

MY VALENTINE.

In the happy long ago,
When my Love was very young,
When I rocked her to and fro,
And her lullaby I sung;
When her cheek so soft and fair,
Nestled often close to mine,
Then at first I did declare
Daisy was my Valentine.

Later, when her loving lips
Little loving words essayed,
When her curls with golden tips
Little gleams of sunshine made,
When her little dimpled arms
Round about my neck did twine,
Daisy, with her chubby charms,
—Daisy was my Valentine.

Now, though years have passed away,
Years—why, bless me! near a score—
She's my Valentine today,
And I love her more and more;
Love her that the light is true
Which from her dear eyes doth shine;
And, because she loves me too,
Daisy is my Valentine.

Other years shall pass away,
Other loves than mine come to her;
To my lass on some fine day,
Some fine lad will come to woo her.
Let this laddie's love be leal,
Be as fond and firm as mine—
Let his heart be true as steel,
Would he win my Valentine!

He must be both brave and true,
He must love both God and man.
Then, when'er he comes to woo,
He may win her, if he can.
Through his lips his heart must speak
Through his eyes his soul must shine;
Through his life her good must seek,
If he win my Valentine.

When these future years have flown,
—Fly they must, they cannot stay—
Daisy still will be my own,
Though she give herself away.
Where'er her lot may be,
How'er her heart incline,
She'll be ever dear to me,
Ever be my Valentine.

ONE OF MY CLERKS.

There was much speculation and suppressed excitement in the office of Messrs. Craggsby and Golding, Colonial Brokers, of Fenchurch street. Mr. Craggsby, for many years the senior partner in the firm, had just died, and the conduct and management of affairs had thus devolved upon Mr. Golding, who was now sole partner, and also nephew and executor to the deceased. The event had caused in the office a feeling of unanimous regret.

While by nature a just man, Mr. Craggsby had been an unusually kind one—so far, at all events, as those whom he employed were concerned. A man of high principle and strict probity, he never made his own uprightness and rectitude an excuse for severely judging others. As one of his clerks put it, 'Craggsby was strict, but you couldn't help liking him, for he would never find fault without a cause for it.' This necessarily ensured him the respect and liking of those who were under his authority.

Another circumstance which added to his popularity was the fact that he disliked making changes in the arrangements of the firm. Having once employed a man and found him trustworthy, Mr. Craggsby preferred to retain him, even though the salary paid continuously increased. This gave a feeling of security to clerks and warehousemen, which remained undisturbed till the death of the chief rudely awakened them, when they remembered how different were the views and opinions of the junior partner, who would now hold undisputed sway. For Mr. Golding was accustomed to rate his social inferiors by a very different scale. Each, in his eyes, had a market value. That was his phrase. A man might have served the firm well and faithfully for twenty or thirty years, but this, in Mr. Golding's estimation gave him no claim to regard or consideration.

But, as almost always happens, there was one person with whom his rudeness of manner was veiled by courtesy, his asperity softened into mildness, by the desire to please, and this person was the daughter of the late partner, and consequently his cousin Elinor Craggsby.

For some years, Mr. Golding had cherished in his inmost heart—or perhaps it would be better to say mind than heart—a liking for his fair relative, and had set himself to gain her favorable regard. As yet, however, he had not achieved any marked success, but he was of a dogged, persevering nature, and did not despair. The match would be a very advantageous one, for Elinor was, by her father's death, placed in possession of a considerable fortune which would be of use in extending and improving the business.

For, as Mr. Golding was wont to say to a few friends, 'Craggsby

was a good fellow enough, but slow and old-fashioned—couldn't keep pace with the age.' And now that the game was in his own hands he began to launch out more boldly. But to do this required capital, and this, if he could but win his cousin's regard, was ready to his hand. Elinor's personal attractions, which had in reality at first captivated him, would have been almost sufficient to induce him to seek the alliance; but Elinor's wealth was irresistible.

'Renshaw, the governor wants you,' said one of the seniors to a young man who, bending over his desk, appeared so intent upon his occupation that the other had to repeat the words, and in a louder key, before any notice was taken.

Then Gilbert Renshaw, with a brief 'Thank you, Brown,' put his work carefully in his desk, and locking it, turned and walked quietly across the office to the private room. Mr. Brown looked after him.

'He's a queer one,' he soliloquized. 'He's been here four or five years, and he takes things as coolly as if he had been here all his life—more coolly, in fact. Half of us would have gone to Golding full run but not he; catch him hurrying. I pelt, can't make him out,' and with this candid admission, Mr. Brown turned his attention to his letter writing.

Meanwhile Gilbert Renshaw had entered the private room where Mr. Golding sat alone.

'You have kept me waiting, Mr. Renshaw.'

'I regret to hear it, sir,' was the quiet reply.

The chief shifted in his chair, and looked up at the young man. Of all his clerks, apart from the important question of their 'market value,' Gilbert Renshaw was the one he most disliked.

'I have sent for you, Mr. Renshaw,' resumed the chief, 'to point out an error of yours in these papers—an error which might have involved grave consequences.'

Gilbert Renshaw bowed, but said nothing. The error thus magnified into so much importance, was in reality a trifling oversight, and was for the most part the fault of a junior. This, probably, Mr. Golding well knew; but as the papers would come before Renshaw for revision, he chose to assume that the entire blame rested upon him. The young man was at once too high-minded and kind-hearted to exculpate himself by accusing his junior, and in a few words expressed his regret.

Gilbert bowed, but made no reply, and then, after taking his principal's directions, left the room.

Mr. Golding looked after him with an annoyed expression on his face.

'If I catch you tripping again,' he muttered to himself, 'you shall suffer for it, my friend.'

But the days went by, and for a time his vindictiveness remained without an opportunity to exercise itself.

He was shrewd enough, however, to wait his opportunity. And that was not long in coming. One Saturday afternoon he happened to want Gilbert for some purpose, and sent for him. The young man could nowhere be found. Mr. Golding glanced at the clock and frowned angrily.

It was just ten minutes to the time at which, their work being done, the clerks were entitled to leave. Some were already closing their desks and making preparations for departure, but the sudden appearance of the chief in the outer office galvanized them into activity. A kind-hearted senior in the meantime surreptitiously dispatched an office-boy to the restaurant which Gilbert generally frequented, but the well-meant effort was fruitless.

Mr. Golding walked across the office to the farther window, which, the house being a corner one, commanded the length of the street, and stood looking out. Suddenly he uttered a slight exclamation, which drew all eyes with glances more or less furtive to the window. There at some little distance quietly strolling along, was Gilbert Renshaw. Unconscious of those watching him he paused at the corner, looked at his watch, and a moment's hesitation as if uncertain what course to pursue, turned into a side street and disappeared.

Monday morning came, and to the amazement of each and all Mr. Golding was first at the office. The juniors, who were naturally among the earliest, were warned by the housekeeper in a mysterious whisper

that 'the governor was there.' A greater degree of order and silence reigned that morning than was usual.

One by one, as the clerks came in, the various posts were taken up. By the senior clerk's desk stood Mr. Golding, a hard, pitiless expression on his face. The clock was just chiming nine, when the door swung open, and Gilbert Renshaw walked in. He glanced round, evidently rather surprised at seeing Mr. Golding, and then walked toward his desk. Ere he had taken three steps the principal's voice checked him.

'You need not trouble yourself to open your desk, Mr. Renshaw.'

Gilbert turned around, still more surprised at this intimation.

Mr. Golding had walked across the office, and the two men stood facing each other. One glanced at the stern face, those cold, keen eyes before him, and Gilbert saw the other's purpose in a moment.

Every one in the office looked on, either stealthily or openly, with increasing interest, and every one was puzzled by the way in which the young man maintained his usual air of easy indifference. But Mr. Golding gave but little time for speculation.

'You left before the time on Saturday, Mr. Renshaw?'

'About ten minutes before two,' answered the other.

'And your reasons for doing so?'

'My work was finished and I had an important engagement.'

'Indeed?' sneered his employer.

'But I do not allow any one of my clerks to keep important engagements till the office is closed, and as you have thought fit to leave at your own time, you will not be surprised if I inform you that I shall not need your service any longer. This is the amount due you,' and Mr. Golding held out a slip of paper, but Gilbert made no movement to take it.

'I understand you, Mr. Golding, and I am as ready to leave your service as you are to require me to do so. Technically, you are in the right, and I therefore apologize for having deprived you of ten minutes on Saturday. My presence, doubtless, is not very agreeable to you, but we may meet again before long; should such an event happen, you will please understand that the interview will not be of my seeking. Good-day, gentlemen,' and with a comprehensive glance and bow to the amazed onlookers, the young man turned and quitted the office, leaving his employer standing, as much astonished as any one, with the unheeded check still between his fingers.

Elinor Craggsby sat with her friend and companion dreamily gazing into the fire. After a while the elder lady looked up from the book she was reading.

'A penny for your thoughts, Nell?'

The girl started at the voice, and the words had to be repeated before she seemed to understand them.

'I'm not sure,' she said meditatively, 'that they are worth the sum.'

'Then,' said her friend with a smile, 'without wishing to be uncomplimentary to the subject of them, I think I can guess their directions.'

'I wish I could make him see how useless it is,' the girl broke out, apparently irrelevantly.

'He doesn't wish to see that,' said her companion. 'As I have often told you, it appears to me that he has deliberately resolved to succeed in the attempt to win your regard, and he is not a man of fine feelings. Nothing short of absolute discourtesy or rudeness would repel him, unless, indeed, it were the presence of a meaning tone.'

There was something in the last sentence that brought a flush to Elinor Craggsby's face. She rose from her seat, and, moving towards the window, stood looking out. Suddenly she uttered an exclamation of annoyance, her friend looked up.

'Here he is!' said Elinor, as if in answer to the look.

A smile played for a moment round Mrs. Seaforth's lips, then vanished.

'Shall I leave you?' she said, half rising.

'No—on no account,' and Elinor, smiling herself in spite of her vexation, recrossed the room, and with gentle force pushed the elderly lady into her seat again and then resumed her own. Scarcely had she done so when the servant announced 'Mr. Golding,' and that gentleman entered all bows and smiles.

'Ellen,' he said, attempting to take her hand, 'you must know how long

and how devotedly I have been attached to you, how I have longed for the hour that should enable me to approach you and offer myself as a suitor for your hand.'

He paused to note the effect of this declaration which, in reality, he had carefully prepared before he reached the house that evening. But he learned nothing from the contemplation of the face before him. It was slightly averted, as was natural, but in no wise did its fair owner seem discomposed. Mr. Golding began to feel a little uneasy, and a new idea for the first time flashed upon his mind. Could there be another? It seemed too absurd, but it would not be dismissed. He rose from his chair and bent over her for a last appeal.

'Can it be?' he murmured half reproachfully. 'Have I a rival?'

As the words left his lips, the room door opened, and a voice announced 'Mr. Renshaw.' At the sound Mr. Golding, with a sudden start, faced round, and to his utter astonishment beheld before him, smiling courteously and with outstretched hand, the man whom he had dismissed from his service, whom he had even spoken of contemptuously to Elinor herself as 'one of my clerks.'

'A friend of yours?' he said, interrogatively but in a tone that sounded strange in his own ears, and caused the other three to look curiously at him.

The girl blushed, smiled, but did not answer; and Mrs. Seaforth, who had risen and approached them, came to her rescue.

'Mr. Renshaw was a friend of Mr. Craggsby's and is still a friend of ours.'

'Mr. Renshaw,' said the other, 'probably has good reasons for his friendship. Fortune-hunters usually have.'

Gilbert Renshaw took a step forward.

'That is true as a general statement, Mr. Golding,' he said, with all his former easy indifference, 'but it is not true, if you will allow me to say so, in this particular instance. I, personally, am not a fortune-hunter. Perhaps you know of some one who may better deserve the name?'

'You were my clerk,' said Golding with a bitter sneer; 'what are you now?'

'I will tell you,' replied the other in the same unruffled tone. 'As you rightly said, I was your clerk, and it came about in this way. At my father's death, the property to which I succeeded was somewhat encumbered. Your late partner was an old friend of ours, and he suggested that I should obtain a situation for some few years, leaving the property thus to clear itself by applying the income to the extinction of the debt. To simplify matters, he kindly offered me a position in his own office at a good salary. Stimulating that nothing should be said or known of his long friendship with our family, lest it should be thought he might favor me. I accepted the post. In a few years, as we planned, my property was encumbered, and your sudden dismissal of me simply anticipated my own resignation by two or three weeks. You see, Mr. Golding, while I give you full credit for having intended to injure me, I can readily treat with indifference a course of action that has ended in failure.'

As Gilbert ceased speaking he glanced meaningly at Elinor who with Mrs. Seaforth, had stood quietly by. It was evidently no news to them, and Mr. Golding, as his gaze travelled from one face to another, saw that his efforts had been in vain, and that success was hopeless.

But the whole matter was so utterly unexpected that for a moment he felt that it could not be really true. He turned to Elinor.

'You knew all this, it seems?'

'Yes,' she said but speaking in so low a tone that he could scarcely catch the words; 'I knew it all; but it was my father's wish that the matter should not be mentioned. That, of course, was sufficient. You would, however, have known it before long, for—'

She hesitated, and cast an appealing glance at Gilbert.

'We are to be married shortly,' said that gentleman promptly, completing the sentence.

The blushing face, the downcast eyes beside him confirmed the statement, if, indeed, confirmation was needed. Mr. Golding waited to hear no more, but turning short on his heel with a muttered execration, left the room and the house.

STARVING, FREEZING CATTLE.

A correspondent of the Milwaukee Sentinel tells this pitiful tale of what he saw in going from Wisconsin to California; before reaching Kinsley and between Kinsley, and La Junta, at which point the road takes a southern course, the fields were literally covered with dead and dying cattle. The uncommon cold in Colorado had caused them to go South. Reaching the Santa Fe road their further progress was barred by the wire fences which have been built all along the route; but could they have passed this, the Arkansas river, which is partly frozen, would have prevented them from reaching any more southern point. Freezing and without food, there was nothing for them to do but to wait for death. Their lips were frozen, and they were unable to eat the bits of grass that were above the snow. It was the most pitiful sight I trust that I ever shall be obliged to witness. It was estimated that 100,000 were in sight from the car window; and when to this number is added the almost countless herds between the Arkansas river and northern Colorado, the amount of suffering is beyond human computation. Many lay under the wire fences dead, having pushed their way as far south as possible. Little calves leaned against the wires with no strength to release themselves from the cruel bars—waiting for death. At Dodge City, where we were detained by a wrecked car, the starving creatures were walking through the town, or standing with their meagre, appealing eyes turned toward the people, who were powerless to help. The white snow that covered their bodies was the only touch of mercy that we saw. Some of them were Texan cattle, wholly unfit for northern climates, unless sheltered and fed when necessary. I wonder if cattle owners could have taken the ride, made solemn by the suffering of helplessness, whether their hearts would have been stirred with pity. Whether they would have resolved that henceforth they would own no more cattle than they could protect from cold and starvation. Surely the moans of the cattle upon the thousand western hills ascend unto the ears of the Almighty. Thirteen hundred sheep lay in one pile dead, frozen to death.

AN HONEST MAN.—I am going down town,' said a citizen on a Woodward avenue car yesterday, 'to return a lost wallet to its owner.'

Every man in the car picked up his ears, and one of them moved up closer and inquired:

'You found a wallet, eh?'

'Yes, sir.'

'On the street?'

'Yes.'

'In the daytime?'

'No, at night.'

'Anybody see you pick it up?'

'Not a soul.'

'And you would have been perfectly safe in keeping it?'

'I would.'

'Well, sir, let me shake hands with you. I have wanted to live long enough to find an honest man, and I have found him.'

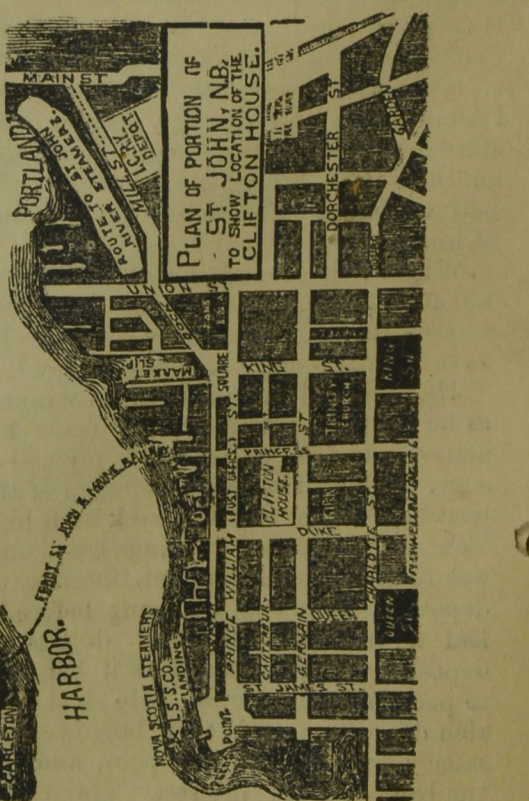
They shook.

Many of the passengers were visibly affected.

'And how much money was in the wallet,' queried the interrogator after wiping his eyes on a pink bordered handkerchief.

'Not a blamed cent.'

Then the curtain went down and the audience filed out.



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