

Literature.

He Might Have Known It.

BY MATTIE DYER ERITTS.

"Is it much farther, Mr. Erskine?"

"No. Only five or six miles now. Are you getting tired, Alice?"

"Oh, no. It was not that!" And there were tears in the dark, lovely eyes which the young girl raised to the rough, kindly face of the elderly gentleman who sat beside her in the carriage.

"What was it then, Alice?"

"Mr. Erskine—"

"Stop a moment, child. You are going home with me now, to be my ward, and to live with me, and be as happy as you can. That 'Mr. Erskine' is too formal for home use. Can't you say Uncle Jack, as Ed Lawrence does, when he's at home?"

"Indeed I can, if you will let me, Uncle Jack!" said the girl, smiling through the tears. "I can do anything to make you happy, since you are doing so much for me. And it is just that I want to speak of. Don't think I don't feel grateful for and appreciate your kindness to me in this heavy trouble, because I can't thank you in fine words, as some would do. I feel it in my heart, Uncle Jack, yes, indeed I do!"

"There, there, Alice! I am sure you do, but after all the kindness is on my child's side, not mine. Don't you know my lonely old home will be the brighter for the presence of a lively young girl?"

"I will certainly try to make it so," said Alice.

"You will do it without trying, Alice. For many a day I have missed young voices in my old halls. For a few weeks every year, at Christmas and his summer vacation, Ed Lawrence comes, but all the rest of the year, there's nobody but the servants, the old housekeeper Mrs. Conner, and myself. Now you will come, and you shall have all the young company you choose, and we'll make things lively."

"You are so kind, Uncle Jack!" murmured Alice.

"I mean to be, to you, child. I don't want ever to let you regret coming among us."

"I shall never do that, I am sure!" said Alice.

They were silent for the rest of the way.

Mr. Erskine was looking out of the carriage window, but he was not seeing the beautiful mountain scenery they were passing. He was thinking of the time, years ago, when he, a young man, stood beside Alice Redfield's mother, another Alice, so like herself, and heard her promise to be his bride when he returned from his next voyage.

He remembered how he had returned, and found Alice Malcolm false to him, and wedded to young Squire Redfield, a richer lover than her true-hearted sailor boy.

He had never made any complaint, but the wound was deep. He returned to the sea, and followed it, until at fifty years old, he had retired, an honored captain, to his old home to spend the rest of his days in quiet.

He had never married. One day there came to him a letter from Alice Redfield. She was a widow, with a small property, and she was now dying without a friend on earth to whose care she could leave her orphan daughter. Would Jack Erskine, for the sake of old times, forgive the wrong she had once done him, come to her and accept the charge of her child, and the care of her small means?

Rough and gruff as the old sea-captain was he had the kindest heart in the world. He could not resist such an appeal as that.

He went at once to the dying bed of his old sweetheart, and saw her laid in the earth before he brought her daughter to his own home, a sacred charge.

Mrs. Conner at first was a little disposed to be half-offended at the idea of a young mistress being set over her. But she soon discovered that Alice was not at all inclined to be "bossy" and that somehow the dark, old-fashioned rooms with their stiff, black haircloth furniture were growing wonderfully prettier since she came.

Mr. Erskine, on his many voyages, had brought home all sorts of queer and curious things, but they had been stowed away in nooks and corners, and seldom saw the light.

One day Alice said:—

"Uncle Jack, did you know this old house was just full of bric-a-brac?"

"What's that? Brick bats? Yes, it's made of 'em child," said Uncle Jack.

Alice laughed merrily.

"Now you know I don't mean that!" she cried. "It's all sorts of pretty things vases and jars and pipes and screens, and I don't know what all!"

"Oh, those things," said Uncle Jack.

"Well if you like 'em do what you please with 'em."

"May I? Thank you. Then I'll have some of them down in a twinkling," said the girl.

She searched among the treasures and put here a quaint jar to hold flowers, there an old screen or a panel, a rich rug before the fireplace, queer boxes and trinkets on mantels and shelves, and vastly improved the looks of the old place.

She even penetrated into the best parlor which was only opened on great oc-

casions, and added many touches there. Over the stately old-fashioned sofa there hung a portrait of a handsome young fellow with merry eyes and a dark mustache which interested Alice greatly.

It could never have been Uncle Jack—and it looked too new, besides."

"Mrs. Conner, who's this?" she asked, standing before it, one day.

"That is Mr. Erskine's nephew, Edwin Lawrence," said Mrs. Conner. "He brought it to his uncle last summer. Edwin is a wild boy but he's got a good heart in him for all that."

"Is it a good picture?" asked Alice.

"Very good. You'll see him at Christmas, and can judge for yourself," said Mrs. Conner.

Somehow Alice took a glance at the picture in the parlor a good many times after that. It would be rather pleasant to have a young person about the house. To be sure Uncle Jack and Mrs. Conner were good and kind, but then it was a little dull, and a young companion would live up things, especially as he was good looking—if the portrait was a correct one, as Mrs. Conner said.

So Alice began rather to long for Christmas to come. As for Uncle Jack, he seemed to be growing younger and happier every day. It needed no nephew or any one else to make him contented. Ah, kind, foolish Uncle Jack! What wild dreams were running through your head, those days?

This bright young presence around his house, seemed to him so like the very Alice he had known so long ago, it brought back the hopes of that past time, and renewed them again. Was it too late? Might not this second Alice bring yet the joy the first one had failed to do?

Ah, Uncle Jack! Do you vainly dream that May and December can never come together?

Christmas was drawing near, cold and bright. Alice had been over to the town to make some purchases, with Uncle Jack. They were expecting Mr. Lawrence in a few days. His room was ready upstairs, and Mrs. Conner had planned some of his favorite dishes, but he had not yet arrived.

It was late when Alice and Uncle Jack got home, so while he went to the sitting room, Alice ran at once up to her own chamber, to put away her purchases before supper. Uncle Jack had been most kind that day. He had supplied her with unlimited money for her own needs, and given her several nice presents.

Alice was very grateful, and as she ran downstairs again, she resolved to express her gratitude in a way she knew he would like.

The lamps were not yet lighted in the sitting room but the fire cast a red glow over the old furniture, and over some one sitting by the fireside.

Alice slipped up quietly, bent over suddenly, and kissed the person in the chair on the mouth, saying:—

"That's for thanks, Uncle Jack!"

But oh! horrors! The next instant she saw she had made a dreadful mistake! The tall, slender figure which rose from the chair was not Uncle Jack's burly form! It was an entirely strange voice which said, as Alice flung her hands over her face,

"It isn't Uncle Jack, but he thanks you for such a kind welcome, all the same!"

The stranger held out his hand, but Alice turned and fled, to hide her burning cheeks in her own room.

Nor did she come back, until Uncle Jack himself called her to supper. Then, when she walked sedately into the sitting room, the lamps were lighted, and Uncle Jack introduced her to Edwin Lawrence, his nephew, who had come sooner than he expected.

It was a very stiff greeting that Alice gave him. The more so because though his mouth was so grave, a merry twinkle in his eye told her he had not forgotten her dreadful blunder.

But she could not help owning he was very handsome. And it was kind of him to address all his conversation to Uncle Jack, so as to set her at her ease.

She could not lose her constraint, however, all the evening. And she was glad when bedtime came, and she could hide her blushes again in her own room.

Next morning she came down early as usual. And lo! there stood Mr. Edwin Lawrence, by the fire. Alice was for running again. But he stopped her.

"Please, Miss Redfield," he said, "don't put me into your black books entirely. You will spoil my Christmas if you do."

"I don't wish to do that," said Alice, "but I—oh, how can I apologize for that awful mistake?" And she turned scarlet.

"Don't apologize at all. I assure you I didn't mind it in the least," said Edwin. "Come, Miss Redfield, let's agree to forget it and be good friends, will you?" And he frankly held out his hand.

Alice gave him hers for an instant, and said:—

"Yes, for Uncle Jack's sake."

"That will do for the present," said Edwin. "When we know each other better I hope it may be partly for my own. I was so glad to hear that my uncle had some one to brighten up this dull old place for him."

"He has been so kind to me," said Alice warmly. "I could not do enough for him in return. There is nothing I would not do for him."

"Nor I," said Edwin.

It happened that Uncle Jack was just coming into the room; and heard these last words. He smiled to himself. There was a thing he was hoping to ask Alice to do some day—would she do that?

Poor, dear, foolish old Uncle Jack!

The Christmas holidays passed like a dream to Alice. There were sleigh rides and parties, and to all, as Uncle Jack seldom went out of an evening, Edwin was her escort.

It was wonderful how well acquainted the young people grew in the three weeks he stayed, and it seemed as if they had known each other for a life.

Perhaps that accounted for a little accident which took place in the hall as they were about to part.

"Good-by Alice," said Edwin with her hand in his, then leaning near her he whispered, "Can't you imagine I am uncle, for a moment, and make a second mistake?"

"Oh, no! I know you are not he!" said Alice, blushing.

"Well, then," persisted Edwin, "may I make the mistake?"

"I don't care!" whispered Alice, and Mr. Edwin very quickly stooped and took one kiss from her red lips before they parted.

After he was gone letters came very often to Alice, over which she smiled and blushed a great deal.

And early in the spring there came one saying he would soon follow it. But Alice somehow could not tell Uncle Jack, and he did not know that Edwin was expected when he went one day to town.

Uncle Jack was thinking a great deal, these days. His dream was taking tangible shape, and at last he determined to tell Alice, and see whether she would be as good as her word, and do anything he would ask her.

"I know I'm an old fool!" he said, as he opened the door at home, fully decided to test his fate. "But I can't help it. So here goes!"

He opened the sitting room door, hoping to find Alice there. And met a sight most surprising! Yes, Alice was there, standing by the hearth, comfortably clasped in Edwin Lawrence's arms, her pretty head resting on his shoulder.

At the sight of Uncle Jack, they suddenly parted. Alice retreated to the back of a chair. Edwin stood leaning against the mantel, looking as much amused as Alice did confused.

"Why, why! What's all this?" cried Uncle Jack, taking off his hat, and wiping from his brow the sudden perspiration which had started there.

"It's all right, uncle," said Edwin. "Alice and I have just been making a little bargain, that's all!"

"And what is your little bargain, if I may know?" asked poor Uncle Jack.

"It certainly is your right to know, dear, kind friend," said Alice. "Tell him Edwin!"

Edwin came forward, put his arm around her, and led her to Uncle Jack.

"It is only to take each other for better or worse, for all our lives," he said.

"Will you give us your consent and blessing, Uncle?"

They little guessed what a bright dream was suddenly demolished forever, as Uncle Jack said, brokenly:—

"Yes, yes! I give both, and may you always be happy, my dear children!"

Then the good old fellow trotted out of the room, and left them alone. As he went, he said to himself:—

"I might have known it! I might have known it! And it's all for the best! All for the best, no doubt!"

And that was the only moan poor Uncle Jack made over his lost hope. It was but the way of the world. For every joy that one has, another must suffer. It is a pity that hearts, as well as bodies, do not grow old and cease to care for happiness.

To The Heirs of Anneke Jans Who Are Readers of The Times.

CLEVELAND, O., April 8, 1898.—About 100 members of the Anneke Jans International Stock Co., of Cleveland, O., assembled in convention on March 29. The sessions were three, taking two days, and proved to be very pleasant and harmonious. Everyone was pleased with the work done during the protracted recess by the corresponding secretary and trustees for the heirs, and many compliments were tendered Mrs. Jennie Kepler for her endeavors and her faithfulness.

Great precaution was taken to avoid the disturbing elements, which are generally sent in by our enemies for the purpose of discouraging the weak ones.

Tickets were issued, which admitted all stockholders to the church in which the meeting was held. This time Trinity's projects were upset, and they obtained no foothold. The meeting passed with perfect harmony, and all were jubilant over the beautiful prospect and the victories already accomplished. The company decided to drop the stock plan, and not call for the balance of stock, but make it still easier on all by raising the money by monthly dues, of the small sum of 50 cents per month each, the money so raised to go to carry on the work. The amount which has been raised is to be placed as a reserve fund to be used in emergency cases at the discretion of the secretary.

In the work there was a consolidation of interests and work with the association. The Pacific coast association and Attorney General Hart, of San Francisco, will

be retained by all, but the association will retain their genealogist to still continue their proof work. The fee for that remains as it was, and Mrs. Kepler will look after your records.

The prospect is bright for an early settlement of the Harlem and also the Holland claims. Mrs. Kepler will meet Gen. Hart at New York and confer with him regarding the best interests of all, and in a few days, or rather weeks, will embark for Amsterdam and Rotterdam to look after the heirs' claims there.

Burglars of some sort tried to effect an entrance at the headquarters, 618 Jennings avenue, on the last night of the meeting, before all had departed for their homes. Mr. Frank Drake of Cuttus, Ont., and heirs from Michigan were still there. A force of police was detailed to watch the house until morning. It was supposed they were not seeking money particularly, but had their eyes on the valuable papers, held by Mrs. Kepler, which had been the result of many years hard labor on her part. This is the third attempt which had been made to rob her in this way, but she watches them with an eagle's eye, and she will watch them and hereafter be guarded when beyond the danger line.

All heirs are urged now to unite their interests as one and help bring about a settlement of the Holland and Harlem claim at once.

Mrs. Kepler has pictures of Anneke Jans and her second husband, Avertardus Bogardus, on sale, also the maps which show the boundaries of the estate, comprising 192 acres and 75 rods of ground, now held by Trinity church corporation. These sell at the price of 50 cents each. The full set of pictures, Anneke Jans and Bogardus, and also Mrs. Jennie Kepler and the maps, the whole outfit, pictures and maps, for \$2.00. Any one wishing them can procure them from her. She will soon have more photographs, and also photographs of William, Prince of Orange.

Dear heirs, let us hear from you in the work. The officers of our union, which is called the Anneke Jans Bogardus International Union, are as follows:

D. E. Dozer, president, Defiance O.
J. H. Drake, vice-president, Des Moines, Iowa.
Mrs. Jennie Kepler, secretary.
W. G. Vantilbourough, Hamlet, Ind.
A. A. VanRiper, St. Louis, Mich.
S. H. Sackett, New London, O.
W. B. Strong, Lincoln, Neb.
J. W. Drake, Kingsville, Ont.
Mrs. M. B. Strong, Campaign, Ill.
W. Kaufman, Villanova, Ont.
Alice Pierson, Unadilla, Neb.
G. A. Johnson, Brownsville, Ind.
Mary P. Thurneau, Oneonta, N. Y.
Mrs. Dr. Buys, Painesville, O.
Mrs. Alice Pettibone, Cleveland, O.
—Delray Times—Michigan.

Humorous.

The Elephant's Retort.

A woman of tremendous avoirdupois entered a Broadway cable car breathlessly and selected eight or nine inches of space next to the man with the newspaper, in the corner.

As she sank firmly down and he began to suffer from the wedging process the passengers heard him remark quite audibly that he was not aware that "elephants" were allowed on this line.

The fare collector was vainly endeavoring to conceal his delight when, after an embarrassing pause, there came a voice, deliberate, dignified, impressive:

"Conductor, stop the car! There is an elephant and a hog aboard, and the elephant wishes to get off."—New York World.

Teacher—What is the meaning of one-twenty-fifth?

Little Boy—I don't remember.

Teacher—If you had twenty-five children visiting you, and only one apple for them, what would you do?

Little Boy—I'd wait till they all went an' eat it myself.

Lady—So you fought with Sherman on his march to the sea? Here is a dollar for you, you noble patriot! Were you in a Massachusetts regiment?

Temp—Well, ha'ily, ldy. I wuz in de Louisiana Tigers, an' de way we fought wid den Yanks wuz a caution.

Author—I am troubled with insomnia. I lie awake at night hour after hour thinking about my literary work.

His Friend—How very foolish of you! Why don't you get up and read portions of it?

Diggs—I just finished reading an account of how they burned heretics at the stake in ancient times. Such barbarism would not be tolerated in this enlightened age.

Biggs—No, indeed! The modern heretic is let of with a roast in the religious journals.

A bald-headed professor recently delivered a lecture entitled "The Air We Breathe" before an East London audience. In the course of his remarks he said: "It is quite impossible for any person to live without air." At this a small boy called out: "Ow about yerself, gov'ner?"

"Yes, his sermons are tiresomely long, but he always says something to the point."

"Well, what did he say to the point last Sunday?"

"In conclusion."

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