

## WAS IT ALL LUCK?

BEFORE a single sleeper on the Eastern Counties railroad was laid down; before even that line of road was marked out on a map; at the time when stage-coaching was at the summit of prosperity, and omnibuses had not encroached upon the privileges of those pleasant conveyances which were "licensed to carry sixteen passengers, four inside and twelve out," so few, comparatively, of which remain to the present day—my story takes date.

One Saturday afternoon, Mark Anderson, a youth of about eighteen or nineteen, and a subordinate clerk in some inferior government office, emerging from Threadneedle-street, and hurrying on to the Four Swans inn-yard, mounted the box, and seated himself beside the driver of one of the numerous coaches which, in those days, plied between the Flower Pot in Bishopsgate-street and the suburban villages on the Cambridge and other roads branching outward from Shoreditch. Though the time was summer, the day was drizzly and cheerless; and the young man seemed somewhat impatient of a slight delay to which the coachman was subjecting his passengers.

"I thought your time was half-past four," said Mark, and pointed to the clock on the opposite side of the street; "you are nearly ten minutes behind."

"Just going to start," said the coachman; but still he lingered; and the youth, having vented his reproof, tied a handkerchief round his neck, buttoned his frock-coat to his chin, and drew up the box apron over his knees; each of which precautions was very prudent, for though an honest big drop of real rain was not to be seen, the misty drizzle was very penetrating.

"Going to Waltham?" asked the driver.

"No; to Enfield Wash," replied the young man; "and far enough too, such a day as this. When are you going to move?"

"In a minute," said the man, looking round, and adding, "Oh, here he comes. Now then, sir, if you please." The last words were addressed to a middle-aged stout gentleman, well wrapped up in a great-coat, who, climbing to the top of the coach, observed in an indifferent tone—"I have kept you waiting, Davis; but can't help it: business must be attended to. You must step out a little quicker, that's all."

"All right, sir," said the coachman, as the vehicle rattled off from the gateway of the Four Swans. "Not quite right, I say," muttered Mark to himself, "to keep us sitting in the rain for his convenience." But his grumbling was inaudible, and the cloud on his face soon cleared up.

The elder traveler seemed destined, that afternoon, to disturb Mark's complacency. Before the coach was off "the stones," he had unfurled a large umbrella, and held it over his head, much to his own comfort, no doubt, but to the discomfort of the youth, just behind whom he was seated, and down whose back the droppings from the umbrella began to trickle in a cold stream.

"Could you be so kind, sir," said the youth, looking round at his tormentor, "as to hold your umbrella a little more backward? It gives me more than my share of moisture, I think."

"Can't help it," said the senior traveler, gruffly. "My umbrella isn't in your way, that I can see; and if I hold it at a different angle, I shall get wet; and I don't mean to get wet, if I can help it. Every one for himself, that's my motto, such a day as this."

"Very good, sir," said the young man, good-humoredly; "I only mentioned it, and did not mean to offend you. I am sorry if I have."

"No offense, young man," replied the other; "but you are wrong about the umbrella."

"I dare say you are right, sir," said Mark. "These Scotch mists get into one before you know where you are."

Scotch or English, the mist gradually thickened; and by the time the coach reached Tottenham, it mattered little to Mark Anderson that he had not been spared the umbrella droppings. He was almost wet through on all sides. But he bore the inconvenience with a good-humor that seemed imperturbable. Presently the coach stopped, and Mark got down while the horses were being changed.

"Hallo, Davis! I say, Davis, is that you smoking?" angrily shouted the elder traveler from under cover of his umbrella, some little while after the coach was again in motion.

"No, sir, I am, though," returned the youth. "Trying your plan, sir—taking care of myself."

"And annoying your neighbors," grumbled the gentleman; "that isn't my plan, my young friend."

Mark had it on his lips to say that he somewhat doubted that assertion; but he did not say it. Instead of that, "If my cigar is disagreeable to you, sir," said he, "I'll leave off directly."

"No, no; go on, by all means," said the gentleman, somewhat testily; "every one for himself; but it's a nasty habit, that smoking; and it can not be very agreeable to any body to be stifled with tobacco-reek, I should think. It isn't to me, I know, so I'll just shift my seat, if you'll draw up for a minute, Davis."

"No need for that, sir," replied Mark, quietly. "I've done, sir, and I beg your pardon for having annoyed you. I did not intend to do it;" and, as he spoke, he threw the half-unconsumed cigar on to the road.

Mark's fellow-traveler looked half-vexed and half-pleased. "I did not wish you to do *that*," he said, in a tone very different from that in which he had before spoken. "I am obliged to you, though, for, to tell the truth, I very much dislike the smell of tobacco. But you should have saved your cigar; it seems a pity to cast away what costs good money."

"It's of no consequence, sir," returned Mark; "I dare say you are right about smoking; 'tis only a habit."

"A bad habit," said the gentleman, very decidedly. "I should say a *very* bad habit for a young man like you. But it is nothing to me,"

he added, in his former misanthropical tone ;  
"every one for himself."

"That seems rather a favorite motto of yours, sir," said the youth, respectfully, but manfully ;  
"but I think there is a better one than that to go by."

"Eh ! what do you mean ? what's that ?"

"'Every one for his neighbor,' sir," replied Mark.

"Ay, ay ! and who is my neighbor ? Yes, yes, I know the answer to *that*. 'A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho,' and so on. You are right, young man ; and it is the best motto to act upon, as you say. But I shouldn't expect it, though, from a young cigar-smoker."

"I don't know why you should not, sir," replied Mark, still good-humoredly. "A cigar-smoker, even a young one, may be courteous, I hope, sir."

"So it seems. And I thank you, my young friend, for your readiness to oblige me by putting out your cigar. You should *not* have thrown it away, though. You'll never get rich at that rate. I shouldn't be now if I had smoked cigars fifty years ago. But there were none then to smoke, I think—at least I never saw any : so much the better for me."

And there the conversation ended ; but it was very observable that during the latter part of it the umbrella was gradually edged away from Mark's back. Presently the coach drew up at the iron gateway of a large and somewhat aristocratic-looking mansion, and the elder traveler alighted.

"You know that gentleman, I suppose ?" said Mark to the coachman, when the coach was once more in motion.

"Yes ; Mr. Cameron his name is. He goes up and comes down two or three times a week. That's his country house. He is rich as a Jew, they say, and does a large business in the city. I thought you would come in for it for smoking, sir. He can't bear it. He gave up the Edmon-ton Highflyer because the coachman would have his cigar."

In due time our young friend reached the neat little cottage of his widowed mother in safety, and received a gentle scolding for being so thoughtless as to leave his umbrella behind him at his Camberwell lodgings in the morning.

Now, the coach-top scene and conversation which we have attempted to describe may seem very trivial ; but our readers will understand that it led to results which were not so. And we may observe, in passing, that really trivial events in life rarely or never occur. We may not, in every case, perhaps not in many cases, be able to trace the connection between the events of to-day and those of yesterday, much less of those which took place years ago ; but the connection exists, nevertheless. And this fact alone should teach every traveler through life to look well to his goings and his doings. It should do something more than this, we think ; but we will not moralize here.

It sometimes happens that two persons—strangers to each other—having once casually met, under circumstances, for instance, like those we have related, seem afterward to cross each other's path with something like design, though the second rencontre and all succeeding ones shall be as accidental as the first. Not many evenings after that of which we have spoken, Mr. Cameron, passing over London-bridge, was caught in a sudden shower. It was very vexatious ; for, by some extraordinary neglect, he had left behind him, at his counting-house, his almost inseparable companion—his umbrella ; and inwardly fretting at his carelessness, or his over-credulous faith in a blue sky, he hastened on toward the Southwark side of the river to seek shelter. Before he could reach it, however, the shower became a torrent, and in another minute or two Mr. Cameron would have been drenched, but for the abrupt but timely offer of the very thing that he then most needed. The offer was made by a young man whom in his haste Mr. Cameron had nearly run down.

"Ha, my young cigar merchant !" exclaimed Mr. Cameron, who, at a glance, recognized his former fellow-traveler : "'A friend in need is a friend indeed,' they say. I beg your pardon for running against you ; but you see I am likely to get wet."

"Yes, sir ; and so if you will oblige me by making use of my umbrella—"

"To be sure I will. I am making use of it already, you see. But two can walk under it : I'll take your arm, if you please. 'Tisn't every body I would walk under the same umbrella with, though. There—you needn't walk so far off ; I can trust you, eh ? And every one for himself, you know—and his neighbor as well. To be sure. By the way, where's your cigar, my young friend ? You were smoking, I think, a minute ago, before I overtook you."

"Yes, sir, I was certainly ; but you don't like it, and I couldn't think of offering you the shelter of my umbrella with a cigar in my mouth, so—"

"So you canted it into the Thames, I suppose. A foolish trick that, my young friend. By the way, what's your name ?"

"Mark Anderson, sir, at your service."

"My service to you, Mr. Mark Anderson—a good name, by the way ; north country, like mine, though you be a cockney. My name is Cameron : Watling-street knows me, I think. And what may be Mr. Mark Anderson's profession ?"

"An inquisitive old gentleman," thought Mark to himself ; "but there's no reason why he shouldn't know what I am ;" and forthwith, with the frankness of a youth who has nothing to conceal, he answered *that* question.

The rain did not seem like to cease, and the pavements were getting cleared rapidly. Our two friends, however, walked on together for some little time in silence.

"Which way are you going, and how far ?"

asked Mr. Cameron, abruptly, as he and Mark arrived at the end of the bridge.

"My lodgings are at Camberwell, sir, and I am going there."

"Ah! then we must part here. I was afraid of that. Our roads are different, young man. Mine lies down yonder"—he pointed as he spoke toward Tooley-street. So I must get on as well as I can, thanking you for your shelter while I have had it. There! I won't keep you any longer in the wet; every one for himself, you know."

"And his neighbor too, sir. It won't make much difference to me, and if you will allow me to walk with you as far as you are going; or, if you like to take my umbrella, sir, you are quite welcome to it."

"You are a fine young fellow, Mr. Mark Anderson," said Mr. Cameron, turning abruptly upon his companion. "A thousand pities you smoke. Well, sir, I'll accept your offer. It isn't above half a mile that I am going, and you shall have the pleasure of putting your motto into practice."

Mark was right enough in judging his companion to be "an inquisitive old gentleman." He was, in fact, *very* inquisitive. But Mark did not mind it; and before they parted that evening, Mr. Cameron had learned a good deal of the young man's previous history—who and what his father had been, where his mother lived, what her resources were, how many sisters he had, what they did to support themselves, and what his own prospects were. And as Mark shook hands with Mr. Cameron at parting, he received at the same time a friendly invitation, and a suggestion, couched in some such language as this:

"Young man, I owe you something for your politeness, and also for being so rough to you the other afternoon on the coach—"

"Don't mention it, sir," Mark began to say.

"Yes, but I must mention it, though; I was in a bad humor that day. I had lost a good bit of money, or thought I had; but that's no excuse. Well, you must get down at my house next time we ride together, and take a chop with me, eh? And you can walk on to Enfield Wash afterward. What do you say?"

Mark thanked the gentleman.

"And cheer up, my lad. You don't think your prospects very promising, I can see. Ah! but you don't know. Who can tell what a day may bring forth. Not you, nor I. Fifty years ago, young man, I left Scotland on foot, with about ten shillings in my pocket, and not a friend north of the Tweed that I knew any thing of. And here I am now, worth more than ten shillings and fourpence I think. But I didn't smoke cigars young man. And I say, Mr. Anderson, 'tis a thousand pities you smoke. I wouldn't if I were you."

Our narrative, however, must now take a leap over a long range of years. Twenty summers and winters have passed since that rainy day on

London-bridge, bringing with them their checked range of joys and sorrows, successes and reverses. The scene now shifts to a commercial room in the Eagle and Crown, at a market town some fifty miles from the metropolis. There sat a party of commercial travelers at supper, discussing, while they did justice to the good fare, as is their wont, the credit and resources of various houses in the different lines of business with which they were connected.

"What a lucky fellow, by the way," said one of the party, after the merits of a great Manchester warehouse-man had been canvassed, "that Mark Anderson has been all his life!"

"A very lucky fellow!" rejoined another; and a third re-echoed the remark.

"Do you think so, gentlemen?" asked a fourth—an elderly man, who had hitherto borne no part in the rather "free-and-easy" converse of that evening.

"There can't be a doubt of it, Mr. W., I should think," replied the first speaker.

"Not a doubt of it," said the second, likewise; "it was all luck, depend upon it."

"He began with nothing—nothing to speak of," continued the former; "but old Cameron took a fancy to him; and now, you see, the old gentleman retires from the firm, and leaves Mark Anderson at the head of it."

"And," rejoined the third commercial, "it all began, as I have been told, by young Anderson happening to have an umbrella, and saving Mr. Cameron from getting a wetting one evening. A lucky thing that. I think I shall take to carrying an umbrella fine days as well as wet ones."

"That wasn't quite all, I believe," responded number one; "he came over the old gent by chiming in with his humors and finding out the length of his foot. A clever fellow Mr. Anderson is, I fancy. But there was a bit of sneaking about him. That and good luck did it all."

"Ah! I have heard that Cameron cottoned to the young fellow at first, because of his name. It has a Scotch sort of sound, you know; and Anderson's father, or grandfather, *was* a Scotchman. So it was 'Highlanders, shoulder-to-shoulder,' you know. A lucky thing to have a fine-sounding name, sometimes. Poor Jack Smith might have told *his* name fifty times, and nobody would have thought any thing about it."

"A lucky thing of Mr. Anderson to leave off smoking as he did. He took his cue there famously. That was what nailed old Mr. Cameron, I suspect. A lucky thought that!"

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. W., when there was a slight break in the conversation, "you have had your say about Mr. Anderson, and you all seem to know something, more or less, of his history; but you will excuse me for thinking you are wrong in ascribing his prosperity to what you call luck. There is more in it than that, I think."

"Of course, Mr. W.," replied one of the former speakers, "we don't mean that Mr. Anderson isn't clever and shrewd, and all that sort of thing that helps a man on in the world; it was

his first start, mind you, that we said was so lucky."

"Mr. W. does not believe in luck, perhaps," observed another of the company.

"No, I don't," said Mr. W. "Luck is a heathenish word, and the idea it generally conveys is a heathenish idea. But we need not dispute about words. What I mean is that Mr. Anderson's 'first start,' as you call it, was owing to something with which *luck* had nothing to do."

"You know Mr. Anderson, perhaps?"

"Yes, rather intimately; and I'll tell you what I know of his rise in the world, if you like. A few words will do it."

"By all means, Mr. W.," said one of the other speakers.

"In the first place, then, what first attracted Mr. Cameron's notice in young Anderson, was his good temper and readiness to oblige a stranger who had behaved to him both crustily and selfishly. Their first meeting was on the top of a stage coach—"

"Yes, I have heard of that."

"Well, then, you will admit that had Anderson given his fellow-passenger 'as good as he sent,' to use a common expression, their acquaintance would probably have ended where it began. So I should say that *good temper*, rather than *luck*, was the first step toward Mr. Anderson's prosperity."

"There's something in that, to be sure, Mr. W."

"Then there was a degree of kindness, somewhat self-denying, in the offer of the umbrella when Cameron and Anderson came in each other's way the second time. It is not every young man would have gone out of his way to oblige even a common acquaintance; and not many perhaps, would have thought of offering the shelter of an umbrella to such a crusty old fellow as Mr. Cameron had seemed to be. Some, I fancy, would have chuckled over the old gentleman's evident distress, and said it served him right. But the young man had a way of his own, and a principle of his own, too: that principle was, 'Every man for his neighbor,' and he acted upon it. So, instead of *luck*, we may set down thoughtfulness and disinterested kindness, and I may say *Christian* kindness—for 'Every man for his neighbor' is a Christian motto—as another step."

"Very true, Mr. W., so far."

"Then, again, Mr. Cameron was pleased with the young man's conversation, and in consequence of that invited him to his house. Here was another step with which *luck* had nothing to do. In the course of further acquaintance, Mr. Cameron discovered that his young *protégé*, as I may call him, was a good son, and—notwithstanding an unfortunate *penchant* for cigars—did a good deal with very limited means, for the comfort of a widowed mother. *Luck* had nothing to do with that, I think."

"Nothing, certainly, Mr. W."

"Well, to go on with my—"

"Lecture," suggested one of the gentlemen of the commercial room, with a wink to the rest.

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"Yes," continued Mr. W.; "to go on with my lecture—there was the leaving off smoking, which Mr. C. calls a lucky thought. Now, I can tell you how that came about. One day, after Mr. Cameron and young Anderson had become pretty familiar, as they were riding together on the same coach where they had first met, I believe the old gentleman began to attack the young fellow about his nasty habit, as he called it, and asked him what he would do if he should get a wife who didn't like it?"

"Leave it off, directly," said Anderson.

"You wouldn't be able," said Mr. Cameron.

"I think I should," replied the other; "and to prove it, sir, I won't smoke again for the next three months."

"Well, gentlemen, young Anderson kept his word; and before the time was gone by, he happened to fall in with a poor scholar—a German—half starved, and learnt his history, which was a very sad one. To have the means of relieving him, Anderson made up his mind that he wouldn't spend any more money on cigars, and in gratitude for the unexpected kindness and liberality of the young clerk, the poor student offered to teach him the German language. Now, it might have been what you call a lucky thought: but I should rather call it a generous one, that led Mr. Anderson to give up smoking."

"I think it was, certainly, Mr. W.," responded Mr. C., the gentleman addressed. "You are right, sir."

"Well, Anderson was a sharp, energetic fellow when he took any thing in hand; and in a year or two he was master of the language, though what good it would ever do him he had not the most distant idea. During all this time he hadn't met Mr. Cameron more than two or three times, and they hadn't got beyond a familiar sort of how-d'ye-do acquaintance. One day Anderson took up a newspaper, and saw an advertisement for a mercantile clerk, well acquainted with German. At that time he was not making much headway, and it struck him that he might better himself by looking after this situation. So he made an appointment with the X. Y. Z. who had advertised; and who should it prove to be but Mr. Cameron himself!

"Ha! my young cigar merchant," said he, when they met; "what do you know about German?" Mr. Anderson explained.

"But," said Mr. Cameron, "you are German out and out, I am afraid. German pipes as well as German gutturals? It won't do, I think. I was obliged to get rid of my last German correspondent because he perfumed the counting-house with stale tobacco: pah! I couldn't bear it any longer."

"I haven't smoked for two years sir," said Anderson. And that pretty nearly settled the matter at once. In two or three weeks' time he had got into Cameron's counting-house. After that, you know, he rose and rose till, by making himself useful, he was taken into the firm; but if you think he has not worked hard for it, you are mistaken. And I think you will agree with



me in saying that my friend, Mark Anderson, does not owe his prosperity—no, nor even his first steps upward—to what you, gentlemen, are pleased to call *LUCK*."

#### THE CARELESS WORD.

INNUMERABLE are the ways of making love; for, although love is a natural product of the human heart, and not a manufactured article, yet it is nevertheless brought to perfection by artificial means—opportunities, tears, sighs, speeches, and the like—and requires considerable skill in the process. We have the highest authority for calling it an art—the art of love. And it is not only one of the fine arts, but unequivocally the finest of all the arts. Treatises have been written upon it from the beginning of time, and will continue to be written upon it to the end of time; and when all the languages of the earth shall have exhausted their resources to the same purpose, the world will not be a whit wiser about it than it was four thousand years ago.

You may make love with your foot, accidentally, of course, and nobody but the beloved shall be the wiser. And how will she take it! Her blue eyes, or deep hazel, or light ash, or whatever color they may be, will suddenly sparkle as if an electric wire had touched her, and she will raise them with their new-born thoughts springing up in them to look into your face, not with a full gaze, but a half-downcast and thrilling glance of an instant, like a sun-flash, and then a blush, burning and sudden, will rush into her face, and she will unconsciously squeeze her beautiful lips together, and then turn away her head quickly, as if provoked at herself for having been betrayed into a recognition of the meaning of your familiar, and, we must add, contraband mode of awakening her feelings.

And how many speechless men there are who make love with their hands and their eyes, or with any thing except their tongues. Love certainly is not loquacious. It can not always talk *to*, but it can talk forever of the object. That is to say, while yet the early season is full of clouds and showers, and the wooer is not over-confident of the promise of the future. But when the sun breaks out and there is an assurance of hope, then even the timid grow brave and become as garrulous as if they had practiced delicious nonsense all their lives long. Yet it is odd, how any man with the passion, ecstatic even in its uncertainty, throbbing at his heart, can sit like a statue, all stone and melancholy, moping, and mooning, while the fawn-like being is moving round him full of grace, beauty, and self-possession.

The liveliest and most imaginative man is liable, sometime in the course of his life, to be thrown into a trance of this kind. Talk of the transmigration of souls! This is the true metempsychosis that all of a sudden, in the very prime of his vivacity, turns your cheerful friend, who has not a real care or anxiety in existence, and used to be such a "capital fellow" at a din-

ner party, into the dullest and flattest of human beings. Where his soul goes to during these intervals of suspended animation is a grave speculation; but most probably it flies for refuge to the lady, if we may judge by the increased gayety she usually exhibits on such occasions, which certainly justifies the suspicion that she has derived an additional spirituality from the man's bewilderment. He is probably laboring all the time under the delusion that he is solving some abstruse problem; but that is a melancholy mistake; his mind—with all respect for nature's laws—is a vacuum. He may think he is thinking, but he is doing no such thing—he is merely looking stupid. Ah! love is a paradox. We might as well attempt to reap the winds, count the spots in the sun, swim in the air, square the circle, or find out perpetual motion, as to trace its rise and progress. "It enters" says Farquhar, "at the eyes." That is all very well for a comedy; but you might as well say that the light of the sun enters at the key-hole. Love enters every where: it seizes on the tips of the fingers—do we not fall in love with a touch of the hand?—it fascinates the ear—do we not fall in love with a voice?—which of the senses is exempt from its influence! and as to imagination, it is often, as every body knows, made prisoner in advance of sight, touch, and hearing.

Now there is not a single mood or tense of love that was not practiced over and over again between Charles Torrens and Edith Esdaile in the course of their wooing. They believed they loved each other better than ever any young people loved each other before; and we believe that they loved each other quite as deeply as any young people can love. And they were indefatigable in cultivating all possible opportunities of increasing that stock of affection. Charles would have paid his morning visits at daybreak, and spun them out till midnight, if a certain sense of the usages of society had not checked his ardor. As it was, he called every day at the house of the lady's father, and came again every evening with as much punctuality and certainty as the waters of the ocean ebb and flow. And it was extraordinary how fertile he was in excuses for this undeviating attention. He was always prepared with something new to show, or to talk about; with a scrap of intelligence for the old gentleman, or the lady-mother; or, perhaps, with an apology for something he had left undone, and a promise to do it the next day, so as to create out of one visit a pretext for another. He always made an excuse of some description, although there was not the slightest necessity for it, and his motive was as transparent as a sheet of glass. But love makes one very conscious and suspicious of every movement: the lover takes infinite delight in stratagetical operations, and is, therefore, constantly employed in devising cunning schemes for eluding and evading observation; forgetting that the more he struggles to escape it, the more he draws it down.

Edith Esdaile was equally ardent and clever