

In a Miner's Valise.

It was a slightly cynical but fairly good-humored crowd that had gathered before a warehouse on Long Wharf in San Francisco, one afternoon in the summer of '51. Although the occasion was an auction, the bidder's chances more than usually hazardous, and the season and locality famous for reckless speculation, there was scarcely any excitement among the bystanders, and a lazy half-humorous curiosity seemed to have taken the place of any zeal for gain.

It was an auction of unclaimed trunks and boxes, the personal luggage of early emigrants, which had been left on storage in bulk or warehouse at San Francisco while the owner was seeking his fortune in the mines. The difficulty and expense of transport, often obliging the gold seeker to make part of his journey on foot, restricted him to the smallest impedimenta, and that of a kind not often found in the luggage of ordinary civilization. As a consequence, during the emigration of '49, he was apt, on landing, to avail himself of the invitation usually displayed on some of the doors of the rude hostleries on the shore: "Rest for the weary and storage for trunks." In a majority of cases he never returned to claim his stored property. Enforced absence protracted equally by good or evil fortune accumulated the high storage charges until they usually far exceeded the actual value of the goods; sickness, further emigration or death also reduced the number of possible claimants, and that more wonderful human frailty—absolute forgetfulness of deposited possessions—contrived together to leave the bulk of the property on the custodian's hands. Under an understood agreement this was always sold at public auction after a given time.

Although the contents of some of the trunks were exposed, it was found more in keeping with the public sentiment to sell the trunk unlocked and unopened. The element of curiosity was kept up from time to time by the incautious disclosures of the lucky or unlucky purchaser, and general bidding thus encouraged—except when the speculator with the true gambling instinct gave no indication in his face of what was drawn in this lottery. Generally however some suggestion in the exterior of the trunk, a label or initials some conjectured knowledge of its former owner or the idea that he might be secretly present in the hope of getting his property back for less than the accumulated dues, kept up the bidding and interest.

A modest looking, well worn portmanteau, had been put up at a small opening bid, when Harry Flint joined the crowd. The young man had arrived a week before at San Francisco, friendless and penniless, and had been forced to part with his own effects to procure necessary food and lodging while looking for employment. In the irony of fate that morning, the proprietors of a dry goods store, struck by his good looks and manners, had offered him a situation if he could make himself more presentable to their fair clients. Harry Flint was gazing half abstractedly, half hopelessly, at the portmanteau without noticing the auctioneer's persuasive challenge. In his abstraction he was not aware that the auctioneer's assistant was also looking at him curiously, and that possibly his dejected and half-clad appearance had excited the attention of one of the cynical by-standers, who was exchanging a few words with the assistant. He was however recalled to himself a moment later when the portmanteau was knocked down at \$15 and considerably startled when the assistant placed it at his feet with a grim smile. "That's your property, Fowler, and I reckon you look as if you wanted it bad."

"But—there's some mistake," stammered Flint. "I didn't bid."

"No, but Tom Flynn did for you. You see I spotted you from the first, and told Flynn that I reckoned you were one of those chaps who came back from the mines dead-broke, and hadn't enough to buy back your things. And he up and bought 'em for you—like a square man. That's Flynn's style, if he is a gambler."

"But," persisted Flint, "this never was my property. My name isn't Fowler and I never left anything here."

The assistant looked at him with a grim, half-credulous, half-scornful smile. "Have it your own way," he said, "but I oughter tell ye, old man, that I'm the warehouse clerk, and I remember you. I'm here for that purpose. But as that there valise is bought and paid for by somebody else and given to you its nothing more to me. Take or leave it."

The ridiculousness of quarrelling over the mere form of his good fortune here struck Flint, and as his abrupt benefactor had abruptly disappeared, he hurried off with his prize. Reaching his cheap lodging house he examined its contents. As he had surmised, it contained a full suit of clothing of the better sort, and suitable to his urban needs. There were a few articles of jewelry, which he religiously put aside. There were some letters which seemed to be of a purely business character. There were a few daguerrotypes of a pretty face, one which was singularly fascinating to him. But there was another of a young man that startled him with its marvellous resemblance to himself. It might have been his own portrait! In a flash of intelligence he understood it all now. It was the likeness of the former owner of the trunk, for whom the assistant

had actually mistaken him. He glanced hurriedly at the envelope of the letters. They were addressed to Shelby Fowler—the name by which the assistant had just called him. The mystery was plain now, but for the present he could fairly accept his good luck and trust to later fortune to justify himself.

Transformed in his new garb, he left his lodgings to present himself once more to his possible employer. His way led past one of the large gambling saloons. It was yet too early to find the dry goods trader disengaged, perhaps the consciousness of more decent civilized garb emboldened him to mingle more freely with strangers, and he entered the saloon. He was scarcely abreast of one of the faro tables when a man suddenly leaped up with an oath, and discharged a revolver full in his face. The shot missed. Before his unknown assailant could fire again the astonished Flint had closed with him and instinctively clutched the weapon. A brief but violent struggle ensued. Flint felt his strength failing him when suddenly a look of astonishment came into the furious eyes of his adversary, and the man's grasp mechanically relaxed. The half-freed pistol, thrown upwards by this movement was accidentally discharged point blank into his temples and he fell dead. No one in the crowd had stirred or interfered!

"You've done for French Pete this time, Mr. Fowler," said a voice at his elbow. He turned gaspingly, and recognized his strange benefactor, Flynn. "I call you all to witness, gentlemen," continued the gambler, turning dictatorially to the crowd, "that this man was first attacked and was unarmed." He lifted Flint's limp and empty hands, and then pointed to the dead man, who was still grasping the weapon. "Come!" He caught the half-paralyzed arm of Flint and dragged him into the street.

"But," stammered the horrified Flint, as he was borne along, "what does it all mean! What made that man attack me?"

"I reckon it was a case of 'shooting on sight,' Mr. Fowler; but he missed it by not waiting to see if you were armed. It wasn't the square thing, and you're all right with the crowd now, whatever he may have had agin you."

"But," persisted the unhappy Flint, "I never laid eyes on the man before—and my name isn't Fowler."

Flynn halted and dragged him in a doorway. "Who the devil are you?" he asked roughly.

Briefly, passionately, almost hysterically Flint told him his scant story. An odd expression came over the gambler's face. "Look here," he said abruptly, "I have passed my word to the crowd yonder that you are a dead broke miner called Fowler. I allowed you might have had some row with that Sydney duck, Australian Pete, over there in Australia. That satisfied them. If I go back now and say that it's a lie—that your name isn't Fowler, and you never knew who Pete was—they'll just pass you over to the police to deal with you, and wash their hands of it altogether. You may prove to the police who you are, and how the d—d clerk mistook you. But it will give you trouble. And who is there here who knows who you really are?"

"No one," said Flint, with sudden hopelessness.

"And you say you're an orphan, and ain't got any relations livin' that you're beholden to?"

"No one."

"Then take my advice, and be Fowler, and stick to it. Be Fowler until Fowler turns up and thanks you for it. For you've saved Fowler's life, as Pete would never have funk'd and lost his grit over Fowler as he did with you, and you've a right to his name."

He stopped, and the same odd, superstitious look came into his dark eyes. "Don't you see what all this means? You're in the biggest streak of luck a man ever had. You've got the cards in your own hands. They spell 'Fowler.' Play Fowler first, last, and all the time. Good-night and good luck—Mr. Fowler."

The next morning's journal contained an account of the justifiable killing of the notorious desperado and ex-convict, Australian Pete, by a courageous young miner by the name of Fowler. "An act of firmness and daring," said the Pioneer, "which will go far to counteract the terrorism produced by those lawless ruffians." In his new suit of clothes and with this paper in his hand, Flint sought the dry goods proprietor; the latter was satisfied and convinced. That morning Harry Flint began his career as salesman and as "Shelby Fowler."

From this day Shelby Fowler's career was one of uninterrupted prosperity. Within the year he became a partner; the same miraculous fortune followed other ventures later; he was mill owner, mine owner, bank director—a millionaire. He was popular; the reputation of his brief achievement over the desperado kept him secure from the attack of envy and rivalry. He never was confronted by the real Fowler; there was no danger of exposure by others; the one custodian of his secret Tom Flynn, died in Nevada the year following. He had quite forgotten his youthful past, and even the more recent lucky portmanteau; remembering nothing perhaps, but the pretty face on the daguer-type which had fascinated him. There seemed to be no reason why he should not live and die as Shelby Fowler.

His business a year later took him to Europe. He was entering a train at one of the great railway stations of London, when the porter, who had just deposited his portmanteau in a compartment, reappeared at the window, followed by a young lady in mourning.

"Beg pardon, sir, but I handed you the wrong portmanteau. That belongs to this young lady. This is yours."

Flint glanced at the portmanteau on the seat before him. It was certainly not his, although it bore the initials "S. F." He was mechanically handing it back when his eyes fell on the young lady's face. For an instant he stood petrified. It was the face of the daguer-type, "I beg your pardon," he stammered, "but are those your initials?" She hesitated; perhaps it was the abruptness of the question, but he fancied she looked confused.

"No. A friend's."

She disappeared into another carriage, but from that moment Harry Flint knew that he had no other aim in life but to follow this clue and the beautiful girl who had dropped it. He bribed the guard at the next station and discovered that she was going to York. On their arrival he was ready on the platform to respectfully assist her. A few words disclosed the fact that she was a fellow country woman, although residing in England, and at present on her way to join some friends at Harrogate. Her name was West. At the mention of his, he again fancied she looked disturbed.

They met again and again; the infirmity of his introduction was overlooked by her friends, as his assumed name was already respectfully and responsibly known beyond California; he thought no more of his future; he was in love! He even dared to think it might be returned, but he felt he had no right to seek that knowledge until he had told her his real name and how he came to assume another. He did so alone, scarcely a month after their first meeting. To his alarm she burst into a flood of tears and showed an agitation that seemed far beyond any apparent cause. When she had partly recovered, she said in a low frightened voice:—

"You are bearing my brother's name. But it was a name that the unhappy boy had so shamefully disgraced in Australia that he abandoned it, and, as he lay upon his death-bed, the last act of his wasted life was to write an imploring letter begging me to change mine too. For the infamous companion of his crime, who first tempted, then betrayed him, had possession of all his papers and letters, many from me, and was threatening to bring them to our Virginia home and expose him to our neighbors. Maddened by desperation, the miserable boy twice attempted the life of the scoundrel, and might have added blood-guiltiness to his other sins had he lived. I did change my name to my mother's maiden one, left the country, and have lived here to escape the revelations of that desperado, should he fulfill his threat."

In a flash of recollection Flint remembered the startled look that had come into his assailant's eye after they had clinched. It was the same man who had too late realized that his antagonist was not Fowler. "Thank God! you are forever safe from any exposure from that man," he said gravely, "and the name of Fowler has never been known in San Francisco save in all respect and honor. It is for you to take back—fearlessly and alone!"

She did—but not alone, for she shared it with her husband.—Bret Harte.

Some Scotch Wedding Superstitions.

In the matter of courtships and weddings Scotch people preserve an extraordinary number of peculiar customs and fanciful superstitions. It is deemed unlucky to alter the first width of an engagement ring. Many troths have been broken as a result. The giving of brooches and pins by lovers is full of ill consequences. No young man or woman, in the tender relation, will take a pin from the other without returning the same after use. Pins, needles, etc., are all emblematic of the cessation of friend-ship and affection. It is very fortunate for the bride to wear some borrowed article of apparel at her wedding. If she crosses the path of the bride party before it, it is an omen of the direst import; but if they should cross its path behind the party it would be a happy augury. A wedding after sunset entails on the bride a joyless life, the loss of children and an early grave. In the south of Scotland a rainy day for a marriage is an unlucky one. The bride is then called "a greetin' bride;" whereas, "Blest is the bride that the sun shines on." To "rub shoulders" with the bride is a sign of speedy marriage; the first among the unmarried female friends who succeeds in doing it will be the first to wed; and I have myself witnessed scrambles on the part of the buxom Scotch lassies for precedence quite closely approaching fisticuffs. As a newly married wife first enters her new home, some elderly person must throw a cake of shortbread into the door before her. One securing a piece of cheese cut with the bride's own hand, before she has left the wedding feast, is certain to be happily married. And it is everywhere in Scotland as inauspicious for the bride's mother to be present at a wedding as it is unfortunate in our country to have the same individual arrive, to remain, at any subsequent period.—Boston Transcript.

SPECIAL MARK DOWN SALE!

Note a few of the many Bargains we are offering at our SPECIAL MARK DOWN SALE now going on. The season has been cold and backward and our stock of Spring and Summer Goods is still very large. We have marked everything down to prices that are bound to effect a speedy sale. Buyers will find this a splendid opportunity to secure nice Goods at Low Prices.

Ladies' Fine French Kid Gloves, former price \$1.22, marked down to 89c.
Ladies' Black Kid Gloves, Mosquitaire Cut, 6 and 8 button lengths, former price \$1.65, marked down to \$1.25.
Black Silk Warp Henrietta, former price \$1.38, marked down to \$1.10.
Fine quality All Wool Black Henrietta, Silk Finish, former price \$1.00, marked down to 75c.
Fine quality All Wool Serges, Double Width, new summer shades, marked down from 50c to 37½c.
Shaker Flannel, fagey stripes, marked down from 8½c to 7c.
Men's Fine French Balbriggan Undershirts and Drawers, former price 75c, marked down to 50c, all sizes.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S Real Estate Sale

There will be sold by public auction on the premises, near Welford Station, Harcourt, County of Kent, pursuant to a license for that purpose granted by the Probate Court for the said county on Saturday the 20th day of September next at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon, the following described lands and premises: On the north by lands owned by Thomas Ingram, on the south by a reserved street and lands owned by J. Dorothy, on the east by lands owned by said Thomas Ingram and on the west by the highway road or main street running from the Welford Station to the Beckwith road, containing sixty feet by one hundred and fifty feet, or one-quarter of an acre more or less.
Terms—10 per cent. of purchase money at the time of sale and the balance to be paid on execution and delivery of deed.
Harcourt, 18th August, A. D. 1891.

The above sale has been postponed until Wednesday, the 23rd September, at the same place and hour.

B. S. BAILEY,
Administrator of the estate of George R. Bailey.

NEW BRUNSWICK, ss.

To the Sheriff of the County of Kent or any Constable within the said County—

Greeting—
Whereas, Isaac B. Humphrey and Matthew T. Glenn, executors of the last will and testament of Duncan McDonald, late of the Parish of Harcourt, in the said County of Kent, deceased, hath prayed that the heirs and all parties interested in said estate, may appear before me to attend the passing of the final accounts of the said estate,

You are therefore required to cite the said heirs and all others interested to appear before me at a Court of Probate to be holden at Buctouche within and for the said County on Thursday, the 10th day of September next at 11 o'clock in the forenoon at my office in Buctouche to attend the passing and allowing of said accounts.

Given under my hand, and the seal of the said Court, this eighth day of August, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) HENRY H. JAMES,
Judge of Probate County of Kent.
C. RICHARDSON,
Registrar of Probate for Kent County.
PHINNEY & CARTER, Proctors.

JAMES BUCKLEY,
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