

Lesson

The Two Travelers.

[Concluded.]

"Before you can go to Constantinople and return with another hack, it will be too late to go to Sweden. Now, if you can get any sort of conveyance from the man in the cottage over here well and good; but, if not, I will content myself to stop with him all night, and wait for you in the morning. What do you say to the arrangement, my friend?"

The ill-natured traveler grumbled a little; but he at length expressed his approbation of his companion's proposal, and went with him to the cottage, which was fortunately but a few rods distant.

No vehicle of any kind could be had; but the obliging farmer offered the travelers supper and lodgings, which they were glad to accept. He then went with a lantern, to examine into the damage done to the hack, and to assist the driver to bring the gentlemen's baggage into the house. It was a small cottage of humble pretensions; but the mistress thereof made her guests a nice cup of tea, and served them with very palatable bits of toast and fine slices of dried beef. The mild gentleman appeared in excellent spirits; but his moody companion devoured the food placed before him in sullen silence, as if he considered all the world in general, and the people around him more particularly, blameable for his individual misfortunes.

"Is my room ready for me?" he asked, as soon as the supper was over.

"Oh, yes," replied the farmer; "but I believe I forgot to inquire if you could sleep together."

"I object to sleeping with any one."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, sir, decidedly."

"I am sorry to hear that, sir, for I confess the truth, we have but one spare bed in the house."

"My good friend, do not trouble yourself," said the mild gentleman, observing the farmer's perplexity. "I prefer sleeping alone myself; but under the circumstances, I shall not object to having a companion; and I am sure my friend here will not be so unreasonable as to object to the arrangement, when I assure him that I neither snore nor kick."

"I shall sit up all night," exclaimed the other traveler.

"Very well," rejoined his companion, with a quiet smile. "If you prefer to do so, I shall be obliged to you. I believe I shall go to bed, Mr. Farmer."

The farmer took a candle to conduct the travelers to the room.

As soon as they were left alone, the mild gentleman went to bed, exclaiming, as he sank into the feathers—

"This is really delicious! These people look out for comfort rather than show."

"Hem!" muttered his companion, seating himself upon a hard wooden chair, and glancing angrily around at the bare walls and scanty furniture of the room.

"Shall I trouble you to wake me at daylight?" asked the traveler in bed. "By the way, as you may want something to amuse you, if you sit up, you will find a new novel in my coat pocket—Good night."

And the good-humored traveler drew a long breath, turned his face to the wall, and composed himself to sleep.

Confounded by his coolness, growled the traveler in the chair, biting his moustache. "I say, Mr. What's-your-name," he added, "is not that a remarkable broad bed?"

"It does very well for one."

"Hem—for one!—I should say so!"

"And for two, on a pinch," said the man in the bed.

"Well," muttered the other, to whom the prospect of a night in a hard-bottomed chair, appeared very dreary, compared with the luxury of sheets and feathers, "I don't know—under the circumstances—a man must sleep—rascally house with only one spare room—villain of a driver."

"I admire these country people," remarked the gentleman on the back side, "by way of cultivating his companion's acquaintance."

"I don't see much to admire," grumbled the other.

"Not in their hospitality—in their genuine politeness?"—he said.

The sociable gentleman was interrupted by an impatient cough, by which his companion evidently intended to put an end to the conversation for the night.

Accordingly, the mild gentleman took the hint, and went to sleep. But the moment he had approached the confines of dream-land, he was wakened by the application of a strange elbow to the under part of his ribs.

"Did you intend to wake me sir?"

"I don't know whether I did or not. You were snoring."

"You must be mistaken, sir; I never snore."

"You were just going to then."

"I may have breathed hard, sir; but if you wake me again I shall kick you out of bed."

The mild gentleman spoke firmly, and he was not troubled with any more elbows that night. When he awoke it was morning, and his fellow traveler was dressing.

"Did you rest well?" he asked.

"Yes—considering," answered the other. "I believe I got a nap of about five minutes."

In the course of the morning, the good-looking gentleman, whose peaceful disposition could not long remain ruffled, found it in his way to do his gruff companion many acceptable favors, which had the effect of softening his temper and making him not a little ashamed of his ungentlemanly conduct. Accordingly on the road to Sweden Corners, the latter saw fit to utter a sort of apology.

"When I am traveling," said he, "I never feel like making myself sociable with anybody."

"Thereby you must lose a great deal of enjoyment and valuable information," replied his companion. "For my part, I never neglect to study human nature, or cultivate good feeling, or gather information among all sorts of people. I find myself the gainer by it."

"You are right," rejoined the traveler with the moustache; "I blame myself for giving way to such feelings as I manifested last night. But you must consider my disappointment. I was returning home to my friends after a long absence."

"So was I; and besides I was anticipating a happy meeting with a brother whom I have not seen for fifteen years; for I have been studying the fine arts in Europe, while he has followed sea. My friends wrote that he was coming home about this time, and I hurried."

his account.

The traveler with the moustache

companion in astonishment.

"Charles! Can it be—"

"I am Charles Stanley—"

"And I am your brother—"

To have seen the

would not have thou

rolling for the last

was, and Edward said so