

## A QUEER BLUNDER.

The morning sun brightened the gilt letters on the sign above the entrance to the stanch old warehouse, but its radiance was lost on the young man with keen, gray eyes who stood at the office door and hesitated before he turned the knob. In that brief moment he tried to recall the directions that Emily Quarles had given him.

"Father is peculiar," she had said. "You must know him before you can appreciate him. And Spencer Grant wondered how long it would be before this appreciative stage could be reached. He hadn't met this peculiar father, and here he was standing on the doormat of his office mustering up courage to go in and ask him for his daughter.

What else had Emily said? "Do not contradict father. Do just what he tells you to do. Let him have his own way. If he blusters and fumes wait quietly. He will soon cool down. Father's gruff manner is largely assumed. If you have tact you will discover the way to handle him. Tell him truthfully, if you have a chance, how we met at Aunt Stanhope's, and that as soon as we were quite assured that we were all in all to each other, which you must add, came to both of us as a complete surprise, I sent you directly to him. I will prepare him as far as I think judicious for your coming. Keep up a stout heart and guard your temper."

Spencer turned the knob and went in. There were several clerks writing in the outer office, but they did not look up as he passed along the narrow space before the high railing to the door marked "Private." He knocked at this door, and a gruff voice bade him come in. Spencer summed up all his resolutions and entered.

A sharp-featured old man with heavy eyebrows was seated at a desk, with his bushy gray head bent above a handful of papers.

"Sit down," he said, without looking up. Spencer obeyed, and after a little the old man raised his head, glanced at the clock, and then gave the young man a long searching glance. As he did so he drew a letter toward him and glanced at a page of it. Again he stared at Spencer.

"Well," he said abruptly, "you are exactly on time. You were to be here precisely at 10. This argues well for your early training. You have made a good impression on me to start with."

Spencer murmured his pleasure at this favorable comment, but the old man interrupted him.

"Your father says here that you resemble him. He writes that the resemblance is so strong that I couldn't help but know who you were if I chanced to meet you anywhere. I don't agree with him, though there is a family resemblance. You are much better looking than he ever dreamed of being."

"Did my father say that?" inquired Spencer hastily. He knew the thing was quite impossible. Emily's father was laboring under some queer delusion. But he didn't mean to contradict him.

"Yes he did," chuckled the old man, with a grim smile. "Fathers with but one child are very apt to be asses." Then his tone changed. "What can you do? Can you write shorthand? Do you understand type-writing? Can you compose a good letter? Can you spell?"

"I think," said Spencer quietly, "that I can best answer that by saying that I have a pretty thorough business training that was picked up in four years of practical work. I've been hard at it, in fact, ever since I left college."

"Your father doesn't make any such claim," said the old man, referring again to the letter. "All he says is 'Try him.' I will. I've made a place for you. I am going to indulge in the luxury of a private secretary. Ha, ha, ha! Here, take these letters. See what answers they need. Answer 'em. That's your little side room there. Leave the door open—I may want to call you."

Spencer smilingly took the letters and without a trace of hesitation went into the little room assigned him. He found the convenience he needed, and with his amused smile deepening he went at his task.

Presently he heard the outer door of the office open and shut, and a moment later the following dialogue came to him through the half-closed door:

"So you have come?" growled the old man. "Yes, sir," said a mild voice with a little quaver in it.

"Well," said the old man, with a dangerous rising inflection, "I want to tell you that it can never be!"

"Do you mean that I won't do?" inquired the mild voice.

"That's just what I mean," snarled the old man. "Your comprehension does you credit."

"But how can you tell till you've tried me?" pretested the mild voice.

"Tried you!" roared the old man. "What do you mean by that?"

"I mean, sir," said the mild voice hurriedly, "that I hardly think it's fair to condemn me unheard and untried. I was led to think you would show me more consideration."

"Oh, you were, were you?" snapped the old man. "Well, sir, you have been falsely

led. I know my daughter much better than you do, sir!"

"Your daughter, sir?"

"Yes, my daughter! And don't you dare to mention her name."

"I—I had no intention of doing so, sir."

"Eh? Coming to your senses, are you? That's right. She's only a foolish, headstrong girl. In a month she'll forget your existence."

"But I don't see what your daughter has to do with it. She is nothing to me, sir."

"Spoken like a sensible youth. I thought I'd convince you. There, there, let the whole thing drop."

"And you positively refuse to give me a trial?"

"Confound you! there you go again! Do you take me for an idiot?"

"I—I wouldn't go as far as that, sir. You don't seem to understand that I was led to believe you would give me an opportunity to show my worth. I am greatly disappointed, sir."

"Heavens, man, are we going over all that again?"

"Try me for a month, sir."

"Not for a minute!"

"For a week."

"Leave the room, sir! Go, sir! Go to the idiot asylum and marry somebody in your own mental class. What an immoral scoundrel you must be!"

"I am not, sir."

"Of course you such an imbecile you don't know it. Get out!"

"I'm going, sir. My father will be greatly surprised at your unreasonable treatment."

"Your father! Who cares for your father? Why doesn't he keep his weak-minded children at home?"

"Good day, sir."

The door closed with a sharp bang, and there was a brief silence.

"I wonder what the deuce he meant by saying he'd tell his father?" Spencer heard the old man mutter. "Who's his father? Well, whoever he is, his son shall never marry my daughter. What in the world could she have seen in such an unbalanced fellow?"

His heavy step sounded on the floor, and when Spencer looked up the old man was gazing down at him from the doorway. His face was very red and his white hair still bristled with indignation.

"Well, Mr. Secretary," he said, "how are we coming on?"

"Very well, sir," replied Spencer. "I'll lay these replies upon your desk in a few moments."

"Good," said the old man.

"By the way," said Spencer, "what do you want me to say to Van Annan & Co.?"

"They make an offer for your stock of cochineal, you know."

"Accept it, and tell them we'll ship the stuff tomorrow."

"I wouldn't do that," said the secretary.

"Eh!" cried the astonished old man.

"You don't seem to know that there is a corner forming in dyestuffs," said Spencer, with a slight smile. "Wait a minute, and I will telephone for the latest quotations."

He arose as he spoke and stepped into the outer office and entered the telephone box.

"It is just as I supposed," he said as he rejoined the old man. "Cochineal jumped 34 per cent. at the opening of the market this morning."

The old man turned and went back to his desk without a word. A moment later he looked in again.

"That means \$2,735 to the good," he said. "Guess you'll earn your salary all right." Then he slowly added, "And I guess I'm getting old."

The sound of an opening door drew his attention. A radiant vision appeared in the doorway. It was Emily.

"Well, papa?" she cried, as she stepped forward.

The old man's lips tightened. "I sent him packing," he said rapidly. "A most reprehensible young fellow. You didn't know him, my dear."

Before she could indignantly reply an astonishing apparition appeared in the doorway of the inner room. It was Spencer, bareheaded, with a pen in one hand and a bundle of letters in the other. As he caught her eye he put his finger to his lips, shook his head at her over the old man's shoulder, and drew back.

"Oh, father," was all Emily could say.

"Don't feel bad, my child," said the old man, with a little tenderness in his tone. "You'll soon forget him." He lowered his voice. "I've got a young fellow inside there"—he jerked his thumb toward the inner door—"who is just the man for you. Smart, splendid family, good looking, bright as a new dollar. Saved me \$2,735 this very morning! Hadn't been at work twenty minutes. Wait a little and I'll introduce him."

"Let me have a look at him!" cried Emily, and she darted to the door.

"Good morning," she said to Mr. Spencer. "Good morning," answered that smiling youth, with an eloquent grimace.

Emily turned to her astonished parent. "He'll do," she said. "Come out here, sir." And they came forward hand in hand. "Bless my soul!" cried the paralyzed father.

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"You are quite right, papa," said Emily. "He is just the man for me. In fact, I've thought so for some, and yet I don't believe you really know who he is. You are getting reckless, daddy. Tell him who you are Spencer."

The young man gravely straightened his face.

"I am Spencer Grant, of Spencer Grant & Co., importers of dyestuffs and druggists' supplies, and entirely at Mr. Richard Quarles' service."

"Spencer Grant & Co.?" gasped the old man as a look of horror came over his face. "Then who was the other fellow?"

"I'm afraid," said Spencer gently, "that it was the highly recommended son of your old friend."

"Awful!" groaned the old man. "I was right when I said fathers with one child are asses. How can I explain?"

"Suppose you leave the explanation to your new secretary?" said Emily.

"Let me suggest," said Spencer, with a happy smile, "that you leave it to the junior member of the new firm of Quarles & Grant. And then the grim old man chuckled."

## Chronic Indigestion

By far the most important part of digestion takes place in the intestines and it is folly to expect stomach medicines to cure a severe case of indigestion or dyspepsia. The kidneys, liver and bowels must first be made regular and active and the only remedy which acts directly on these organs is Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. They are purely vegetable act pleasantly and naturally and positively cures dyspepsia, biliousness and stomach troubles. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box, take no substitute.

## Just a Trifle Gaudy.

"It's a hard life declared the old circus man, "and I always say at the close of every season that I am through with it. But there is something in the life, the smell of the sawdust ring, the glitter and noise, the changing scene, that appeals to a man who has once been in the business, and it is seldom that a man leaves the life until death steps in. There is a good deal of humor in the business, too, as we are brought into contact with all sorts and conditions of men."

"I am reminded of a funny thing that happened to me a good many years ago when such a thing as moving a circus by rail was not thought of. It was part of my work at that time to drive our great \$10,000 chariot, not only in the parade, but between towns as well. What little sleep I got I had to catch here and there on my seat while we were on our way to another town. One night my doze turned into a sound sleep, and when I awoke I discovered that the team, left without a driver, had turned into a farmyard and come to a stop before a hay stack, where they were quietly eating. While I was rubbing my eyes and trying to grasp the situation, the old man who owned the hay came out where I was and walked around the chariot and looked it over with a critical eye."

"Well," said I, with a grin, "what do you think of it?"

## Burdock Blood Bitters.

CURES SCROFULA.

Mrs. James Carr, Umfraville, Hastings Co., Ont., says: "My little boy, two and a half years old, was in a terrible condition and suffered a great deal from scrofulous sores. My husband bought a bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters for him and gave it to him, and by the time he had finished the second bottle there was not a sore to be seen. On account of this wonderful cure I can honestly recommend B.B.B. to all who suffer from any disease arising from bad blood."

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Mr. Oliver J. Murray, Charlottetown, P.E.I., writes as follows: "About six months ago I was troubled with painful boils, for which I could get nothing to cure me. As a last resort I tried Burdock Blood Bitters. One bottle completely rid me of boils, and my health was never better than at present."

"Gosh," said he, "ain't hit jes' a trifle bit gaudy?"

"Well, what do you expect?" said I, indignantly, at this implied reflection upon the great moral show that I represented.

"Well, I suppose hit is all right," answered the old man, doubtfully, as he looked it over once more. "I ordered hit and I'll stand by my bargain. Hit seems to me that hit is jes' a bit loud. But I suppose I ain't used to city ways."

"It was now my turn to be surprised, and I was about to ask him what he was driving at when he added that I might as well unhitch, as the funeral wouldn't be until 2 in the afternoon."

"Then there were explanations all around. It seems that the old man's wife had died, and he had sent to the nearest city for a funeral car, and had mistaken our great \$10,000 chariot for it. There had been a good deal of rivalry in the neighborhood in regard to funerals, and the old man had made up his mind to outshine them all, and I think he was disappointed in the end when he discovered that he had been mistaken."—Detroit Free Press.

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## Pessimist and Fatalist.

The indignant looking passenger was about to speak, but the conductor headed him off by exclaiming in a loud tone of irritation:

"This is the slowest train I was ever on."

What's the use of a schedule if we don't pay any attention to it? The drinking water tastes as if it hadn't been off the kitchen range ten minutes. The car doesn't look as if it had been swept for a month, and it is full of idiots who insist on opening the windows when we go through tunnels, so that the cinders can blow in."

The passenger caught his breath and then exclaimed: "I was just about to say that this affair is an outrage."

"I know it. But you're lucky. You can travel a few miles and then get off and be happy. But I've got to stay on this train for hours every day of my life."—Washington Star.

Bentley's is the best Liniment.

## A Saving Habit.

"I can't see," said the shoe clerk boarder, "why a Scotchman should say 'hae' for 'have.'"

"It is his economical disposition. He saves a 'v' every time he does so," said the cheerful idiot.—Indianapolis Press.

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