

## LITERATURE.

THE FORGED NOTE;  
Or, the Scheming Mother's Mistake.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Mrs. Abraham Walpart was most emphatically a woman of high life, while Mr. Abraham Walpart was a merchant in middling circumstances, who had to work most assiduously to keep his wife at that height of fashion which she had contrived to assume. Mr. Walpart labored diligently at his business—was honest and upright in his transactions, and his pocket was a fountain from whence flowed a vast deal of money into his family, but yet his vote upon domestic affairs amounted to a mere cipher—and should he chance at any time to give it, his wife invariably claimed the right of veto. Julia was their only child—a girl of nineteen years; and something may be known from her character from the fact that her mother often expressed her deep regret that one so beautiful and gifted as her daughter would not endeavor to shine more in fashionable society. Julia Walpart was one of those beautiful females who are created to adorn the home of peace and joy, but who, nevertheless, cannot fail to shine with a rich pure light, in any walk of honest life.

The lamps had been lighted in Mrs. Walpart's sitting-room, and the lady and her daughter were there alone. The former was rocking to and fro in her large lolling chair, evidently suffering under some severe nervous shock, while Julia seemed to have been weeping and even now her bosom was heaved by deep sobs of anguish.

"Now you see, Julia," said Mrs. Walpart, as she stopped the motion of her chair, "to what a pass you have brought yourself by not listening to my advice. When you first began to receive the attentions of that James Albee I warned you against him."

"How did you warn me against him?" asked the fair girl, as she removed her hand from her aching brow and gazed into her mother's face.

"How did I do it? Why, did I not tell you that he was nothing but a poor clerk, and that you should look higher for a husband?"

"Yes, you did tell me that, mother, but that was no warning against him. That was merely your prejudice against his pecuniary affairs."

"Prejudice, child?" iterated Mrs. Walpart, elevating her brow with a sort of haughty assurance. Indeed it was no such thing. I knew that he would turn out a swindler."

"But you never hinted such a thing before," said Julia, struggling hard to keep her rising emotions.

"Perhaps I did not in so many words," returned her mother, "but I never thought him any better than he should be."

Julia Walpart gazed for a moment into her mother's face, and then burst into tears. She had loved James Albee with her whole soul, and even though the charge of forgery hung over his head, yet she could not hear him thus traduced. At length she wiped her eyes once more, and with considerable energy she said:

"James Albee never committed that forgery with which he is charged! His soul is too pure and noble for that. As well you might tell me that this flinty topaz grew upon your calendar!"

"You speak foolishly, girl," said Mrs. Walpart, with much sarcasm; "but I trust you will let me hear no more of it. Your father has been wrong in thus allowing you to cultivate the acquaintance of that Albee; but I trust that this circumstance will learn him a lesson. Now, Julia, I hope you will be wise, and receive the attentions of Mr. Babbington. He is a fine young gentleman, fashionable in every sense of the word, and his society cannot fail pleasing you as soon as you shall have learned to appreciate him."

"Mother, if you have any feeling for me at all, do not allude to Mr. Babbington again."

Julia said this with much emphasis, and her manner seemed to throw her scheming mother somewhat aback, but ere she could make a reply, one of her servants entered and handed her a card.

"I declare," said Mrs. Walpart, as she looked at the card, "Mr. Albert Babbington is at the door! Show him up;" she said to the servant,

and then turning to her daughter, she continued, "Now Julia, I must command you. Mr. Babbington is my especial friend, and I would have you treat him with respect, at least, and by your respect you will soon learn to look upon him in a still more favorable light."

Mrs. Walpart had no opportunity to say more nor did Julia have a chance to reply, for at that moment Mr. Babbington was ushered into the room. He was in very truth a "man-butterfly;" with any quantity of hair, jewelry, and perfumery about his person, and as he replied to the salutation of Mrs. Walpart, he did it in that drawling, self-sufficient tone and style which marks the insufferable egotist. Julia instinctively shrank from the man to whom her mother would have her turn her love; and though for the sake of mere good breeding, she tried to treat him civilly, yet she found even that a difficult and irksome task.

"Mr. Babbington," said Mrs. Walpart, after some twenty minutes had been consumed in criticisms and strictures upon the characters of various acquaintances, "have you heard anything about the forgery?"

"Do you allude to that—ah—Albee fellow?"

"Yes, sir."

"Aw—well—the fellow has managed to get bonds. I am sorry for it, for the vulgaw wretch should be imprisoned. Such fellows are really dangawas to society. It is a wondah that the villain did not make my purse the object of his heinous crime—not that I should have missed a few thousand, howevah."

"But tell me, Mr. Babbington, who was it that was so foolish as to bail this forger?"

"Aw—really—have you not heard?"

"No, indeed, I have not."

"Well, my dear Lady Walpart, you must pardon him for his folly, for 'pon my honaw I think he meant it for charity. It was Mr. Walpart."

"Not my husband?"

"Really, Lady Walpart, I must say it was."

"Then God bless him with a good heart!" ejaculated Julia, while the look of mingled contempt and anguish that had dwelt upon her handsome features, gave place to an expression of real gratitude.

Mr. Albert Babbington flourished his perfumed handkerchief with a sort of nervous movement, while Mrs. Walpart looked the picture of utter astonishment and chagrin. But she was relieved from the necessity of attempting to smooth over her daughter's indiscretion to her visitor, by the sudden appearance of Mr. Walpart. The merchant gave a very cold return to Mr. Babbington's "good evening;" and as he saw his dearly loved daughter's face was suffused with shades of sorrow and mortification, his temper was not at all softened. It did not take long for the superfine guest to discover that though the mother favored his suit, the father failed to appreciate his good qualities. In fact Mr. Albert Babbington thought Mr. Walpart was rather more distant, and ere long, he made an excuse for his departure.

For several moments after the visitor had gone, an unbroken silence pervaded the room. The merchant was removing his boots, Julia seemed to be pondering upon what had passed, while Mrs. Walpart rocked to and fro in her chair more furiously than ever. At length as her husband sat back in his chair, she asked, in a tone anything but pleasant:

"Mr. Walpart did I hear rightly with regard to your bailing that forger?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," laconically replied the gentleman.

"You know whether you became bondsman for James Albee, do you not?" sharply asked the lady.

"Ah, now I understand. Yes, I did become bondsman for the young man."

"And don't you know you are making a fool of yourself, Mr. Walpart?"

"Really, my dear wife, you flatter me," returned the merchant, in a tone of perfect coolness.

"Flatter you, sir? No, sir. Let me tell you that you have acted the perfect fool in this matter. It was not enough that you should, in spite of all my arguments—"

"P-h-e w! Arguments!" interrupted her husband.

"Yes, sir—arguments, sir. It was not enough

that you should insist upon his visiting the house, but now that he has proved himself a villain, you should still cling to him. You are ruining our family reputation, sir!"

"In the eyes of Mr. Babbington, I suppose," quietly remarked Mr. Walpart, with an unusual degree of sarcasm.

"Mr. Babbington is a gentleman, sir, and I would thank you not to treat his name with disrespect," retorted Mrs. Walpart, with a look and action of offended dignity. "He has a sincere regard for Julia, and I yet hope that both you and she will come to a sense of your own interests."

"So we probably shall," replied the merchant "but you must excuse me now, for I have some business to attend to."

"As Mr. Walpart spoke, he drew his chair up to a table, and taking from his pocket a small bundle of papers, he began to look them over. His wife knew that a further attempt at an expression of her thoughts would be utterly useless, and after remaining for a few moments a silent spectator of her husband's movements she rose from her seat and left the room.

On the next morning, ere Mr. Walpart arrived at his store, a young man called to see him, and on giving his name as James Albee, he was requested to step into the counting-room and await the merchant's coming. James Albee had just entered on the stage of manhood, and a single look upon his open, smiling countenance would at once disarm the unprejudiced mind of all suspicion, and yet he rested under the charge of forgery! A check for five thousand dollars, purporting to have been signed by his employers, Messrs. Folt and Babrook, had been presented at the bank and cashed over a month previous. But as Albee had the principal management of the business, the firm had not until within a week discovered the fraud. As soon as Mr. Folt saw the check he knew it to be spurious, and after serious consultations with his partner, suspicion was fastened upon James Albee. No palpable circumstances showed that he had made any use of the money, and an examination was made of his trunks; this proved nothing, however, and while yet the firm were in doubt upon the subject, they learned that young Albee had lately loaned to a friend who was about commencing business four thousand dollars. This, together with the teller's evidence, that Albee himself had presented the forged check, was deemed a conclusive evidence and the young man was accordingly arrested. A bill was found against him, and he was held in heavy bonds for trial, Mr. Walpart, as the reader already knows, having recognized himself for the required amount.

There seemed no possible way for the young man to clear himself of the charge; and as he sat now in the merchant's counting-room there was a deep shade of sorrow upon his manly features, and his heart lay heavy and sad within his bosom.—(Conclusion in our next.)

## The Man with the Wheelbarrow.

During the great overland emigration to California in the Spring of 1850, the newspapers gave accounts of the progress of a man who set out on the long journey across the plains, trundling a wheelbarrow. Time and again we heard of him still going ahead and in fine spirits but at last all record of him ceased. A few days ago, however, we again heard of him. It appears that he reached his destination, and at last accounts was delving for gold in the mines of California, with a fair prospect of becoming rich. The history of his adventures is given in the following letter to the New York Journal of Commerce, dated San Francisco, Oct. 15, 1851.

In a previous communication I remarked upon the character of spirit developed by the miners of this country—that such a class of men were very rarely to be found.

As an evidence of the truth of my assumption, I will give the outline of the case of one individual, the details of which were related to me by a gentleman of at least apparent truth, also interested in the region where the subject of this article dwells, and who was familiar with the facts.

A man who has been an unsuccessful delver in the mines of Georgia, on hearing the thrilling news of the gold placers of California had his spirit quickened within him; and although he

had arrived at an age—being about sixty—when the fires of youth usually cease to burn with vigor, fixed his eye upon the far distant and but little known country, and resolved that he would wend his way thither—alone, and without that indispensable friend, money, of which he was destitute. Under such circumstances it would not avail to attempt a passage "round the Horn," or by the more uncertain and at that time unperfected route across the Isthmus; but as California was on this continent, he knew there was a way there, though it might lead through trackless deserts and barren wastes. These were not enough to daunt his determined spirit. He bent his way to the "Father of Waters," and worked his way as he could, until he found himself at "Independence," in health and with no less of strength, and with one hundred and fifty dollars in his purse. He had no family to provide for, or even a companion to cater for on the route upon which he was now about to enter; yet some things were necessary for himself; and to relieve his body from the pressure of a load, he provided himself with a wheelbarrow upon which to place his traps.

It is not to be supposed that our hero was ignorant of the large number of emigrants that were moving over the plains; and it is quite probable, that his sagacity was precocious enough to look ahead, and see the result of attempting to carry forward such ponderous loads; and such a variety of at least dispensible things as the earlier parties started with.

A detail of the amount and variety of goods and wares, useful and superfluous, with all the appendages of refined and fashionable life that were distributed along the wide wastes and mountain ranges, would astonish the reader.

Our hero was not in a hurry. He reasoned thus; "the world was not made in a day, the race is not to the swift." He trundled along his barrow, enjoying the comfort of his pipe; the object of wonder, the subject of many sportive remarks, by those who were hurried along with their fresh and spirited teams—on their first day. Many weeks had not passed before our independent traveller had tangible evidence that trouble had fallen to the lot of some who had preceded him. A stray ox was feeding on his track, the mate of which he afterwards learned was killed, and this one turned adrift as useless. He coaxed him to be the companion of his travels, taking care to stop where he could provide himself with the needful sustenance. He had not far to travel before he found a mate for his ox; and ere long a waggon, which had given way in some of its parts, had been abandoned by its owner, and left in the road. Our travelling genius was aroused to turn these mishaps to his own advantage; and he went leisurely to work to patch and bolster up the waggon, bound his faithful oxen to it, and changed his employment from trundling the wheelbarrow to driving a team, onward moved the new establishment, gathering as he went from the superabundance of those who had gone before, such as flour, provisions of every kind, books, implements, even rich carpets, etc., which had been cast off as burdensome by other travellers. He would occasionally find a poor, worn-out animal that had been left behind; and as it was not important to him to speed his course, he gathered them, stopping where there was abundance of grass, time enough for his cattle to gain a little strength and spirit. Time rolled on, and his waggon rolled with him, till he reached the end of his journey, when it was discovered that he had an uncommon fine team and a good waggon, which produced him on sale twenty five hundred dollars.—Being now relieved of the care of his team, and in the midst of the gold region, he closed his prospecting by a location; and while all around him were concentrating their strength to consummate the work of years in a few months, he deliberately commenced a building, finishing, and as fast as he could, furnishing a comfortable cabin. His wood was gathered, sawed, and regularly piled in a straight line, and perpendicular by the door—convenient, as though the old lady was within to provide his meals. He acted upon this adage, "never start till you are ready." Now our hero was ready to commence working his "claim," which he did, as he did everything else, systematically and steadily. He may yet be seen at his work, with the prospect—if he lives to be an old man—of being rich; for in two years he has accumulated ten thousand dollars.