How the Mills Were Saved

By ELLEN F. MORSE

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Mine was a case of stepmother and one of the worst cases of the kind on record. Stepmothers are not all bad by any means, but when they are it's mighty hard on their stepchildren. Boys, when they become old enough, can go away and fight the world for themselves, but that's not so easy for girls. Nevertheless, I did that very thing.

After mother's death father took into the house to take care of me he said—a woman about his own age. He saw the folly of this plan when it was too late. There was something about the woman, or perhaps some weak spot in father, that enabled her to dominate him. And as for me, she made my life one of misery.

When I was seventeen, having stood well in my classes at school I was offered a position as governess in the Opdyke family. I accepted it to get away from my stepmother. I taught the younger children of the family. There was a son, Harry, a year or two older than I, who was a clerk for his father, a manufacturer of paper. The Opdyke family considered themselves very well off when I went to live with them. They were dreadfully afraid that Harry would fall in love with me. They had no objection to me except that they wished him to make a good match, which, being interpreted, means one with money.

I didn't know it at the time, but my father had considerable property. It was in securities in which he had invested what money he had after a panic. When I left home he still had these securities, but they were not available. He was keeping them for a time when the commercial depression had passed and the property they represented would resume the payment of dividends. Therefore either he was not in a position to give me any income, or if he was his wife prevented him from doing so.

I remained in the Opdyke family five years. Meanwhile Harry had become his father's right hand man at the mills. He had permitted himself to fall in love with me, but I knew that although the family thought a great deal of me they were looking higher for him; consequently I would not yield to his wishes for a betrothal.

Several matters of importance to us all came about at very near the same time. In the first place, Mr. Opdyke, who had been carrying a debt on his mills, found himself unable to provide for it any longer. In the second place, my father died, and my stepmother produced a will leaving all his property to her. Harry told me confidentially of the condition of the family affairs and said that, now we were on the same financial basis, we had better join our fortunes. "What a pity," I said to him, "that my father didn't leave me some of his property; I might have helped your father and you through your difficulties."

I gave way to Harry's persuasive efforts and we became engaged, although we kept the engagement a secret. Under these conditions Harry took an interest in my personal affairs. I told him a great deal about my stepmother, and he suggested taking legal steps to break the will. But after talking the matter over we both agreed that there were no grounds for breaking it—at least none that we could prove. My father was probably of sound mind at the time he made it, and I could not prove that his wife had used undue influence to induce him to make it in her favor. The only objection I could bring up was that my father had told me shortly before his death that my stepmother had tried to force him into making a will in her favor, but he was firmly resolved to make no will.

I made up my mind to have a look at the document. I took Harry with me to the court where it had been filed, and it was shown to me. It was not in my father's handwriting, but I was familiar with his signature, and it seemed to me to be genuine. I noticed that the witnesses and and the notary were all of my stepmother's choosing. At least, there were none of father's friends among them. The document had not been executed on a regular form, but on a sheet of ordinary paper. After examining it thoroughly I handed it to Harry.

Persons in the paper business are apt to acquire a habit on taking up a sheet of paper of holding it up to the light and looking at the watermark on it. Harry did this, at the same time rubbing the surface with his thumb and finger. I saw by the expression on his face that he had made a discovery. Hurriedly looking at the date on which the will was made he turned to me and said:

"That will is a forgery."

"How do you know?" I exclaimed, catching my breath.

"The paper was made in our mills not a year ago, and the will was made three years ago. In other words, the will was made two years before the paper."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, and we have the data in the mills to prove what I say."

Though I was delighted, I was mad and resolved to send my stepmother to state prison. But I afterward compromised by her signing off her widow's dower and my not prosecuting her for forgery. I saved the Opdyke paper mills, which my husband now owns.

SWITCHED ON SUFFRAGE.

Bill Changed His Opinion After a Talk With His Wife.

Old Bill Shiftless wandered in the other day to talk a little politics, says the Osborne (Kan.) Farmer. Bill is somewhat interested in the woman suffrage movement. He is for it good and strong. Bill says: "My wife has as much right to vote as I have. She does half the work and owns half of everything and should have as much say as I have. Of course the old woman would also vote as I told her to, but that makes no difference. It would give me double power, and the Lord knows us poor people have little enough to say now about the way things are run. Then, besides, I want the old lady to have all the pleasure she can get out of this world."

That night old Bill was talking the question over with his wife. She said she would like to get a chance to vote the distilleries off the face of the earth. Bill flared up in a minute.

"That's just the way with the women!" yelled Bill. "Give them half a chance and they would ruin everything. Look at the poor people around here who can't afford a doctor or to buy medicine. If they can keep a little liquor in the house it saves many a sick spell. Women have all they can do to look after things around the house without chasing off and voting."

Then old Bill chased himself to bed and left Mrs. Shiftless to bring in a bucket of coal and get kindling for the morning.

BRUMMEL'S GHOSTS.

Pathetic Picture of the Great Beau in His Decadence.

We are more familiar with the picture of Beau Brummel in the days of his prosperity than in his decadence. Here is a pathetic glimpse of the last phase at Caen, when the old man's mind had begun to give way under the accumulated stress of penury and ingratitude.

"Sometimes he thought he ought to give a party, so he would arrange the apartment, set out the candles and get the house attendant to be with him. At 8 o'clock this man would open the door of the room and announce 'the Duchess of Devonshire.' At the sound of this name Brummel would rise from his chair and greet the cold air from the staircase as though it were the beautiful duchess herself, making his most courtly bow and saying: 'Ah, my dear duchess, how rejoiced I am to see you—so very amiable of you at this short notice! Pray, bury yourself in this armchair! Do you know, it was a gift to me from the Duchess of York, who was a very kind friend of mine, but, poor thing, she is now no more.' Then, his eyes filling with tears, he would sink into his chair, looking vacantly into the fire until Lord Alvanley, Lord Allen, the Duke of Beaufort or some other old friend was ushered in. At 10 the attendant announced the carriage of each invisible visitor and this ghostly party would conclude."—London Graphic.

Auction Selling In Japan.

Sealed bids are used in auctioning property in Japan. There is no shouting. The auctioneer announces to the audience that he has such and such a piece of property for sale and invites bids. Those who wish to bid write their bids and names on slips of paper. The paper is folded and placed in a box. When the auctioneer sees no more bids coming he opens the box and sorts out the bids. The highest bid takes the property. It is like a bond sale—no one knows what his neighbor bids. If a bidder is anxious to get the property he will not put in a small offer. On the contrary, he will very likely bid all the property is worth. For this reason an owner never puts up his property for auction unless he wants to sell it.—New York Sun.

A Famous Dresser.

Joachim Murat was in his day the best dressed man in the world. Born in 1707 in a village near Cahors, the son of a day laborer, he was sent to a Jesuit school to be educated for the priesthood. He ran away, joined the army, and sixteen years after he had become a lieutenant he was a field marshal, Duke of Cleve and Berg, with Napoleon's sister, Caroline, as his wife, and, finally, by the grace of his brother-in-law, was created king of Naples. In all stations he paid the closest attention to his attire and wore in battle gold embroidered and jeweled uniforms which would have made him conspicuous at a court function and dressed himself as for a review when he was led forth to be shot.—New York Tribune.

Strenuous.

"Life is far from being monotonous at the Twiller home."

"How is that?"

"The family pets include a bulldog, a cat and a globe of goldfish, the problem being to keep the bulldog from killing the cat and the cat from catching the goldfish."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Careful About Himself.

Husband—I say, how many l's in bilious? Wife—One, of course. You told me how to spell it yesterday when I was writing. Husband—Ah, but I'm writing now, and that makes all the difference.—London Punch.

Encouraging.

Tragedian—My parents tried hard to keep me from becoming an actor. Comedian—I congratulate them on their success.

The hate which we all bear with the most patience is the hate of those who envy us.—Cotton.

My Unobtrusive Typewriter

By EDWARD L. THORNTON

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While I was in Russia trying to get a contract for steel rails, requiring a typewriter, I engaged one who spoke a little English. I kept him busy typing letters, contracts, specifications and other such documents.

Alexis Breutowski was his name, and he was born in Russian Poland, a quiet, unobtrusive fellow, very poor and out at the elbows. I took a fancy to him and told him that if he cared to go with me I would take him to the United States and secure a position for him in the steel works I represented. He accepted the offer.

That was at a time when nihilism was threatening every man prominent in the government, from the czar down to the superintendent of police. I tried to learn something about the nihilists from Alexis, but he appeared to take no interest in what they were doing, or, rather, said he did not approve of their methods. The only man he appeared enthusiastic over was Count Tolstoy, whose policy was nonresistance.

However, when I made a friend of a Russian and Alexis saw that I was with him a great deal he told me that it was dangerous to be seen with the man. When I asked him why he replied that he had heard through a relative who was connected with the police that the man was a suspect, which meant that he was being watched by the government for complicity with nihilism. Having no wish to become a suspect myself, I dropped the man like a hot coal.

I was successful in getting an order for rails and after the contract was signed applied for permission to depart. I understood from Alexis that he had also made application. I had hired a suit of rooms which I used both for living and office apartments, and that I might at all times have my typewriter handy I gave him one of them for a sleeping room.

When the time came for my departure Alexis had not yet received his passport. I told him that I had been dealing with representatives of the government and I thought that if I told them I wished to take my typewriter to America to give him a business position they might hurry the delivery of the document. But Alexis shook his head, saying that there was so much suspicion of persons entering and leaving Russia that my making such an application might deter rather than hasten the granting of the passport, but if I would wait a few days he was quite sure he would receive it. I told him that I must leave the next day, but since I intended to remain in London until the ship on which I had engaged passage sailed he could join me there. I offered to leave with him the price of the tickets, but he declined, saying that the money would be advanced by his relatives.

What was my surprise the next morning on arising from my bed to find the suit of clothes I had taken off the night before missing. I looked in Alexis' room; his bed had not been slept in. Had he stolen my clothes and decamped? My money was all right; he had not taken that. But my passport was gone.

I ran over the probabilities in my mind and remembered that he was about my age, height and build. I was a blond; so was he. The eyes of both were blue. Then it occurred to me that he who had worn a full beard had the day before cut it off, leaving only a mustache, as in my case. "Fearing," I said to myself, "that he would not get his passport in time to go with me, he has taken mine, made himself as much like me as possible in order to pass on it as his own and gone away with it."

Thinking that he had left me some written word, I looked about, but not a scrap did I find.

Taking another suit from my trunk, I put it on and went out to get some breakfast. In the restaurant I noticed several men talking in low tones. I heard one of them speak the word nitroglycerin. Somehow I suspected from their peculiar manner that some government magnate had been assassinated. I bought a newspaper, but there was no notice of anything of the kind. The man Alexis had warned me against came into the restaurant and looked about. Seeing me, he beckoned me to follow him and went out. He paid no attention to me till we reached a little street almost deserted; then he turned and said, "Go at once to the chief of police and report that your passport has been stolen."

"How did you know? Who stole it? What's the matter?"

"Your typewriter is beyond the border. He wishes no harm to come to you. Go at once and do as I say."

"Has anything happened?"

"Yes," he whispered. "Last night the chief of police was killed by a bomb as he was entering his home."

I took the man's advice and escaped arrest for complicity in the assassination. I got out of Russia as soon as they would let me go.

On arriving in London I had not been at my hotel an hour before I received the card of Alexis Breutowski. I sent for him to come up to my room, where we had a long interview. I am not going to divulge what passed between us except that the principal burden on his mind seemed to be his stealing of my passport. I persuaded him to go to America, and he now occupies the position I intended for him.

PERFORMING LIONS.

Perils That Come With Managing Those Vicious Animals.

I asked Captain Bonavita once what he considered his most dangerous moment when he performed with his twenty-seven lions. He said that he thought it was when he first entered the arena. The moment before, when he had to drive this great herd of lions in, was almost as bad, but the first few minutes when the crowd of lions entered were terribly uncertain and undoubtedly the most dangerous.

In the first place, with such a crowd there was the danger of being pushed or knocked down. Then there was the danger of tripping among them or of stepping on their tails, for many of them would lie down and roll over and over as a preliminary to the performance and if he were not struck by their feet he was just as likely to be struck across the face or body with their strong ropelike tails.

In getting them into their places there was also considerable danger, for in such a crowd it is difficult to treat each animal according to its peculiar idiosyncrasies, and a flick of the whip intended for one lion who would be fairly indifferent to it is likely to be caught by another to whom it will mean instant revolt. In any sort of revolt the whole number will always side with the one that caused it.—Ellen Velvin in McClure's.

NAPOLEON'S POLICE.

An Incident That Shows How Closely They Were Watched.

During the reign of Emperor Napoleon I. at a dinner in Paris the conversation turned upon the emperor and his government. One of the company remarked that he was a great man, but was too fond of war. When the party broke up a gentleman who was present requested to speak in private to the person who had made that observation. "Sir," said he, "I am sorry for it, but I must request you to go with me to the police."

"Why?" said the other in the greatest apparent alarm. "I have said nothing against the emperor but what every one must acknowledge, that he is too fond of war. There can be no harm in that."

"With that I have nothing to do. You must go with me to the police."

The other now began to show the strongest symptoms of fear. He entreated the police agent in the most pathetic language to have compassion on him. The other, however, stood unmoved by all his solicitation, when suddenly the man rose from his knees and burst into a laugh to the utter astonishment of the police agent.

"You think you have caught me," said he. "You are a spy of the police. So am I, and I was put over you to see whether you would do your duty."

Imbeciles' Marvelous Memory.

Some imbeciles are endowed with excellent memories and thus are enabled to acquire a great wealth of experience. But, the intelligence of the imbecile being defective, the memory is all topsided. It works mechanically, without judgment or selection. The most insignificant trifles are treasured just like the most important facts. Owing to their marvelous memory many superior idiots are not recognized as such in school, but, on the contrary, are considered to be very gifted pupils. The mistake occurs especially when they are good natured and agreeable. A close examination shows that such talented idiots have learned everything like a phonograph and reproduce other people's thoughts, opinions and judgments. Where such imbeciles are living in simple, primitive, idyllic surroundings their soft spots may pass unnoticed, but in the severe mental strains of life in modern great cities they may become the most dangerous elements of society.—London Globe.

A Tribute to Garrick's Acting.

David Garrick had a brother in the country who was an idolatrous admirer of his genius. A rich neighbor, a grocer, being about to visit London, this brother insisted on his taking a letter of introduction to the actor. Not being able to make up his mind to visit the great man the first day, the grocer went to the play in the evening and saw Garrick in "Abel Drugger." On his return to the country the brother eagerly inquired respecting the visit he had been so anxious to bring about. "Why, Mr. Garrick," said the good man, "I am sorry to hurt your feelings, but there's your letter. I did not choose to deliver it. I happened to see him when he did not know me, and I saw that he was such a dirty, low lived fellow that I did not like to have anything to do with him."

Where Licorice Grows.

On the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates the licorice plant is chiefly grown. These great rivers flow through flat, treeless prairies of uncultivated and nearly uninhabited land. For three months of the year hot winds blow, and the temperature reaches 104 degrees. For six months of the year the climate is moderate and salubrious, and for three months bleak and wintry, the thermometer going down to 30 degrees at night.

Something In the Filling.

"Do you know you can tell a man's disposition by his teeth?" asked the girl who believes in signs, bumps and palm reading.

"How interesting!" said her companion, who did not believe in anything. "Then Jack must have a golden disposition."

A lie is a poor substitute for the truth, but what other is there?

Slaves of the Russian Passport.

A peasant leaves his home to seek for work as a field laborer wherever he can find work to do, and, like every Russian, male and female, he takes his passport with him, which is quite as much a part of him as his soul is. It is always a half yearly passport, which he must renew at the end of six months, sending it home in a registered letter to an official at his native place and inclosing the legal fee and something over for the trouble. The time of renewal draws near; the workman gets a demand for a new passport. Through official neglect or other reason the passport fails to come in time. The honest workingman, who is earning his bread in the sweat of his brow and by the practice perhaps of exceptional sobriety is trying to earn a pittance for his family, is arrested suddenly and sent home—that is, is flung into a forwarding prison, whence he emerges to join a convict party, which contain the cream of criminality, and is made to suffer torments before he gets home. When he arrives he gets his passport and is a free agent—once more a loyal subject.—E. B. Lanin.

Fixing Up the Horse.

If you had a highly intelligent thoroughbred horse to which you were greatly attached, what would you do for him in order to bring him to the highest point of efficiency?

Would you teach him, at great inconvenience and after many repetitions, to smoke from ten to fifteen cigars a day, and would you mix with his oats all the way from a pint to a quart of alcohol? Would you re-enforce this by overloading his stomach with highly spiced food and add all the narcotics that were in the market, such as tea, coffee, etc.? Would you keep him in a heated stable without any fresh air, make him sit up at all hours of the night and permit all the veterinarians in the neighborhood to hold consultations and operate upon him as often as they needed the money?

And if you did all this, what sort of a race would you expect that horse to win?—Life.

Ancient Football.

Philip Stubbes wrote in 1583 in his book on "The Anatomie of Abuses":

"For as concerning football I protest unto you it may rather be called a freendly kinde of fight than a play of recreation; a bloody and murthering practice than a felowly sporte of pastyme. For dooth not every one lye in waight for his Adversarie, seeking to overthrow him and to picke him on his nose, though it be on hard stones, so that by this meanes sometimes their necks are broken, sometimes their backs, sometimes their legs, sometimes their arms, sometimes one part thrust out of joynt, sometimes another; sometimes the noses gush out with blood, sometimes their eyes start out—fighting, brawling, contention, quarrel picking, murther, homicide and great effusion of blood, as experience dayly teacheth."

Relics of the Incas.

The Inca period has left us remarkable traces, especially in the magnificent roads. Broad, beautiful turnpikes, now only partially preserved, run for a distance of over 2,000 miles from the coast to the plateau and the foot of the highest peaks. We marvel at the skill of the Inca engineers, especially in the magnificent stairways hewn in the rock, in the filling up of deep ravines, in the paving with ponderous flags. In several places have been found the remains of a former asphalt covering to these roads. At certain intervals are found the ruins of custom houses and laid out grounds and fortifications, of which the most interesting specimen is the fortress of Cuzco, built about the year 1000, and plundered and destroyed by Pizarro in 1548.—Century Path.

The Club.

An exclusive dining society in London is the one bearing the arrogant title the Club, which since its foundation has been limited to thirty-five members. Johnson, Burke, Reynolds and Goldsmith were among the original members. Garrick and Boswell joined in 1773 and Gibbon and Fox in 1774. Of the eighteen premiers in the nineteenth century nine were members of the club, Fox, Liverpool, Canning, Russell, Aberdeen, Gladstone, Salisbury, Lord Rosebery and Mr. Balfour.—London Spectator.

The Orator's Fate.

"Some orators," said Senator Sorghum reflectively, "make me think of our parrot."

"The one whose head you chopped off?"

"Yes. He had to take all the blame for what somebody else insisted on his saying."—Washington Star.

Asking Too Much.

"My dear," said Mr. Clarkson, "I don't want you to think I have any desire to criticise you for the way you manage, but really we must try to live within our income."

"Within our income? Goodness! And be regarded by everybody in our set as eccentric?"—Judge.

Doubled Her Capacity.

"Mrs. Garber fell downstairs and bit her tongue in two."

"I feel sorry for her husband. She was a terror when she had only one tongue!"

Vice Versa.

Teacher—I would like some one in the class to define the meaning of vice versa. Bright Boy—It's sleeping with your feet toward the head of the bed.

Good deeds ring clear through heaven like a bell.—Richter.

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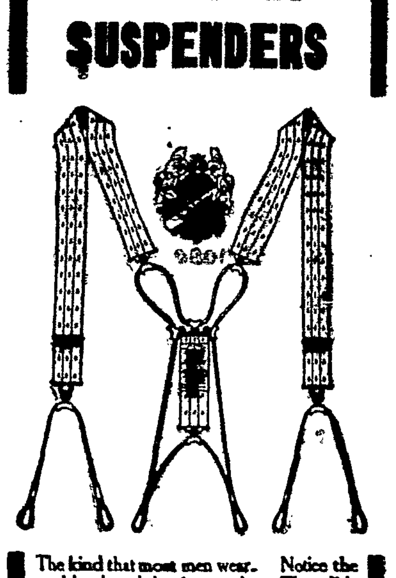

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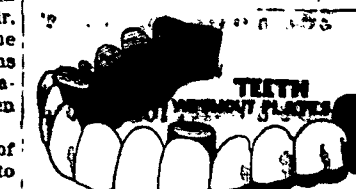

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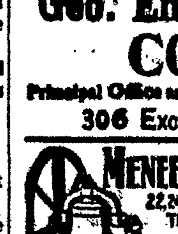
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