

particular instance, might be death to me?—“Dad! there was no harm in it,” Archie replied; “and if there was,” he added, “the old gentleman for-got all about it the next day. I have no doubt; and, besides, he can’t know nothing about you, you know. Why, what a solemn phiz you are screwing up! What is the matter, Frank?”

“I went to my dear child, without speaking, and put my hand on Mr. Falconer’s letter—that letter which had laid my hopes so low. I put it into Archie’s hand, and bade him read it. He did read it. When he saw Mr. Falconer’s name he turned pale. ‘What is the meaning of all this, Frank?’ said he. ‘I’ll tell you in a moment,’ I replied; ‘but first answer me another question. Do you trace any connection between your evening with Mr. Falconer and this letter?’

“‘I don’t understand it at all, Frank,’ said Archie, with a bewildered stare.

“And then I told him, for the first time, of my engagement with Mr. Falconer, of its sudden breaking off, and of the terrible trouble under which I was even then labouring.

“Archie said nothing in reply. While I was speaking he rose from his seat, paced the room up and down, and, as he paced, he looked at the letter in his hand. It was late at night that this conversation took place, and, as I have said, and I remarked at the time how cold and clammy his hand was, and how he pressed me as he said good night.

“After he had thus retired I sat and thought, and thought. I had no longer any difficulty in comprehending the real cause of Mr. Falconer’s altered conduct towards me. He was a gentleman of exceedingly fastidious notions on some points, and the story which I had heard of his conduct would have told me, that he was a man of a very delicate mind, and that he was naturally very sensitive to the mind, even to that of a stranger. But when he heard it, for the first time, of the advanced state of his daughter, he was, no doubt, both shocked and horrified. Taking for granted that she was a virtuous and chaste girl, he was, no doubt, both shocked and horrified.

“And yet, my dear, directed of the false gloss which Archie Cleaver had habituated himself to putting upon the incident in his history, there was nothing that I have ever been ashamed of. Indeed, I remember my share in it, now with satisfaction, because it was the means of rescuing a poor and innocent young person from great and what would otherwise have been lasting trouble and sorrow. Even my presence on that occasion at an inn, was not only perfectly justifiable but almost unavoidable. But let this pass.

“Well, my dear child, I thought all this over as I sat in my study, after Archie had retired; but I saw no way out of my difficulty. I had discovered the root of the mischief, but I saw no way to its remedy. Happy I remembered where it was, a ‘Columbian’ way into the world, and I saw no way to its remedy. Happy I remembered where it was, a ‘Columbian’ way into the world, and I saw no way to its remedy.

“On grandpa’s let me guess where Archie was gone,” exclaimed Mr. Levermore, whose tongue had been so long hanging out of his mouth, and who was now looking at me with a very good one, my dear, and a very true one. How he managed it I never exactly know, but he did manage so well that, in about ten days, he was the better of a letter to me from Mr. Falconer, apologizing for his injustice, and inviting me to visit him.

“And you did visit him, grandpa; and your Mary was so sorry, and you were married after all?”

“Right again, my dear.”

“And so, grandpa,” said the young lady, clapping her hands and laughing, and could plainly be heard for it was far too good for her grandfather to see her face now. “And so you see that a racing tongue can sometimes do good, as well as harm.”

“My dear child, I admit this. But it is poor work, after all, to have a grandpa and a poor son, and what ought never to have been so. Is it not? And if you could have seen my poor father’s pale, thin, anxious face, and have known how much he had suffered, you would have been a different person.”

“Dear grandpa, I was only—only—”

“Only rattling, my dear. Well, now my story is ended; and I have only one thing more to say before we make our appearance at grandpa’s table to-night—only this one thing: take care of your frequent prayer, my dear child, this portion of the psalmist, ‘But a voice, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips; and when you feel tempted to indulge in idle talk, put up that prayer from your heart before your tongue begins its rattle.’”

#### LETTERS AND NOTICES.

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