching," said the young man, briefly.

"What could have been his object in establishing himself here? If he is a rogue, I don't see what opportunities he has of practicing dishonesty."

"Bear in mind that his house is not many miles from the border. If he committed a robbery in the States, he could easily take refuge in his Canadian home, where he would be safe from arrest."

"There is something in that."

"If you don't care to remain in his house overnight, I think I could insure you a welcome from my uncle, who lives not far away."

"Thank you, but it would be awkward to make a change at this late hour. Besides, what explanation could we give?"

“Still, if you distrust him——”

“There is another consideration. We have paid in advance,” suggested Scott.

“I should not mind forfeiting five dollars,” said the earl. “There is one thing I should mind more.”

“What is that?”

“To leave now would be a confession of cowardice. We ought—the two of us—to be a match for Red Ralph.”

“I will do my share,” said Scott, smiling.

“Yes, you look like a brave boy.” Then, turning to the young man, “I thank you for your kind offer, but I think we will stay with Red Ralph for this one night.”

Already it was getting dark, and the air was chill.

“Let us go back, Scott,” said the earl. “It is not very late, but I feel sleepy, and I think I shall retire early.”

“Very well, sir.”

It was not quite nine o'clock when they entered the farmhouse. There was a fire of logs in the fireplace, and before it, with his legs stretched out, sat Red Ralph. But he was not alone.

A man of dark complexion sat opposite him. He was tall and swarthy, and, though differing in appearance, seemed a fitting companion for Red Ralph. Both had pipes in their mouths, and the room was pervaded by the fumes of bad tobacco.

“Well, stranger, you took a long walk,” said Red Ralph, turning in his chair.

“We sat down under a tree to rest,” responded the earl. “Can we have a candle?”

The woman got up from her chair at the back of the room and lighted one.

“Come with me,” she said, “and I will show you your chamber.”

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ON WATCH.

THERE was nothing especially noticeable about the chamber into which Scott and the earl were ushered. It was a corner apartment, and had two windows on different sides of the room.

There was a double bed, a washstand, a small table, and two chairs, besides a plain pine bureau. There was no carpet on the floor, but beside the bed was a cheap rug.

“Will this do you?” asked the woman, as she set the candle on the table.

“Yes,” answered the earl, after a comprehensive glance around the room.

“We don’t keep a hotel. If we did——”

“My good lady, make no apologies. We are obliged to you for taking us in.”

“I hope you’ll sleep well,” said the woman, with her hand on the latch.

“We generally do,” replied the earl.

"Ah!" she said, and there seemed something significant in her tone.

She opened the door and went downstairs, leaving the two travelers alone.

"This isn't very luxurious, Mr. Grant," remarked Scott.

"No."

"I suppose you are used to a luxurious house?"

"When I am at home—yes; but I have knocked about the world so much that I can stand a little discomfort. How is the bed?"

He felt of the mattress, and found that it was of straw. Had there been a feather bed over it there would have been greater comfort.

"Only a straw bed," he said. "This is, certainly, Spartan simplicity. I don't think Red Ralph would be a success as an innkeeper."

"I think I can sleep, Mr. Grant," rejoined Scott. "I feel quite tired."

"Is there a lock on the door?"

Scott went forward to examine.

"Yes," he reported, "there is a lock, but no key."

"Is there a bolt?"

"No."

"I wonder," said the earl, thoughtfully, "whether the key has been lost or intentionally removed?"

"We might ask for a key."

"No. That would make it evident that we were distrustful. Besides, it may be that the



people below are not aware that there is no means of locking them out. On the whole, we will not call attention to our defenseless condition."

While they were talking, a step was heard on the stairs—a heavy step, too heavy for the woman. Then came a knock at the door.

Scott opened it.

There stood Red Ralph, holding in his hand a pitcher and glass.

"I have brought you a nightcap," he said. "I had my wife mix some whisky and water. It is good for the stomach. I drink some every night before I go to bed."

"Thank you," returned the earl, politely. "You are very considerate."

He took the pitcher and set it down on the table. Red Ralph lingered a moment, and his eyes wandered about the apartment.

There was nothing to see, however, as the travelers had brought no luggage with them, not expecting to be detained overnight.

"I hope that you will be comfortable," he said.

"Thank you."

"Do you sleep sound?"

"Generally. Do you?"

"Oh, I never wake from the time I strike the bed. At what hour shall I wake you?"

"At seven."

"Good! I will tell the wife to have breakfast at half-past seven."

“By the way, may I trouble you to look after my horse? I meant to go out to the barn before I retired.”

“I will look after him. I am used to horses. I am a horse trader.”

“Thank you. Good-night.”

“Good-night.”

“Our friend is unusually attentive,” said the earl, with a glance at the pitcher.

“Yes; perhaps we have misjudged him.”

“Perhaps, but I am not sure. Scott, will you hold the candle?”

He took the pitcher and peered into it attentively, rather to Scott's surprise. Then he poured out a small quantity, and tasted it.

“I hope you will excuse me from drinking, Mr. Grant,” said Scott. “I promised my father I would never drink whisky.”

“Even if you did indulge, I should not advise you to drink any of this.”

“Why not? Is it of poor quality?”

“I am quite confident that it is drugged. It has a peculiar taste, and I detect minute particles of some foreign substance which has been mixed with it.”

“Poison?” asked Scott, looking startled.

“Not so bad as that. It is only a sleeping potion. Our friend had an object in asking if we slept sound. He means that we shall.”

“Are you quite sure the whisky has been tampered with, Mr. Grant?”

“I am reasonably sure of it.”

“Then of course we won't drink it.”

“Certainly not, but we will appear to have done so. Open the window.”

The earl poured out a glass of the whisky and emptied it out of the window. He filled the glass a second time, and again emptied it.

“That is better than to have swallowed it,” he said. “I will leave a small portion in the pitcher to disarm suspicion.”

“What do you think Red Ralph intends to do?” asked Scott, in a low tone.

“I think he intends to make us a visit during the night. As there is no way of locking the door, that will be very easily managed. Had we drunk the whisky, we should have slept so profoundly that Ralph could have ransacked the room without interference.”

“Have you a pistol, Mr. Grant?”

“Yes, but I might as well be without one. I have no means of loading it.”

“What, then, do you propose to do?”

“That is not easy to decide.”

“Can we secure the door in any way?”

“I can think of no way.”

“We might put the bureau against it.”

“Yes; I will consider whether that is best. It interposes only a temporary obstacle. Then Ralph and his companion may be armed, while we are not. The two would be more than a match for us.”

“I suppose they would be satisfied if you would give up your money.”

"Probably, but though the loss of the money would not seriously embarrass me—it is only five hundred dollars—I decidedly object to being robbed of it. By the way, have you a newspaper with you?"

"Yes, Mr. Grant. Here it is."

The earl took the paper, and carefully tore it into strips about the size of a bank-bill. Then he removed the bank-bills from his wallet, put them in an inside pocket in his vest, and replaced them with strips of newspaper.

"It is a good plan to oppose roguery with artifice," he said. "Possibly this will help to circumvent the enemy."

Scarcely had he done this when Ralph's step was heard on the staircase, and a moment afterward there was a knock at the door.

"Open it, Scott."

There stood Ralph, smiling craftily.

"Have you drunk the whisky, gentlemen?" he asked. "Would you like to have me fill the pitcher again?"

"We shall not need any more, thank you," said the earl. "Perhaps you will kindly take the pitcher?"

Ralph looked into the pitcher, and his face indicated satisfaction. From the little that remained, he felt assured that both his guests had drunk liberally.

"I hope you liked it," he said.

"You were very kind to think of us," re-

joined the earl, avoiding a reply to his question.

“Won't you let me fill the pitcher?”

“No, we shall not need any more. I think you said it would make us sleep sound?”

“It has that effect upon me.”

“I think you are right. I can hardly keep my eyes open,” and the earl yawned ostentatiously.

“I feel the same way,” added Scott.

Red Ralph smiled.

“Yes,” he said, “I am sure you will have a good night's sleep. I will remember to call you at seven. I won't stay any longer, for you must wish to retire.”

“Good-night, then.”

“Now, said the earl, when the coast was clear, “we must decide what to do.”

“Shall we go to bed?”

“We will lie on the bed, but it will be better not to undress. We must be prepared for any contingency.”

“Shall I move the bureau against the door?”

“No. We will try to keep awake for an hour. My opinion is that our friend will make us a visit within that time.”

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## A PLOT FOILED.

THOUGH the two travelers had not removed their clothes, they covered themselves up with the quilt, in order to deceive any one entering the room. Then they lay and waited.

It was perhaps ten minutes less than the hour when they heard the door softly opened. In the half light they saw Red Ralph enter. He had removed his shoes, and was walking in his stocking feet.

The earl had hung his coat from a nail just behind the door.

Ralph saw it, and at once began to search the pockets. He only glanced carelessly at the bed, for he felt sure that the potion had done its work, and that both his guests were asleep.

In the side pocket he found the wallet. He uttered an ejaculation of satisfaction, and quickly transferred it to his own pocket.

He could not very well examine it in the darkness. But he could tell from the feeling that it was well filled, and naturally concluded that the contents represented a large sum of money.

Having got what he wanted, he withdrew as quietly as he came, carefully shutting the door behind him.

When he had gone, Scott broke the silence.

“What will he do when he discovers that the wallet is stuffed with waste paper?”

“Probably he will be angry, and feel that he has been defrauded.”

Scott laughed.

“Do you think he will make us another visit?”

“If he does, and complains of the deception, it will involve a confession that he is a thief. I confess I don't know what to anticipate.”

Ten minutes later a slow step was heard ascending the staircase.

Scott and the earl listened in excitement. They could not forecast the next act in the drama.

The steps paused before the door, but the door was not opened. In place of this they heard a key turn in the lock outside. It was clear that they were locked in.

“Ralph does not mean that we should escape,” said the earl.

“What shall we do?”

“I shall go to sleep. I think we are secure from any other visit. Hostilities are probably deferred till morning. What will be done then I am quite at a loss to understand, but when that time comes we can decide what to do.”

When Red Ralph went downstairs after purloining the wallet, it was with a feeling of satisfaction at the apparent success of his dishonest scheme.

Below, his wife and his accomplice still sat before the fire.

"Well, Ralph?" said the latter, with an eager look of interrogation.

"I have got it," chuckled Ralph.

"I don't like such doings," said his wife, wearily. "Heaven will never prosper dishonesty."

"Shut up, Sarah," commanded Ralph, harshly. "I can't stand a sniveling woman. What I have done is my business, not yours."

"I wish they had never come. I ought to have sent them away."

"You did just right. You invited them in, and delivered them into my hands."

"Open the wallet!" said the dark man, impatiently.

Ralph seated himself in the chair which he had vacated before he went upstairs, and, with a smile, opened the wallet.

But the smile quickly faded from his face, and it grew dark with anger, as the contents were disclosed.

"Confusion!" he muttered. "Look at this!" and he threw the paper into the fire.

"What does it mean?" asked his accomplice, bewildered.

"It means that we have been fooled—tricked! They have filled the wallet with this trash, in order to deceive us."

"But are you sure that they had any money?"



"Sure? Why, I saw it with my own eyes. Didn't you, Sarah? Didn't the man pull out a thick roll of bills when he paid the five dollars he agreed upon?"

"Yes," answered the woman, reluctantly.

"There was no mistake about that. The money was real, fast enough. There must have been two or three hundred dollars."

"Where could he have put it, then?"

"I don't know."

"Why should he play such a trick upon you?"

"He evidently suspected something."

"How could he suspect a man with your honest face?"

"Be careful, Conrad! I don't allow any man to insult me," said Ralph, with lowering brow.

"Don't get mad, Ralph; I was only joking. What are you going to do now?"

"I don't know."

"The money must be somewhere in the chamber," said Conrad, suggestively.

"Probably it is, but it is concealed. I can't get at it without waking them up."

"If they drank the doctored whisky, it would be safe enough."

"I don't know whether they did drink it or not. They pretended to, but if they suspected me, they may have emptied it out of the window."

“Then won't you do anything?” asked Conrad, in evident disappointment.

“I will lock them in. I will see, at any rate, that they don't escape from the room. In the morning I will consider what is best to be done.”

The woman breathed a sigh of relief. She was honest at heart, and felt no sympathy with her outlaw husband.

It was perhaps by way of consoling themselves for their disappointment that the two men resumed their drinking, and drank heavily.

“Go and get some more whisky, Sarah,” said Ralph, for the pitcher was about empty.

The woman did so, but an idea had occurred to her. She was resolved to prevent the robbery of her guests, and to afford them a chance to escape.

She turned the tables upon her husband, and dropped into the whisky some of the same sleeping potion which had been intended for the two travelers.

Red Ralph and his accomplice were too much affected already to notice any peculiar taste in the whisky. They drank deep, getting more and more drowsy, until at last Ralph slipped from his chair to the floor, where he lay without sense or motion.

“Good-night, old fellow!” hiccoughed Conrad. “I'm with you,” and he was soon lying beside his friend.

Sarah looked at the twain half remorsefully.

"Ought I to have done it?" she asked herself. "But there was no other way. I have perhaps saved my husband from prison, for the theft would surely have been found out. The man looked strong and resolute, and would not have allowed himself to be robbed without seeking to punish the robber."

She left the two men lying upon the floor, and sought her own bed.

"They won't wake till late," she reflected, "and I can let the travelers lie till morning. I won't deprive them of their night's rest."

She went upstairs and saw the key in the lock.

"I will leave it there," she said, "till morning."

About five o'clock—her usual time for rising—she dressed and went upstairs. She unlocked the door, and knocked loudly upon it.

"Who is it?" asked Scott, jumping out of bed.

"It is I," answered Sarah.

Scott was agreeably surprised, for he had feared it might be Ralph.

"The door is locked," he said.

"You can open it."

He did so, and saw the nervous, half-frightened look of his hostess.

"You must get up at once," she said, "you and your friend. It is not safe to remain here."

"I had found that out. But won't your husband interfere with us?"

"He is sound asleep, and won't wake for hours. But you had better get up now, and avoid difficulty."

"Wait a minute, till I wake my friend."

But the earl was already awake. He quickly grasped the situation.

"Are you not exposing yourself to danger on our account?" he asked, earnestly, of the woman.

"No, I shall know how to manage, but go now. It is morning, and the sooner you get away the better."

"Can we get into the barn, and take our horse?"

"Yes, there will be no difficulty. Make as little noise as possible coming downstairs. My husband might awake."

"Madam," said the earl, "we are much indebted to you. Take this as an acknowledgment," and he tendered her a ten-dollar bill.

"No," she said, shaking her head. "Should my husband discover that I had money he would suspect that I had let you out. Then I should be in danger."

"Then we can only thank you."

They were already dressed, and followed the woman downstairs. They saw Ralph and his friend lying like logs on the floor, and suspected why they slept so soundly. Both were snoring loudly.

With a sensation of disgust they left the house, and led the horse out of the barn. He seemed to be much better of his lameness, so that he was able to travel, though slowly. They reached Niagara in time for breakfast.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

## RED RALPH'S SURPRISE.

RED RALPH and his companion slept soundly till after nine o'clock. The drug was only of moderate strength, or they would have slept longer.

When Ralph opened his eyes he saw the breakfast-table spread, and his wife moving about the room. He looked around him half dazed.

"How does it happen that I am asleep on the floor?" he asked.

"You fell from your chair last night."

"Why didn't you arouse me, and make me go to bed?"

"I tried to, but you slept too sound."

"It is strange I should sleep so—and Conrad, too. What time is it?"

"Half-past nine."

"Has there been any noise in the room above, where the strangers are sleeping?"

"I have heard none."

♦

“The potion kept them asleep. I must go up and rouse them.”

“What are you going to do to them, Ralph? You won’t injure them?”

“I must have their money. I may as well take Conrad with me. Here, Conrad, wake up!” and he shook his companion with no gentle hand.

Conrad opened his eyes, and looked sleepily around him.

“How came I here?” he asked.

“You took too much whisky and got stupid drunk,” said Ralph, not mentioning that he, too, had been in the same box. “Is breakfast ready, Sarah?”

“Yes.”

“Then we’ll sit up and eat. I am famished.”

“Won’t you rouse the strangers first?”

“No. That will do afterward. If I get their money, you may give them some breakfast, too.”

“Very well.”

The woman spoke calmly, but she was inwardly excited. She knew that her husband would be enraged when he learned that the prisoners had escaped, but she hoped that her agency in the matter would not be suspected.

The two men ate heartily, and his breakfast made Ralph feel better natured.

When the meal was over, he said: “Come with me, Conrad. We have work to do.”

He went upstairs, followed by his accomplice.

The key was in the lock, just as he had left it, apparently.

He turned the key, and opened the door of the chamber. What he expected to see was the two travelers in a profound slumber. What he did see was the bed disarranged and the chamber empty.

"What does all this mean?" he ejaculated, starting back in surprise.

"They're not here!" said Conrad, looking about him.

"Of course they're not, you fool! But how could they get away?"

Conrad pointed to one of the windows, that was half open.

"That explains it," he said.

Ralph hurried to the window, and put his head out.

Stretching from the window to the ground was the bed cord.

This was a piece of strategy on the part of his wife. After the departure of Scott and the earl, she had removed the bed cord, and fastened it to the window to mislead her husband into supposing that it was in this way their guests had escaped.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" ejaculated Ralph.

"They must have smelt a rat," said Conrad, sagely.

"What I can't understand is how a man of

good weight could have been held up by such a slender cord. And it doesn't seem to be stretched at all."

"It may be stronger than you think," suggested Conrad.

"I suppose it was, but I wouldn't like to trust myself to it."

"I wouldn't mind."

"Try it, then."

Conrad was a man who inclined to be venturesome. He got out of the window, and tried to lower himself by the rope. The slender cord broke, and he fell and lay an inglorious heap on the greensward below.

"I told you so!" said Ralph, with a boisterous laugh.

"The man strained it," said Conrad, looking rather foolish.

"Here, Sarah," called out Ralph, "come and look here."

Outwardly calm, but with inward trepidation, Ralph's wife ascended the stairs.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"What's the matter? You can see for yourself. The men have escaped."

"So they have," she said, in affected surprise. "How did they do it?"

"Climbed out of the window by the bed cord. Didn't you hear it?"

"They must have done it before I was up," she replied, evading a direct answer.

"Conrad," called out Ralph, with a sudden



thought, "go out to the barn, and see if they have taken the horse."

"Yes, they have. The horse isn't there," reported Conrad.

"Then I've been taken in, and done for. What beats me is, how did they suspect anything?"

"You forget," said the wife, "that they may have missed the wallet."

"That's true. I should like to know how long they have been gone. I wonder you didn't hear the horse."

"I think I slept pretty sound myself. It was not till late that I went to bed."

"Well, there's no use in crying over spilt milk," said Ralph, philosophically. "At any rate we've got the five dollars."

"And that will pay for all they got here."

"Especially," chimed in Conrad, "as they went off without their breakfast."

"So they did," said Ralph, with a broad smile.

He seemed amused by the thought that their guests had, after all, been overreached, and this contributed to restore his good humor.

Sarah breathed a sigh of relief. Her stratagem had been successful, and there was no suspicion entertained by her husband that she had assisted the two to escape. Had he suspected it, she shuddered to think what would have happened.

When Scott and the earl reached the hotel

at Niagara, they went up to their room to finish out a night's rest, their slumber at the farmhouse having been interrupted.

The consequence was that they appeared late at breakfast.

Meanwhile, there had been an arrival at the hotel of two characters well known to the reader.

Two days previously, Ezra Little suddenly determined to go to Buffalo. By the failure of a large firm in that city a considerable stock of goods had been thrown on the market. It was almost certain that the stock would be sold out for much less than its real value.

Ezra Little, among others, had received a notice from the assignee of the approaching sale. The goods were, many of them, in his line, and in several departments his own stock was getting short.

"I think, Mr. Allen," he said to his superintendent, "I shall run on to Buffalo, and examine the stock of Frost, Burks & Co., and if it is a sacrifice sale I shall probably make considerable purchases."

"It will be an excellent plan, I think, Mr. Little. We are running short in several departments. Besides, it will be a pleasant trip for you."

"That is true; I haven't been fifty miles from the city for three years. Three years since, I went to Philadelphia, and ever since then I have tied myself down to business."

"I will look after things while you are gone. I understand your system."

When Ezra Little announced at home that he was going to Buffalo, the news made a sensation.

"Isn't Buffalo near Niagara Falls?" asked Loammi.

"Certainly."

"You will go there, won't you?"

"Yes, I will try to get time. I shall never have a better opportunity."

"Oh, pa, won't you take me?" asked Loammi, eagerly.

"Take you? Why should I?"

"I should enjoy it so much."

"No doubt, but the expense will be too great. The car fare and hotel rates will amount to considerable."

"But, pa, as you were just saying, you will probably clear more than a thousand dollars by the purchase you propose to make."

"That is not certain."

"Oh, yes it is; you are so sharp and shrewd, pa."

Ezra Little's pride was flattered.

"Well," he said, "I think I am fairly sharp."

"And my expenses won't be much."

Ezra looked undecided.

At this point his wife intervened.

"You had better take Loammi, Ezra," she said. "It will be a pleasure to him, and if you are sick he can take care of you."

“Well, Loammi,” said his father, with unwonted good humor, “I think I will let you go. But you must be ready at six o’clock this evening.”

“I’ll be ready, pa, never fear.”

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

LOAMMI and his father arrived late in the evening at Niagara, and put up at the International Hotel. Had they looked back in the book of arrivals they would have seen the name of Scott Walton, but they failed to do so.

As they sped over the Central Railroad, Loammi was in high spirits. It was his first long journey, and he felt somehow that it would increase his consequence. He was prepared to make much of it on his return, and he felt that his friends and schoolfellows would be impressed.

The International Hotel seemed to him quite grand, and as he had never been a guest at a hotel before, he quite enjoyed his new way of living.

“Isn’t it fine, pa?” he said, as they walked through the office.

“It is fine enough,” responded his father, practically, “but it costs money, Loammi; I expect they’ll be charging me four or five dollars a day.”

"Oh, well, pa, you can afford it."

"That may be, but I am afraid it is money thrown away to pay your expenses on such a trip. It would have been better to pay you ten dollars, and let you stay at home."

"I wouldn't have been willing to do it, pa. Wouldn't Scott like to be traveling as we are doing?"

"I presume he would. You haven't heard anything of him, have you?"

"No."

"He can't be in New York, I should say."

"He's probably tramping about somewhere," said Loammi, rather contemptuously.

"I think the boy has some business talent," his father remarked, who was not so much prejudiced as his son.

"Oh, I suppose he'd pass, but he couldn't hold a place. He had to leave you, and now he's left Tower, Douglas & Co."

"Do you know why he left them?"

"One of the clerks told me he was too fresh."

This was not quite correct, as it was Loammi who had designated his cousin in that way.

While they were waiting for breakfast, a traveling acquaintance from Boston, a Mr. Norwood, greeted them.

"Do you know," he said, "there's an English earl staying in this hotel?"

"Is there? Who is it?" asked Ezra Little, for he had a reverence for rank.

"It is the Earl of Windermere."

"Yes, I know of the title. Have you seen him?"

"No, but I saw his name on the register."

"I hope we shall meet him, pa," said Loammi. "It would be quite a feather in our cap if we could get introduced to him."

"I should like that myself, Loammi. Do you know if he is a young man, or an old one, Mr. Norwood?"

"He is a young man, under thirty."

"We will look for him at breakfast."

When they took their seats at the table, Mr. Little said to the waiter: "I hear there's an earl staying at the hotel?"

"Yes, sir."

"Could you point him out to us?"

The waiter looked across the room.

"He generally sits at that table, sir, but he hasn't come in yet."

"Is any one of his family with him?"

"I don't rightly know. There's a boy goes round with him a good deal—about the age of this young gentleman."

"I will try to get acquainted with him, pa," said Loammi. "I guess that'll be the easiest way to get in with the earl."

The breakfast proceeded, and was nearly over for Loammi and his father, when the waiter came up.

"There's the earl just coming in, sir," he said, "and the boy with him."

Both father and son looked toward the earl

with eager curiosity. They did not at first take special notice of the boy. When they did, Loammi grasped his father's arm in excitement.

"The boy looks just like Scott," he said.

"It is Scott," pronounced his father, looking through his eyeglasses.

"Nonsense, pa, it can't be!" said Loammi. "It's ridiculous to think of Scott being in company with an earl."

"Ridiculous or not, it is a fact."

"Perhaps they are not together," said Loammi, who did not like to believe that his humble cousin was in such aristocratic company. "Is that the boy that usually goes around with the earl?" he asked, turning to the waiter.

"Yes, sir, it's the very identical boy."

"I never heard of such a thing," gasped Loammi. "That boy's cheek seems too great for anything. But perhaps he is the earl's valet, though I don't know how he could have got the position."

"I don't know but he's the earl's brother," said the waiter. "Anyhow, they're pretty thick. They went out riding together yesterday afternoon."

"He isn't the earl's brother," said Loammi, emphatically. "He's a—a relative of ours."

"Lor' now, you don't mean it! Didn't you know he was traveling with the earl?"

"No," answered Loammi; "I haven't seen much of him lately."

"The earl seems to think everything of him. They're always together."

"I never was so astonished in my life, pa," said Loammi, when the waiter had left them.

"It does seem singular."

"I'll get Scott to introduce me."

"I thought you didn't care to take any more notice of him."

"No more I did, but as he's intimate with an earl that makes a difference."

Mr. Little and his son lingered at the table till they saw the earl and his young companion rise. Then they followed them out.

Scott had not noticed the presence of Loammi and his father, but it was soon made evident to him.

As he was walking with the earl, suddenly he felt a tap on his arm, and looking round espied Loammi.

"Loammi!" he exclaimed, in surprise.

"Yes, I am here with pa. I was surprised to find you here."

Scott smiled.

"I have been traveling for some weeks," he said.

"Here's pa."

"How do you do, Scott? I hope you are well," said Ezra Little, graciously.

"Very well, thank you."

The earl, noticing that Scott had met acquaintances, walked slowly on.

"Won't you introduce us to your friend, Scott?" asked Loammi, eagerly.



"If he is willing," Scott said.

He went up to the earl and acquainted him with his cousin's request.

"Are they friends of yours, Scott?"

"I can't say they are friends, but they are my cousins. I have told you of them. They are my cousin, Loammi Little, and his father."

"Do you think they know who I am?"

"Yes. It is probably your title that makes them desirous of an introduction."

"Very well."

In answer to a look, Loammi and his father approached.

"My lord," said Scott, formally, "let me present to you Mr. Ezra Little and his son, Loammi. They are relatives of mine."

"I am glad to meet any relative of my young friend, Mr. Walton," said the earl, with dignity.

"My lord earl," said Mr. Little, with a profound bow, "I am indeed honored in making your acquaintance."

"And I, too," murmured Loammi.

"I am an Englishman, like yourself, my lord."

"And so, I believe, is my young friend, Scott," said the nobleman.

"Yes," said Scott, "but I have nearly forgotten it. I intend to be an American citizen."

"I shall never forget that I am an Englishman," observed Ezra Little.

"Gentlemen," said the earl, "will you excuse me? I have a letter to write."

“Certainly, my lord.”

“I will meet you in half an hour, Scott,” said the earl, familiarly. “You will find me in the reading-room.”

“How on earth did you get so thick with the earl, Scott?” asked Loammi.

“He seemed to take a fancy to me.”

“Are you with him a good deal?”

“Yes.”

“How can you afford to stay at this expensive hotel?” asked Ezra Little.

“I am traveling on business.”

“For what house?”

“Please excuse my mentioning just yet.”

“How long are you going to stay here?”

“I expected to have this morning, but I have a letter from my employers with instructions that will detain me here a day or two longer. But how do you and Loammi happen to be here?”

“I have business in Buffalo.”

Scott smiled.

“So have I,” he said.

“I intend to make large purchases from the assignees of Frost, Burks & Co.”

“I shall probably meet you both this evening.”

As Scott walked away, Loammi said, enviously: “Did you notice how well Scott was dressed?”

“I didn’t notice.”

“He doesn’t look much like the poor rela-

tion we took in some months ago. But it won't last."

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

## A LARGE OPERATION.

SCOTT found a letter awaiting him at the hotel, of the following purport

"We are notified that the stock of Frost, Burks & Co., of Buffalo, will be sold at a great sacrifice. We append a list of articles that we would like to buy if they will be sold at, say sixty per cent. of the ordinary wholesale price. At that rate, you may buy without limit, or you can take the whole stock if a commensurate reduction should be made.

"TOWER, DOUGLAS & Co."

Scott went to Buffalo in the same train as Ezra Little, but in a different car, so that the latter did not know his humble cousin was on board. The earl went along, and proposed to look about the city while his young companion was engaged.

Scott took a cab, feeling that the emergency justified it, while Ezra Little waited a considerable time for a horse car. The result was that Scott was with the assignee twenty minutes before Mr. Little arrived.

When Scott was introduced, the assignee, a

gentleman named Clark, regarded him impatiently.

"I've no time to waste with boys," he said. "I am very busy."

"I am a boy," replied Scott, quietly, "but I represent the firm of Tower, Douglas & Co., of New York. There is my card."

"Is this really so?" asked the assignee, almost incredulous.

"You can rely upon it. What could be my object in making a false representation?"

"Very well, Mr. Walton. Are you empowered to purchase?"

"Yes."

"To what extent?"

"That depends on the terms I obtain. I may take your whole stock if there's sufficient inducement."

The assignee looked amazed.

"We shall certainly prefer to sell the entire stock to one purchaser."

"And will you make it worth my while?"

"What terms do you offer?"

"Half cash, half on thirty days."

"That will be satisfactory."

"Have you an inventory?"

"Yes."

Scott looked it carefully over. He was offered even better terms than his employers had stipulated for.

At the end of half an hour he had agreed to purchase the entire stock, conditioned upon

the amount and quality of goods being as represented. He knew enough of the value of goods to feel that he had made a good bargain for the firm.

Meanwhile, Ezra Little and Loammi had arrived.

"There's a gentleman with Mr. Clark," said a clerk.

"Please carry in my card," ordered Mr. Little, pompously.

He felt that his name would secure respectful consideration.

But he had to wait half an hour. Then, on entering the office, he found to his surprise Scott ahead of him. He nodded to him coolly, and in a tone of some importance said: "Mr. Clark, I have come to look over your stock, and if I find it and your terms satisfactory I may make considerable purchases."

"I am sorry to disappoint you, Mr. Little," said the assignee, referring to the card in his hand, "but you are too late."

"How am I too late?"

"I have sold the entire stock to one party."

Ezra Little looked astonished and disappointed.

"May I ask to whom you have sold?" he inquired.

"To this young man."

"To that boy?" ejaculated Ezra Little.

"Yes; he represents the great New York firm of Tower, Douglas & Co."

“That is a mistake,” said Ezra, indignantly. “He is an impostor. He was employed by them, but has been discharged.”

The assignee looked alarmed.

“What do you say to this, Mr. Walton?” he asked.

“Simply that it is false,” returned Scott. “If you have any doubts as to my being in the employ of the firm, you can look at this letter received this morning.”

The assignee read the letter given at the commencement of this chapter.

“Mr. Little, you appear to be mistaken,” he said, severely. “What can be your object in trying to discredit Mr. Walton, I will not inquire, though I can guess at it. If you wish to negotiate for any of the stock I refer you to him. He obtained it on such terms that he can afford to deal with you liberally.”

This was gall and wormwood to Mr. Little, but he wished to make his journey pay, and broached the subject to Scott.

“Will you sell me what I want at the price you paid?” he asked.

“No, Mr. Little, I cannot do that, but I will sell at five per cent. profit.”

When Mr. Little made an examination of prices, he ascertained that even on these terms he would make a better bargain than he anticipated. The result was that he bought five thousand dollars' worth of goods from Scott, and felt sure that even then he would clear

more than a thousand dollars on his purchases.

As he left the office with Scott, Loammi questioned him eagerly.

“Did you buy many goods of the assignee?” he inquired.

“No.”

“But I thought you meant to.”

“I bought of Scott.”

“What has he to do with it?”

“I found that he had bought the entire stock before I got into the office.”

“What do you mean, pa? You’re joking, ain’t you?”

“No.”

“Of course, Mr. Little,” said Scott, “the sale must be ratified by my firm. I will, however, make a special request to that effect, and I don’t anticipate that they will interfere with my arrangements.”

“Are you going back to Niagara on the next train, Scott?” asked Ezra Little.

“No; I must wire the firm of what I have done. Then I have agreed to meet the earl at the Mansion House, where we shall dine.”

“When will you return to New York?”

“Probably I shall take the night train.”

“I shall wait a day or two. I have not yet had a chance to see the falls.”

“Then if I don’t see you again, Cousin Ezra, I shall bid you good-by.”

“Good-by, Scott. If you leave your present

employer at any time I will give you five dollars a week and your board."

"Thank you," said Scott, with a smile.

He was not conceited, but it struck him that one who had been intrusted with such a responsible commission was worth considerably more than this small sum.

"How have you succeeded, Scott?" asked the earl, when they met at the Mansion House.

Scott told him.

"How much will your purchases amount to?"

"Probably to eighty thousand dollars."

"It is wonderful. And you are only seventeen years old!"

"I believe so," said Scott, smiling.

"I am not sure but it would be for my advantage to go into business with you."

"What shall be the style of the firm? The Earl of Windermere & Co?"

"We will consider that. When do you propose to return to New York?"

"This evening."

"I'm sorry I can't go with you. I shall start in three days, and when I take up my residence in New York it will be at the Windsor Hotel. Will you call and see me there?"

"With the greatest pleasure, my lord."

"You mean, Mr. Grant."

"Well, Mr. Grant. But when others are present I will use your title."

Some time during the next day Scott reached



New York. He lost no time in calling at the store, and reported his business operations in detail.

He was received with great cordiality.

“Scott,” said Mr. Tower, “you have quite surpassed my expectations. I own I had some hesitation about intrusting you with the Buffalo business, but you have managed it to my satisfaction.”

Scott told him of his transaction with Mr. Little.

“I told him it would depend on your ratification,” he said.

“I will ratify it,” said Mr. Tower, “and the five per cent. shall be your commission.”

“Thank you, Mr. Tower. You are very liberal. Two hundred and fifty dollars will make me feel rich.”

“We will pay you five hundred dollars besides for your general services during the six weeks you have been absent, and your salary will be raised to forty dollars a week.”

“I don’t know how to thank you, Mr. Tower. It is only fair to tell you that I have an offer from another firm.”

“Did they offer you more? What firm is it?”

“Ezra Little. He offered me five dollars a week and my board, in case I ever leave you.”

Mr. Tower seemed much amused.

“You can accept the offer if you desire,” he said.

“I prefer to stay with you, if you are willing,” said Scott.

“You can stay as long as you like. We should be sorry to lose you.”

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### SCOTT GETS INTO SOCIETY.

FOUR days later, Scott received the following note:

“DEAR SCOTT: I am at the Windsor Hotel. Can you call this evening? WINDERMERE.”

Scott lost no time in responding to the invitation. He was greeted with the greatest cordiality.

“I am delighted to see you,” said the earl. “I missed you more than I anticipated after you left me. Now I have a favor to ask.”

“What is it?” asked Scott.

“I have taken a suit of rooms here, and I have set aside a bedroom for you. I shall be in the city for four weeks, and I want you with me.”

“I am afraid you have forgotten that I am only a boy working for my living.”

“No; I don't forget it. I respect you more for it. In fact, Scott, I want your company. Will you come?”

“Thank you, Mr. Grant—I can't refuse. I seem to forget that you are an earl.”

“That is what I wish.”

Just then there was a knock at the door, and a hall boy entered with a card.

The person whose name it bore came up directly afterward.

He brought a dinner invitation from a well-known social club. The earl good-naturedly accepted.

The visitor regarded Scott inquiringly.

“Is this young gentleman one of your party, my lord?” he asked.

“Yes, sir. It is my young friend, Mr. Scott Walton.”

“Then I am authorized to include him in the invitation.”

Scott looked at the earl inquiringly.

“I accept for him,” said the earl, promptly.

He smiled when his visitor left the room.

“You are in for it, Scott,” he said. “I advise you to order a dress suit at once, if you are not provided with one.”

“Won’t the club think they are imposed upon when they find that I am only an humble business boy?”

“You are not invited on that ground, but as my intimate friend.”

“Then, Mr. Grant, I will throw the whole responsibility upon you,” said Scott, smiling.

“I will accept it. How will it do for me to dub you Sir Scott Walton?”

“It might embarrass me in my business.”

“True. Then you shall be plain Mr. Wal-

ton. Mind that you get a handsome suit. It will be expected, as you belong to my party."

One of the leading New York dailies, a few days later, in describing the dinner, after giving the earl's modest little speech, continued thus: "The earl was accompanied by a handsome young gentleman, Mr. Scott Walton, who is understood to be a near relative. Mr. Walton was called upon for a speech, but modestly declined."

When Ezra Little read this paragraph, he was immensely surprised.

"Read that. Loammi," he said.

"What a humbug that boy is!" said Loammi, much disgusted.

"Humbug or not, he has got into the best society, and his success reflects credit upon us, who are his cousins."

"The idea of his palming himself off as a relative of the earl!"

"Perhaps he didn't. It was probably a conjecture of the reporter."

"I don't believe it. I feel sure Scott put him up to it. I'd like to tell him it is all a mistake."

"I won't allow you to do anything of the sort. As the matter stands, it may lead to the supposition that we also are related to the earl."

This seemed such a clever idea that Ezra determined to act upon it.

When one of his business acquaintances in-

quired whether Scott was really a connection of the earl's, he answered: "He is related to me, and there may also be a distant relationship to the earl. Probably the earl authorized the statement."

"Why don't you invite the earl to dinner?"

"Egad, I will!" exclaimed the merchant.

The next day Scott received the following note from Mr. Little:

"DEAR SCOTT: Can you induce your friend, the earl, to accept an invitation to dinner at our house any day next week? It would give me great pleasure, as an Englishman born, to pay some attention to so distinguished a representative of my native country. The choice of the day rests entirely with the earl. We shall be only too glad to receive him at any time.

"Sincerely, your cousin,

"EZRA LITTLE."

Scott showed this letter to the earl.

The earl smiled.

"I am glad," he said, "that I have been the means of so cordially uniting your cousin and yourself. Of course, I know that I am only invited as your friend."

Scott laughed.

"That didn't occur to me," he said.

"But as to accepting the invitation," continued the earl, "I am afraid I cannot. Should I accept Mr. Little's invitation, I

should be overwhelmed by similar invitations from other parties."

"He will be terribly disappointed."

"I can partially make it up to him. I will secure a box at one of the theaters for some evening next week, and invite your uncle's family to join our party. That will involve no embarrassment."

"I am sure Cousin Ezra will be delighted to accept."

"Then I will make out an invitation which I will send by you. I will also invite Mr. Tower, your senior employer, as it may help you with him."

"It will, I am sure."

When Scott called at his uncle's house, Ezra Little inquired, eagerly: "Did you receive my note?"

"Yes, Cousin Ezra."

"Will the earl accept my invitation?"

"He would be glad to do so, but it would bring upon him so many others that it would prove embarrassing."

Mr. Little's face fell.

"Can't you influence him to accept?" he asked, with a degree of deference that was new to Scott.

"No, but he sends you an invitation."

Scott put in Mr. Little's hand this missive?

"The Earl of Windermere will be glad to have Mr. Ezra Little and family join him at

the Star Theater next Wednesday evening to see Henry Irving in 'Hamlet.'

"R. S. V. P."

"Tell the earl I shall be delighted, and so will Mrs. Little and Loammi," said the gratified merchant.

"I think, Cousin Ezra, etiquette requires a written acceptance."

"Tell me what to write, and I will copy it."

Scott did so, and succeeded in toning down the exuberant terms in which Mr. Little was at first inclined to couch his acceptance.

Mr. Tower, though a more sensible man, was undeniably flattered by the invitation which Scott brought him. The earl had called at the store, so that the invitation was *en règle*.

"Really, Scott," he said, "I shall feel obliged to raise your pay, since, in addition to your services here, you are introducing me into such distinguished society."

"I have no objection to that, Mr. Tower," said Scott, smiling.

"And you are really the guest of the earl at the Windsor Hotel? It is most extraordinary."

"I hope, Mr. Tower, you will appreciate me as much as the earl does."

"I do already, Scott, but for business reasons."

Mr. Little sent for reporters on two of the daily papers, and managed to have his presence

in the earl's box prominently mentioned. Lo-  
ammi was immensely gratified, and contrived  
to make himself conspicuous, while Scott mod-  
estly withdrew into the background.

Seth Lawton happened to reach New York  
on the morning following the theater party.  
He read in amazement the paragraph which  
served to indicate the intimacy of his relatives  
with the earl.

"My young cousin is getting on," he said.  
"Well, he deserves it."

Mr. Lawton himself was modest, and was  
considerably surprised when Scott brought him  
a cordial invitation to dine at the Windsor  
with the earl.

"I don't know, Scott," he said. "I am an  
old-fashioned fellow. I am not used to stylish  
company."

"The earl will like you all the better on that  
account."

Scott was right. The Earl of Windermere  
could see the sterling gold in Cousin Seth's  
character, and treated him with a cordiality  
that pleased the old man.

"I never thought I should like an earl," he  
said afterward to Scott, "but your friend is  
a trump. He ought to be an American citi-  
zen."

Ezra Little was rather disgusted when he  
heard that Seth Lawton had been the earl's  
guest.

"You ought to have prevented it, Scott," he



said. "What will the earl think of us when such a homely old fellow is introduced as a cousin?"

"Cousin Seth and the earl are great friends," replied Scott.

"Humph! I suppose he felt obliged to be polite to him. Seth is a mere clodhopper."

He would have been surprised to learn that the earl rated the "clodhopper" higher than himself.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### MR. BARCOCK'S INVESTMENT.

FROM this time forth Ezra Little began to pay more attention to his poor relation. Scott's social and business success had surprised him. He was compelled, though reluctantly, to consider him a young man of promise.

He had no idea, however, how successful Scott was, and would have been very much amazed to learn the extent of his income.

One result, however, was to excite the jealousy of Loammi. He found that Scott dressed better than himself and had more command of money. Accordingly, he applied to his father for an increased allowance.

"What do you want more money for, Loammi?" asked his father, in a tone far from

encouraging. "Don't you get a dollar a week?"

"What can I do with a dollar a week, pa?"

"It was more than I received at your age."

"You were a poor boy, while I am the son of a rich man."

"Ahem! not exactly rich, Loammi," said Ezra Little, complacently.

"Everybody calls you rich, pa."

"I have some money," admitted Mr. Little, cautiously, "but it is only by great care that I am moderately well off."

"Scott dresses better than I, and always has money in his pocket."

"He is very foolish to spend all his spare money on clothes. By the time he is twenty-one he won't have a cent laid up."

"At any rate, he has plenty of cash now. The fact is, pa, people are beginning to notice that he dresses better than I. Percy Shelton was walking with me the other day when we met Scott. 'I thought your cousin was poor,' he said. 'He only has his wages to depend upon,' I said. 'Then he must be pretty well paid,' he replied. 'I saw him at Patti's concert Tuesday night, occupying a three-dollar seat.' That made me feel awfully mean, for you wouldn't let me go to hear Patti."

"No; it would be throwing money away."

"All the fashionable people go. People that know you are rich think it strange not to see me there."

This argument had some effect on Mr. Little, who was anxious that his son should be admitted into fashionable society, but was too close to supply him with the necessary means.

"How much do you want, Loammi?" he asked, cautiously.

"Percy Shelton gets five dollars a week."

"Well, you won't," said his father, sharply. "You must think that I am made of money."

"I will try to make it do, father, pa."

"You won't get that either. I will give you two dollars a week, and that ought to be enough to satisfy you."

Loammi was not satisfied, but did not think it prudent to say any more just then.

There was one more concert by Patti, and he had hoped to attend. Indeed, he had told Percy that he expected to do so. He might, indeed, have bought a dollar ticket, but he was ashamed to be seen occupying a cheap seat.

Loammi had not much taste for music, and cared chiefly to attend the concert because most of his fashionable friends would be there.

In this dilemma he received unexpected assistance.

He met Scott one evening near the Fifth Avenue Hotel. His poor cousin was handsomely dressed, and looked to be on good terms with the world, as indeed he was.

"Good-evening, Loammi," he said.

"Good-evening, Scott. Are you still working for Tower, Douglas & Co.?"

"Oh, yes."

"Do they pay you well?"

"I am quite satisfied."

"How much do you get?"

"I would rather not tell."

"Percy Shelton told me he saw you at Patti's concert Tuesday evening."

"Yes, I was there."

"The tickets are rather high, ain't they?"

"I paid three dollars for mine."

"I want to go ever so much; but pa, though he is rolling in wealth, keeps me very close. How much do you think I get for my weekly allowance?"

"I couldn't guess."

"Only two dollars."

"But you have nothing to pay for board or clothes."

"That is true; but of course I can't go to hear Patti."

"Do you really want to go?"

"Of course I do. All my friends have attended."

"Then I will invite you to accompany me tomorrow evening."

"On three-dollar tickets?"

"Yes."

"You're a good fellow, Scott," said Loammi, overjoyed. "I always said so."

Scott smiled. He did not feel quite certain about that, but forbore to remind Loammi of certain recent experiences.

"When will you buy it, or take it?"

"We will go now if you have time."

"All right."

Two days afterward Loanman fell in with Percy Shelton.

"I saw you at the concert last evening," said his friend.

"Yes."

"Was that your cousin with you?"

"Yes; I thought he would like to go."

"That was very kind of you," said Percy, who naturally concluded that Scott went by Loanman's invitation.

"Scott must get a good salary," thought Loanman. "I wonder how much he is paid."

But Scott preferred to keep this to himself. He knew that if Loanman were told, he would have frequent occasion to borrow, and he felt that it would be prudent in now to lay by a portion of his earnings.

It will be remembered that his friend, Justin Wood, had bought for him an interest in the invention of Mr. Babcock, advancing the inventor a sum of money, which put him on his feet.

Scott had not forgotten this, but forbore to look up Mr. Babcock, not having quite so much confidence in his success as the inventor himself.

One evening, however, as he was preparing to go out to walk, he met Babcock coming upstairs.

" Good-evening, Mr. Babcock," he said; " I am glad to see you."

" You were going out?" asked the inventor.

" Only for a walk. I shall be better pleased to receive a visit from you."

" Then I will accept your invitation. I thought you would look me up."

" I was afraid I might interfere with you. I presume you are busy."

" Yes, very busy, I am glad to say. And how is your friend, Mr. Wood?"

" At present he is out of the city."

" I should like to see him to thank him for his timely aid."

" Then it has been of service to you?"

" I should say so. I am succeeding beyond my anticipations."

" I am glad to hear that," said Scott, cordially.

" You have reason to be. Are you not my partner?"

" I believe I do own an interest in your discovery," said Scott, smiling.

" I see you do not attach much importance to it. You have not considered what your profits will amount to."

" No, Mr. Babcock, I have not thought of that at all. I only hope that it would give you a fair living."

" It will do more. In fact, I have come to see you on business to-night. The parties who are manufacturing my window fastener have

made me an offer for it. As you hold a one-third interest, I cannot accept without consulting you."

"How much do they offer, Mr. Babcock?"

Scott thought the sum might be a thousand dollars, and was very much surprised when the inventor answered: "Fifteen thousand dollars!"

"Is it possible?" he inquired.

"I thought you would be surprised. But it is true. That would give you five thousand dollars."

"I don't see how so small an article can pay so well."

"It is the small inventions that pay best. What do you say?"

"I want to consult your interest in the matter, Mr. Babcock. This would give you ten thousand dollars, to be sure, but it would throw you out of your."

"No. They engage me as superintendent of the manufacture at a salary of a hundred dollars per month."

"That is very good. In that case, if you think it wise to sell, I will agree."

"Then you can come to-morrow to see them, and conclude the bargain?"

"I shall be occupied, but I am sure my employers will give me leave of absence when I tell them the cause. But I don't think I ought to receive so large a sum as five thousand dollars. It was you who made the discovery."

“ True, but I never should have reaped any benefit from it if you had not introduced me to your friend, Mr. Wood.”

The next day the sale was made, and Scott found himself enriched by five thousand dollars. It seemed to him almost like a dream, from which he was afraid that he might awake.

“ What would Mr. Little say if he knew ? ” thought Scott. “ He did me a great favor when he discharged me from his store under a cloud.”

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE SEALED PACKET.

ONE day, in looking over his trunk, Scott's eye fell on the sealed packet, referred to at the opening of this story, which was inscribed:

*For My Son,*

*To be opened a year from my death.*

Singularly, the next day would be the anniversary of his father's passing away.

Scott had been so busy that he had given little thought to this packet. Now his interest was excited, and the next day he broke the seal, and read the letter which it contained.

It ran thus:

“ MY DEAR SCOTT: When you open this packet twelve months will have passed, and I



hope you will be in a position to live comfortably on your earnings. I assume that you will be in the employ of Ezra Little, who I understand is well to do, and who will not, I think, turn his back upon a needy relative.

"You will find nothing in this letter that will provide for your future prospects. Indeed, I wish to pass on to you a debt which I am unable to pay. During my early manhood, I received many favors from a young man named Robert Kent, who afterward emigrated to America. I heard a report two years since that he had been unfortunate, and that his family was suffering. I should like to be able to help him in memory of the past, but my life is nearing the end. Should you ever fall in with Mr. Kent or his family, if you can do anything for them on your father's account I shall be very glad. It may seem strange that I give you this legacy of duty, considering that I leave your well nigh penniless, but I have confidence that sooner or later you will succeed, and I hope you may be in a position to help my early friend or his family.

"The only clue I can give you as to my old friend's whereabouts is, that he was an artist by profession, and that he went to New York. Probably, if living, he is in that city, or near it. You may not be in a position to help him, but I should like to have you make his acquaintance, and tell him that I have not forgotten him or his past kindness."

There was something more, but this was the substance of the letter. It was sufficient to interest Scott greatly.

"I wish I could find my father's friend," he reflected. "Though but a year has passed, I am amply able to pay the debt which my poor father owed. It would be pleasant, besides, to see one of his friends."

Naturally, Scott's first reference was to the New York directory. He found numerous Kents, but none that seemed likely to be Robert Kent. There was no artist of that name included in the list.

He thought of advertising, but this would involve a greater degree of publicity than he desired, and might lead to attempted imposture.

A month passed, and Scott was as perplexed as ever. To seek for any particular man in a crowded city like New York was like seeking a needle in a haystack. Besides, he might have left New York and gone to some other city, perhaps to the West.

Yet the man of whom he was in search was, at that very moment, occupying a shabby lodging on Bleeker Street, with his wife and two children. Moreover, his son, a boy a few months younger than Scott, was employed by Ezra Little, in his Eighth Avenue store, at a salary of three dollars a week.

Let us look in upon the Kents in their humble home.

The apartments consisted of three rooms, after the usual fashion of New York tenements. In two of the large rooms, sitting in a big rock chair, sat, as a matter of course, a girl, with an expression of delicate refinement, and refined tastes. He had looked for some time, the visitor, at the girl, and a faint smile, at times, prevailed.

At half past six, the door opened, and a slender, dainty girl, entered the room.

"He is doing very well," said the boy, with a smile, as if he were a successful business man, in a private conversation.

"No matter," said the girl, "it is not to be tied to the ground, but you must be at it."

"It is not to be tied to the ground," said Mrs. Kent, as she spoke, "but you must be at it, young man, if you wish to be successful in the likely to get."

"How is it, father?" asked the boy. "We are barely getting on, but I am not sure. Now, with only Harry's savings, and my own, I can't cult to tell you, as I shall be in a day. Do you ask Mr. Fiddle, he would raise you, Harry?"

"Yes, father; but he is old, and I's hand, and told me he could get plenty of boys at the wages he paid me, and perhaps for less."

"Yet he is rich," said Mr. Kent, bitterly. "He and his can live on the fat of the land."

"Has he a son?" asked Mrs. Kent.

"Yes, mother. He has one son—Leammi."

"Do you know him?"

"Yes, a little."

"What sort of a boy is he?"

"He is the most disagreeable boy I ever met. When he comes to the store he struts through it as if he were a prince."

"His father was poor enough in the old country."

"He is rich now."

"If I were rich too, I would only be too glad to help them who were less fortunate than myself. I had one friend in England, an artist, like myself, John Walton, who would have done the same. I was alone to send a little's place."

"Did he have a son, too, of Scott's?"

"I think it probable. He was called a Scott."

"Then he may be in New York. I have heard that there was a boy named Scott Walton in the store a year or so."

"That must be his son," said Mr. Kent, eagerly. "Is he in the store now?"

"No. I understand that he and Loumie couldn't get along together, and he was discharged. But I was told that his father was dead."

"Poor Walton! I am sorry to hear it. It seems to me that it is those who best deserve to live who are summoned first."

"Harold," said his mother, "will you go to the grocery at the corner and get a quarter of a pound of tea and half a pound of butter?"

"Yes—of course, but I shall pay for them."

"You, Mr. Muller, the trustee of the S. S. Industrial Bank?"

"He is the trustee of the bank's assets."

"I see," said the young man, "but I shall be glad to see you, Mr. Muller. It was a surprise to me that Mr. Muller was the trustee of the bank."

"He is the trustee of the bank's assets."

"You are the trustee of the bank's assets?"

"He is the trustee of the bank's assets."

"I see," said the young man, "but I shall be glad to see you, Mr. Muller. It was a surprise to me that Mr. Muller was the trustee of the bank."

"You are the trustee of the bank's assets?"

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"I see," said the young man, "but I shall be glad to see you, Mr. Muller. It was a surprise to me that Mr. Muller was the trustee of the bank."

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"I see," said the young man, "but I shall be glad to see you, Mr. Muller. It was a surprise to me that Mr. Muller was the trustee of the bank."

"You are the trustee of the bank's assets?"

"He is the trustee of the bank's assets."

"I am sure he will do his best."

Harold carried home the welcome intelligence to his father. It made Mr. Kent somewhat more cheerful.

Ten dollars would help him not a little, though the time had been when he received seventy five dollars for a portrait no better than he produced now for ten.

"Now, father, you must get well as soon as you can," said Harold.

"Ah, no need to say that."

"I am afraid your father will only worry the more if he finds that he is not soon in a condition to work."

"It seems so little to make a portrait for ten dollars," added Mrs. Kent.

"I should be only too glad if I could get all the work I could do at that price."

The new order somewhat cheered the poor artist. Once, in his early days, he was ambitious, and hoped for a reputation; but long since his ambitions had faded, and he was content and glad to work for a bare livelihood.

Even then, he would not have succeeded but for the small help his son was able to give him. Three dollars a week in many an unfortunate household in the metropolis plays an important part in the finances of a poor family.

But a new trial was in store for the Kent family. The next day, just before the store closed, Loammi visited it.

He wanted to ask a favor of his father, and

as he walked through the store he looked about him with the air of a prince of the blood royal. It happened that as he passed along he managed to drop his handkerchief. Instead of picking it up, he signalled to Harold Kent to do it.

"Pick up my handkerchief, boy!" he said, in a lofty tone.

"I can't leave my place behind the counter."

"Pick it up, I say!" said Louman, stamping his foot.

"That's not my business to do," retorted Harold, turning at the owner's tone.

"What's your business?"

"Harold Kent."

"I don't forget," said Louman, significantly.

When, on Saturday night, Harold has paid his weekly wages, he was told that he need not report to Louman on Monday morning.

"Why is this?" asked Harold, in dismay.

"Louman has complained of you," he was told.

It was too late to appeal to the superintendent, and Harold left the store, grief-stricken and discouraged.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## A TIMELY HELPER.

WALKING along Eighth Avenue, Scott Walton saw a boy coming out of Ezra Little's store with sad face and eyes red as with weeping. The boy was poorly dressed, and Scott's experience of poverty had been so recent that he felt quick sympathy.

"Are you in trouble? Can I assist you?" he asked, kindly.

Harold turned to see who was addressing him.

"I have just lost my place," he said, briefly.

"Were you working for Mr. Little?"

"Yes."

"How did you lose your place? Tell me, if you don't mind."

"I offended Mr. Little's son, Loammi. He got me discharged."

"I am not surprised to hear it. Loammi got me discharged some months ago."

"You?" exclaimed Harold, in surprise, for he noticed that Scott was handsomely dressed.

"Yes."

"But you are not a poor boy. You do not mind it."

"I was a poor boy then. How much salary did you receive?"



"Three dollars a week."

"I think I can promise you five dollars a week without other profit."

"Can you?" asked Hatfield, overjoyed.  
"But how can you? You are only a boy."

Scott smiled.

"I have some other jobs with the firm of Tower, Douglas & Co. I think they will take you on at five dollars a week. But where do you live, and what is your name?"

"I live at 1000 Brossker Street, and my name is Harold Kent."

"You are not related to Robert Kent?" said Scott, looking at him.

"He is my father."

"He is not the 'strong' one, is he?"

"Yes, do you not know him?"

"Not yet, but I can tell. If you are going home, take me to see him."

"I shall be glad to do so, but may I ask your name?"

"My name is Scott Walton. Our fathers were friends, and I will be your father's friend."

"I have heard my father speak of your family. He will be delighted to see you, and is your father living?"

"No; my poor father is dead. I judge that you are poor."

"Yes, very poor. My father is an artist, but he has very little to do. Lately he has taken to portrait painting, but he only gets ten dol-

lars for a portrait. Now he is sick with the rheumatism, and cannot work."

"Cheer up, Harold! Better times are in store for you. I am prosperous, and my father commissioned me to seek you out and help you."

Scott followed Harold up into the poor apartment occupied by his father. As he entered the room, Mr. Kent looked in surprise at his companion.

"Is this one of your fellow clerks, Harold?" he asked.

"No, father. I have been discharged from Mr. Little's store, and I have no fellow clerks."

Mr. Kent's countenance fell.

"Then we have no income," he said, sadly. "It only needed this blow. Why were you discharged?"

"It was on account of Leonard Little, but don't be troubled, father. I am to have a better place, at five dollars a week."

"Who will give it to you?"

"I will see that he has such a place, Mr. Kent," said Scott.

"But why should you feel an interest in my poor boy?"

"Because my name is Scott Walton, and you were a friend of my poor father."

"Not John Walton's son?"

"Yes; I have been looking for you for a month. This evening fortune threw your son

in my way. He has said that he may be in my fort again."

"But is your father not coming back, or you been a hospitable?"

"But—"

"Did you see any other people?"

"No, except the two men who were with us."

"Has your father not said anything since that he has returned?"

"I have not seen him since we got to the fort, and after a few days he has not come back. I don't know how long he will be gone, but I don't want to bother you with my questions. I will go home. I will see you again, Mr. Kent. I will be glad to see you."

"But I will be glad to see you, too."

Scott went home, and he was glad to see his mother and father again.

"Take this," said Mrs. Kent, "and give it to your father. I have saved it for you."

"I will give it to him, and he will give it to you, in an event."

"Has he said anything since that day I have prospered?"

"Won't you stop and eat a supper with us, Mr. Walton?" asked Mrs. Kent.

"Gladly, if you will call on Scott. I want to ask Mr. Kent about his father's acquaintance with my poor father."

The evening was spent in social chat, and it was ten o'clock before Scott left his new friends.

“ I shall expect to see you on Monday morning at the store, Harold,” he said, as he went away.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### CONCLUSION.

THREE days later, in the early evening, Loammi Little met Harold in the street.

“ Hi, you boy! ” he said, with malicious pleasure; “ you lost your place at my father’s store, didn’t you? ”

“ Yes, ” answered Harold, calmly.

“ That will teach you to treat me with respect hereafter. ”

“ I suppose I am indebted to you for getting me discharged. ”

“ Yes, ” answered Loammi, with a smile.

“ Then I want to thank you. ”

“ To thank me! ” exclaimed Loammi, in surprise.

“ Yes, for I have now a better place. ”

“ Where? ”

“ With Tower, Douglas & Co. ”

“ Did Scott Walton get it for you? ” asked Loammi, quickly.

“ Yes. ”

“ Then he had better mind his own business. My father may get him discharged from his place there. ”

“That is more than he can do. Mr. Tower puts great confidence in Scott.”

“Do you know what he pays him?”

“Forty dollars a week.”

“Nonsense!” said Loammi, angrily.

“It is true.”

“Then Mr. Tower is a fool.”

“Why don’t you call and tell him so?”

A really mean person can receive no heavier blow than to find his malicious attempt to injure another of no avail. This was the case with Loammi.

When he was forced to believe that Scott really received the high salary he had contemptuously scoffed at, he became more discontented than ever. He tried to get his father to increase his allowance, but without success. He was mortified to find that even Harold vied with him in dress.

“How these beggarly upstarts are coming up!” he said to himself, bitterly. “It makes me sick.”

But a heavier blow was in store for him. Dull times came in business, retail trade fell off, and one morning it was announced in the papers that the great house of Ezra Little had suspended.

Mr. Little made desperate efforts to secure financial assistance, but in vain. No one liked him, and it looked as if he was irretrievably ruined.

When things looked darkest, a plain-looking old man entered the store, and asked to see Mr. Little.

"Seth Lawton!" exclaimed the merchant. "I can't see you. I am very busy."

"I hear you are in trouble," said Cousin Seth.

"And I suppose you are glad of it," replied Ezra, bitterly.

"No, I have come to help you," responded Mr. Lawton.

"You help me!" repeated Ezra, scornfully. "What good will a few hundred dollars do?"

"How much help do you need?"

"With forty thousand dollars I could weather the storm handsomely," replied Mr. Little.

"You shall have it, if you will secure me well."

"Have you got forty thousand dollars? I thought you a poor man."

"It isn't the only mistake you have made, Cousin Ezra. At the time you looked down upon me I was richer than yourself. But I will only help you on conditions."

"I will agree to any conditions," said Ezra, his pride humbled. "Only help me out of my present trouble."

So the house of Ezra Little was saved, and its head received a lesson. His pride had had a fall. Those whom he looked down upon proved to surpass him in the only thing on

which he prided himself—the possession of money.

One of Cousin Seth's conditions was that Loammi should go into his father's store, and exchange his elegant leisure for honest work. He complained a good deal, but Seth Lawton and his father insisted. He may in time become a useful, hard-working man of business, but he has a good deal to learn first."

Scott continues to prosper, and next year will become a partner in the firm of Tower, Douglas & Co. Harold is earning a good salary now, and his father's troubles are over. He gets more remunerative work at his profession, and, with his family, occupies a pleasant home in Bayonne.

Mr. Lawton has leased a handsome house uptown, and Scott lives with him. He is rich—how rich no one knows—and Scott is generally supposed to be his heir.

THE END.











