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THE END OF THE FEUD

By NELLIE CRAVEY GILLMORE

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The Longwoods had just moved to Glendale after generations of residence in Lexington. When Miss Mathilde found out that they were there and not only going to live in the same town with herself, but as close neighbors, she began to bustle about and make hospitable preparations for receiving them in her own home.

Twenty years ago, when Mathilde Westley was a girl in her teens, she, too, with her mother, father, sisters and brother, had lived in Lexington, and the Longwoods and Westleys were like twin families. But one by one the parents and sisters had passed away, leaving Miss Mathilde and her brother sole survivors. After a few years of dreary lingering in the old home they had drifted to Glendale, where Jake Westley had built up a flourishing little mercantile business.

A little later had come also the Peabodys and pitched their tent just across the street from the Westleys' pretty, rose sheathed cottage. But for this circumstance Miss Mathilde might have been contented, even fairly happy. Her life was full of congenial, healthy tasks which she performed with as much cheerfulness as she did thoroughness, each day standing forth as its own bright monument of reward.

If only there had never been a Russell Peabody! Every day for fourteen years she had been forced to see him three times, four, sometimes five, as he passed in and out of the gate across the way going back and forth to his work.

For just a little while many years ago the sun of happiness had shone upon Miss Mathilde's life. It was in the days when she was a Vassar girl and he a student at Harvard. They had met, fallen desperately in love, exchanged vows and rings, only to find on their return from college that a bitter feud had existed between the Westleys and the Peabodys for scores of years back. That marked the end of Mathilde Westley's brief love dream.

A LOOK OF SURPRISE CAME INTO HIS FACE AT SIGHT OF THE MAID.

and Russell Peabody settled down as an old bachelor almost before he was a man. Thus the years drifted.

This morning Miss Mathilde was busy with her dust cloth, interrupting herself every little while in the cleaning to run back to the kitchen and glance at the preserves sizzling in a big copper kettle. The new maid was tending them, and Miss Mathilde, after stirring them vigorously for a moment and pronouncing them done, pushed back the little damp ringlet that insisted upon escaping from the soft knot on top of her dainty head, while a sudden look of inspiration glowed in her face. She took a deep old fashioned dish out of the cupboard and filled it with the fragrant steaming preserves.

"Put on a fresh white apron right away, Kitty, and take this over to the little brown house on the other corner, where the Longwoods live. Tell them that Miss Mathilde sent it—for 'Auld Lang Syne.' Can you remember that?" Then she added to herself:

"They've just moved in, and I know they haven't got everything fixed up yet, so the peaches will come in handy."

Now, there were two little brown houses across the way, and each of them stood on a corner. Also Kitty was a new maid, and it was not unnatural that she should have selected the wrong place. Miss Mathilde was so deeply engrossed in the bottling process that she did not even look up as the girl went out of the gate.

Russell Peabody by some peculiar circumstance sat in his study looking over the contents of an old cabinet drawer he had not opened for many years. He held in his hand a faded knot of pink ribbon—one that she had worn that night of their betrothal—and his face was less ruddy than its wont as he recalled the sweet memories of their short lived happiness and the bitter thoughts of all the drab years that followed.

The sharp peal of the doorbell brought him to his feet. All of them were away for the summer; not even a servant was in the house, and he answered the ring himself.

A look of surprise came into his face at sight of the trim strange maid, but he took the dish from her hands with a smile of appreciation. Probably some neighborly friend of the family, pitying his bachelorhood, had sent it over.

"From Miss Westley—Miss Mathilde, sir—for the sake of 'Auld Lang Syne,'" she said. A moment later Kitty was out of the gate, and Russell Peabody stood staring into the space through which she had disappeared, and as he stared a radiant hope awoke in his eyes. For one second he knew what is termed "mad, delirious bliss." What if she had meant that there was no past—that she wanted him again as he used to be—at her side; that she cared, even as he had, more and more through all the lonely years that had divided them? Was she clearing the road for him at last, the road for which he longed, but lacked the courage to take?

After awhile he closed the door and went back into his study. With trembling hands he gathered up all his treasures and locked them back in the cabinet—all but the faded knot of ribbon. This he wrapped carefully in a piece of paper and wrote across the back of it:

"Will you wear it this evening for 'Auld Lang Syne?'"

Afterward he went out in the street and stopped a boy who was coming along with some papers. He gave him the package, thrust a half dollar into his hand and pointed the way to Miss Mathilde's cottage.

The day hung heavy on Russell Peabody's hands. Would she wear the pink ribbon, or was her overture of the morning simply an act of neighborly kindness? When night came, he dressed himself more carefully than he had done for a score of years. He discarded the usual black tie for one of less sober hue and flicked imaginary specks of dust from his broadcloth lapels at least a dozen times. He looked at himself a bit uncertainly in the glass; but, after all, forty-three was not so very old, and time had traced no unflattering lines on his keen, good looking face.

At 8 o'clock he left the house and walked rapidly, without looking up, till he came to Miss Mathilde's gate. The high fence was tangled in clematis, and he did not see her at all till his hand rested on the latch. She was dressed all over in white. With a white rose nestling at her throat—above a faded knot of pink ribbon.

"Mathilde!" A vivid light leaped to his face, illumining it.

She answered by a quick flash of her eyes, and he, reading love's language in them, held out his arms.

She went to him with a little something between a sob and a laugh, and he kissed her softly under the twinkling November stars.

Whose Was It?

In a certain Denver church one Sunday a bright new half dollar was noticed in the aisle by a woman in one of the pews. She was wondering how she'd get it, and in glancing around to see if her discovery had been noticed she saw a woman directly behind her looking at the coin. The first woman feared the second would "beat her to it," so she put her hand over her mouth and whispered:

"How shall I get that half dollar I just dropped?"

"You didn't drop that. I dropped it," replied the other.

The women were both wondering how to get the half dollar when a man came along with the contribution box. As he offered her the box a woman across the aisle from the other two said to him:

"I just dropped a half dollar on the floor. Would you be so kind as to hand it to me?"

The man picked it up and gave it to her. The other two women, although they are neighbors, haven't spoken to each other since.—Denver Post.

Land Crabs of the West Indies.

In the West Indies is found a species of land crab which lives a considerable distance from water, but once a year migrates to the seashore in order to spawn. As soon as the crab reaches the beach it eagerly goes to the edge of the water and lets the waves roll over its body to wash off the spawn. The eggs are hatched under the sand, and soon after millions of the newborn crabs are seen quitting the shore and slowly traveling up the mountains. The yearly migrations of the old crabs are among the wonders of animal life. In going down the crabs of a large region seem to select a certain rendezvous, and there they gather in countless numbers. The procession, which is commonly divided into battalions, with the strongest in front, sets forward with the precision of an army. In traveling they turn neither to the right nor left. Even if they meet a house they will try to scale it. The night is their chief time of traveling, but if it rains by day they improve that occasion.

When the West Was Unknown.

"Between the Missouri and the Pacific," said a member of congress, "save a strip of culturable prairie not above 200 or 300 miles wide, the region is waste and sterile, no better than the desert of Sahara and quite as dangerous to cross." The author of these words was Edward Bates of Missouri, whom Horace Greeley long afterward boomed for the presidency in the New York Tribune and in the Chicago Republican convention of 1860, and who became attorney general in Lincoln's cabinet. This was in the session of congress of 1829. As late as 1843 McDuffie of South Carolina in a speech in the senate, which was applauded by many persons in and out of that chamber, declared that for agricultural purposes he would "not give a pinch of snuff for the whole territory" west of the Rocky mountains.—Putnam's Monthly.

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THE HOUSE OF LORDS

CHECKS IT HAS RECEIVED AT THE HANDS OF THE COMMONS.

The Long Parliament Put the Peers Out of Business Altogether For a Number of Years—Bolingbroke's Way With the Noble Lords.

There is an idea in the minds of very many persons that the British house of lords is supreme and can do pretty well what it pleases. This, however, is a mistake. On several notable occasions their noble lordships have been paralyzed and have got very much the worst of it in stormy arguments with the gentlemen of the house of commons.

The first occasion on which this happened was when the peers ventured to differ with the long parliament, which was at the time engaged in a life and death struggle with Charles I. The commons on this occasion wasted no valuable time in talking, but promptly abolished the lords altogether and turned them, archbishops, dukes, belted earls and all the rest of the gorgeous coroneted crowd, into the street. The gilded chamber was vacant.

For half a dozen years or so the country got on without any house of lords.

All the checks the house of lords have received have not been of such a drastic nature as this, of course.

Various ministries, finding that the peers were unwilling to pass their proposed bills, have resorted to the threat to create enough new peers to swamp the house of lords. These new peers would, of course, have been pledged beforehand to vote for the ministry creating them.

In 1711 the prime minister of the day, the daring and unscrupulous Viscount Bolingbroke, was anxious to terminate the desolating and ruinous war with France, which had been raging on and off for twenty years.

To effect this purpose he had drawn up the treaty of Utrecht. It was necessary at that time that lords and commons should agree to a treaty before it would become valid. The commons assented to the treaty, but the lords declared that they would have none of it and that the war must go on, whereupon Bolingbroke coolly but firmly informed them that, rather than see himself defied by them, he would create a whole army of new peers to vote for the treaty.

The story goes that he had a regiment of the Life guards paraded under the windows of the house of lords and threatened to make every trooper into a noble lord if driven to it. He did make twelve new peers, and then the lords gave in.

The Liberal government of 1832, with Earl Grey as prime minister, used the same threat. They wished to pass the first reform bill. The lords hated this bill bitterly.

Until then they had been practically an oligarchy, with all the real power in their hands. The franchise had been so limited that only rich men, and generally only the nominee of some great nobleman, could get into parliament.

The reform bill altered that. It gave the smaller men a chance. The lords expressed their deliberate intention of wrecking the bill.

Earl Grey retorted by extorting from King William IV.—who didn't like reform bills, but dared not oppose the wish of the nation for fear of a revolution—permission to call up to the house of lords as many new peers as should be necessary to carry his bill.

The mere threat was enough for the lords. They had no wish to see their order made cheap and ridiculous, as would have been the case had peers become as plentiful as blackberries.

It used to be the custom in the British army for all officers' commissions to be purchased. That is, an officer, instead of getting into the army by means of a competitive examination and rising by merit, came straight from school, without knowing anything of the new duties he was about to assume, and had a commission bought for him. After that, instead of being promoted as a reward for his services, he used to buy each promotion.

If he had no money his chances of being promoted were about a thousand to one. The result was that officers who had grown gray in the service and fought in many battles remained subordinates all their lives, while the sons of wealthy families who had not seen a quarter of their service jumped over their heads by having their way purchased up for them to be colonels and generals.

Mr. Gladstone decided to do away with this purchase system. The lords did not wish it to be abolished. Consequently, when Mr. Gladstone introduced a bill to abolish purchase in the army the house of lords was not disposed to give it a kind reception.

They threw out the bill and imagined that they had won a glorious victory. But Mr. Gladstone found that Queen Victoria had the power to abolish purchase in the army by her own act if she pleased. He induced the queen to do this by means of a royal warrant.

And the house of lords could no more interfere with a royal warrant than they could knock the dome off St. Paul's by throwing their coronets at it.—Pearson's London Weekly.

Man and Woman.

"Man, composed of clay, is silent and ponderous," preached Jean Raulin in the fifteenth century, "but woman gives evidence of her osseous origin by the rattle she keeps up. Move a sack of earth and it makes no noise; touch a bag of bones and you are deafened with the clitter clatter."—London Chronicle.

The laws of conscience which we pretend are derived from nature proceed from nature.—Montaigne.

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