

What was his Creed.

He left a load of anthracite in front of a poor widow's door, When the deep snow, frozen and white, Wrapped street and square, mountain and moor.

That was his deed; He did it well; 'What was his creed?' I can not tell.

Blest 'in his basket and his store,' In sitting down and rising up; When more he got, he gave the more.

Withholding not the crust and cup. He took the lead, In each good task: 'What was his creed?' I did not ask.

His charity was like snow, Soft, white, and sly in its fall; Not like the noisy winds that blow From shivering leaves the trees; a pall

For flower and weed, Dropping below, 'What was his creed?' The poor may know.

He had great faith in loaves of bread, For hungry people, young and old; And hope inspired kind words he said, To him he sheltered from the cold.

For he must feed, As well as pray, 'What was his creed?' I can not say.

In words he did not put his trust, In faith his words he never wrote; He loved to share his cup and crust, With all mankind who needed it.

In time of need, A friend was he, 'What was his creed?' He told not me.

He put his trust in Heaven, and Worked ever on with head and hand; And what he gave in charity Sweetened his sleep and daily bread.

Let us take heed, For life is brief, 'What was his creed?' What his belief?

AUNT DEBORAH.

'My dear fellow, I am more concerned for you than you can imagine. I wish it were in my power to help you.'

'Don't mention it, Wat. I have been imprudent and extravagant, and suppose I deserve the consequences.'

'You should have been wiser than to fall under Howell's influence; but then you know him so well as the rest of us. As for the betting at the races—why, a debt of honor must be paid, if course.'

'Of course!' Out the speaker looked lugubriously out of the window, and drummed with his fingers on the sill.

'The question is,' resumed his friend, 'how is this to be done, since your uncle refuses to help you?'

'Why, I must dispose of my personal property I possess—my watch, books, and so forth—and so pay, as far as the money will go. And then I shall join Tyrell's party for the West, and go stoutly to work and show my uncle that I am fit for something.'

'Rather a Quixotic plan. What's the use or necessity of going West?'

'I am sick of this place. You know, Wat, I'm not used to being in debt, and it galls a fellow more than you'd believe an idea of to lose his self respect, and be perpetually dogged and dunned. Why, it has actually made me ill.'

Vaughan looked anxiously at his friend.

'So it has. I noticed the change in you as soon as you entered the room; though it is, no doubt, partly from over-work under that old screw, Sands. The idea of his turning you off on account of a little frolic!'

'The frolic may have been carried too far,' admitted the other, frankly. 'At any rate, it will serve as a lesson for the future,' he added, philosophically.

Vaughan walked thoughtfully up and down the room, then, abruptly stopped.

'Rives, I've thought of something. Suppose I get you a loan from my Aunt Deborah?'

'Not for the world!'

'She's ever so rich, and wouldn't miss it. Besides, she has never refused me anything. You've heard me speak of my Aunt Deborah?'

'I don't remember, though I've heard that you had a rich maiden aunt, with whom you were a great favorite. But as to the loan, Walter—I won't hear it! I mean to go to work and make money to pay my own debts.'

'You'll have an awful time of it on in those Western wilds.'

'I can bear it,' with a shrug. Vaughan resumed his walk.

He was, as he had said, greatly concerned to see his friend in this strait, and still more so at the thought of losing his society—for he knew Rives to be in earnest about going West.

He was now thinking how this could be prevented. His friend, an easy, generous, open-handed fellow, had, for the first time in his life, been led into what sober-minded people regard as evil ways. He had fallen into society not the most desirable; had been led into betting heavily on a friend's horse at the races; had given champagne suppers, and gotten himself so deeply into debt that his uncle, who had received an exaggerated account of it all, had refused to assist, or even to see him. Added to this, he had lost his place as banking-clerk, and was now, as has been seen, thrown

upon his own resources to make his way in the world.

'The worst of it, to me,' he presently remarked, gravely, 'is that I have offended my uncle. He has been as kind to me as a father, and deserved something better of me. But he shall yet see that I am not ungrateful, and that, though tripping once, I can and will stand alone like a man.'

Vaughan turned round suddenly, as though not having heard his friend's words, his face illuminated as with a brilliant inspiration.

'I say, Rives, I've an idea. If you won't accept a loan from my Aunt Deborah, why, suppose—suppose you marry her!'

Rives stared at him in amazement. 'She's a first-rate good soul—the best and dearest of rich spinsters!' continued Wat, earnestly, and a little excited. 'I don't see why you shouldn't marry her, if she can be induced to have you.'

'Wat, I hope you're not in earnest in this extraordinary proposal,' remarked Rives, gravely. 'You ought to know me sufficiently to be sure that I would never marry a woman for her money—not even a young woman; but an old maid—why, it's preposterous!'

Wat laughed a little, but resumed, staunchly: 'You are—let me see—twenty-eight, or thereabouts—'

'Twenty-seven only!' corrected Rives, with emphasis.

'Well that doesn't form so very very great a disparity in your ages. And for the rest—why, Aunt Deborah is no beauty, I must admit, but she is remarkably pleasant-looking, clever and agreeable, and the best hearted creature in the world, though a little eccentric.'

Rives slightly shrugged his shoulders.

And you really think that, with her cleverness, she would marry a young fellow like me?' he said, sarcastically.

'Why not, if you could induce her to like you sufficiently? As I said, Aunt Deborah is peculiar in her tastes and opinions; but, con'ring to think of it, I am sure she would appreciate you.'

'How is it that she has never married?'

'Well,' said Vaughan, slowly, 'she has lived a very retired life, and, in fact, I may as well confess, she admitted to me that she never had but one offer, and as she was at the time only eighteen, and the suitor a bald-headed old widower, she very sensibly declined.'

'Poor lady! It's unfortunate she could not find some one to suit her. I always pity old maids, and treat them as kindly and respectfully as possibly. But as to my marrying Miss Deborah—Pshaw! Wat, say no more about it.'

'Very well, if you won't be persuaded; but you have no idea how much you lose by it. Why, Aunt Debby is the richest single lady that I know and possesses, besides her funded property, one of the finest estates in the country, with a separate farm, and a charming little shooting and fishing-box, which in the fall she places at the disposal of her male relatives—Why, hello!—Wat gave an Indian whoop, which startled his friend—'I wonder I did not think of it before! Now, suppose, Rives, you go down to Elm wood—my aunt's place—and take up your abode in the hunting-box until I come, which will be in about two weeks?'

'Why, Wat, you are crazy!'

'Not a bit of it. Aunt Debby is always pleased to have the cottage occupied. She says it keeps it from moulding, and I know that it is not engaged this fall. I'll write to her at once, and say that I want it for an invalid friend, and she'll be delighted. What better could you do, since it must be six weeks at least, before Tyrell's party sets out for the West? You can take your servant down with you—that devoted fellow, who is so clever at cooking—if he will follow you.'

'Cicero? Yes, he will follow me anywhere; and I confess, Wat, I should enjoy it, if I were sure it would not incommode your good aunt. I would not for the world intrude upon her.'

'Oh, never fear! The cottage is in the midst of a wood, by the river side, and nearly a mile from the house, and quite out of sight. I'll write this very hour, and meantime you give up your boarding-house, and come and share my rooms with me; and so it is all arranged,' concluded the young man, gleefully rubbing his hands.

His confidence in his aunt was not misplaced. In two days he received from that estimable lady a reply to his letter, placing the cottage at his friend's disposal, and adding that though she was herself at this time absent from home on a brief visit to a sick friend, she had written to her housekeeper to air and prepare the cottage, and supply it with a few additional conveniences, suitable to an invalid.

And so, all objections being removed, Philip Rives went down to Elmwood accompanied by his friend Vaughan, to show him the way and put him in possession.

It was a charming little rustic cot-

tage, with a great stone chimney and portico, covered with blossoming creepers. A little lawn sloped to the narrow river, famous for its fish; and the wood was so near that its deep green shadows fell across it at noonday. Within it was simply and prettily furnished, and thoroughly comfortable.

Vaughan showed his friend the chimneys and gables of his aunt's mansion at a distance—the woodland intervening.

'I am glad we are no nearer,' Rives said. 'In my present state of mind and body I hardly feel as though I could do the agreeable to your good aunt.'

'All right! By the time that I reappear you will be your fascinating self again, and then I'll introduce you to aunt,' said Wat.

And he went back to the city that evening.

A few days thereafter Rives, strolling about the wood, found himself nearer the mansion than he had supposed. Remembering that Miss Deborah Vaughan was from home, he ventured nearer for a better view of the fine old house and grounds; but to his surprise he saw a handsomely-dressed lady, past middle age, and very tall and dignified, cutting roses on a terrace and dropping them into a basket carried by a young lady in a plain gray dress and garden hat.

'So Miss Deborah has returned home,' he thought, as he rather listlessly withdrew out of the range of her vision, 'and brought some companion or poor relation with her. A gay life she must lead here, poor thing!'

On the day following he made an excursion to the neighboring village for the purchase of fishing-rods. In returning, he saw a young lady approaching on horseback—the same whom he had seen on the previous evening, he was sure; and at the same time an old gentleman passed him on a sober-looking horse. The two met a short distance in front of him. He could not avoid hearing their words as he passed:

'I am glad to see you looking so well, Miss Agnes. And how is my good friend, your Aunt Deborah?'

The girl replied in a voice so sweet that Rives involuntarily turned to look at her. And he turned again after going a short distance to see her galloping down the road, and to admire her fine form and the easy, graceful carriage which, to his experienced eye, bespoke the perfect horsewoman.

'I should enjoy riding with that girl,' he thought. 'If only I had Chevalier here! I dare say she would not object to an escort, considering her secluded life. Wonder if she's dependent on the old lady? I'll write to Wat and ask her she is.'

He found himself thinking of her more than once that evening.

'She isn't exactly pretty—but what an interesting face; and what a sweet voice she has! Wonder if she sings! Plainly dressed; should think Miss Debby might bestow upon her some of her own finery. Afraid she has a hard time of it with that stiff old lady. When Wat comes I'll get acquainted; and try to make it as agreeable for her as I can, poor girl!'

The acquaintance was nearer than he thought. Sitting one evening on a rustic bench, considerably without the domains of his fishing-box, he heard a light step near, and looked up from his book to see 'Miss Agnes' appear from behind a clump of laurel, and pause immediately in front of him with a look of startled surprise.

'Pardon me!' Philip hastened to say, as he arose. 'I am exceedingly sorry I have intruded. And, to relieve your apprehension, allow me to explain that I am Philip Rives at present, by Miss Vaughan's kindness, an occupant of the fishing cottage below.'

The young lady blushed a little, and smiled.

'I thought as much when, after the first glance, I saw that you were not a tramp,' she said. 'Of course I have heard my aunt speak of Mr. Walter Vaughan's invalid friend. I hope your health is improving in your country retreat.'

He answered that he felt much better, and that he took considerable exercise—had in fact to-day fatigued himself with walking, and hence his trespass upon a spot which he had suspected of being frequented by some one.

'It is, I confess, a favorite haunt of mine,' the young lady replied very pleasantly; 'but I would not, on any account, drive you away after your fatiguing walk.'

And then there was just the least bit of archness in the last words, as her glance seemed to take in the tall, stalwart frame and manly bearing of 'Mr. Walter Vaughan's friend.'

So the two sat on the rustic bench under the elm and chatted, touching lightly here and there on many and various topics, until Rives was surprised and delighted at his companion's intelligence, and fascinated with the sweet, feminine way in which she expressed herself.

When he ventured to inquire whether she did not find this secluded country life a little too lonesome, her

reply was that it was her own choice; that her Aunt Deborah often urged her to a more sociable life, but that she was satisfied with what she had—books, flowers and unlimited freedom on this beautiful estate. Not but that she would enjoy society also, if it were of the sort that she desired, but frankly, people in general did not seem to appreciate her. And then she laughed, in a careless way, as she added that she was too independent to be generally admired.

'Do you come often to this spot?' Rives inquired, observing her gather her mantle about her, preparatory to leaving.

'Very often; but I have other haunts quite as pleasant, and will give this one to you, as you appear to like it.'

He assured her he should find the place much more agreeable if she would continue her visits, and that, in fact, he felt rather lonesome at the cottage.

'Why don't you come up to the house and get acquainted with Aunt Deborah?' she inquired.

He replied that he had had a glimpse of his friend Vaughan's aunt, and had been a little awe-stricken by her imposing appearance, connected with all that he had heard of her wealth, goodness and cleverness.

'Your friend Vaughan's aunt isn't good or clever enough to frighten people,' Agnes said, laughing. 'She is a plain, kind-hearted soul, and one who likes to make people happy when it is in her power to do so. She would be glad to see you, and make you welcome to her house.'

But Rives decided to wait till Walter's arrival; and meantime would Miss Agnes allow him to come to this spot to-morrow and bring the new book he had been speaking of?

And so it fell out that these young people met again and again; and the young man found himself each time more interested in Miss Deborah Vaughan's poor niece and companion, for she had told him that she was an orphan, and had been brought up by this aunt and a dear uncle, now no more.

He wrote to Walter and made a confidant of him, and finally declared his intention of asking Agnes to become his wife, if she would not object to sharing the life of a Western settler. He was sure of succeeding in the new life he contemplated, and they could be very happy in the simple and primitive way of living for which he thought they both had a taste.

Walter laughed outrageously on reading this epistle. Then he hastily scribbled off the following answer: 'DEAR PHIL—If you won't be persuaded to marry Aunt Deborah and wealth, and are resolved upon Agnes and poverty, go ahead. But Agnes is a good girl, and will make a good wife—if you can get her—for she has not the highest opinion of masculinity in general, and I have heard her say that she would never marry except for love, and didn't expect ever to meet with a man whom she could love.'

'Shall be with you this day week, Meantime, success to you. W. V.'

On that day week, accordingly, Mr. Walter Vaughan made his appearance at the Elmwood fishing cottage, where Cicero, with many Chesterfieldian bows informed him that his master was gone for a solitary walk down the stream.

Walter required no further information, and boldly proceeding in the direction indicated, as one familiar with the locality, impudently presented himself in presence of the two lovers, who were seated, hand in hand, on the rustic bench under the elm tree.

He extended a hand to each. Rives cordially grasped it; but his eyes opened a little as he beheld Agnes hide her face on her friend's shoulder, with an odd sort of little half laugh, half-sob, while the latter put his arm about her and kissed her tenderly.

'Don't be jealous, old fellow,' said Walter, laughing, noting the sudden change in his friend's expressive countenance.

'Nor am I—only— Well, really, I must say that I was not prepared for this. Agnes never mentioned that you were cousins.'

'Nor are we,' answered Walter, still laughing.

Rives looked very icy and dignified, and Agnes raised her face and stood apart, blushing and laughing a little.

'No,' repeated Walter, 'we are not cousins. And as you don't appear as well acquainted with this young lady as you ought to be under existing circumstances, allow me to introduce her. My aunt, Miss Deborah Agnes Vaughan.'

Rives actually turned pale.

'Walter, this is a joke.'

'Not a bit of it. She is really the Aunt Deborah of whom I spoke to you, and whom I wished you to marry.'

'But—but you said your aunt was rich! said Rives, looking extremely bewildered, and still incredulous.

'So she is. She is owner of this estate and a large fortune besides, left her, three years ago, by her uncle.

Isn't it so, Aunt Debby?'

'But, persisted Rives, 'I have heard Agnes call her Aunt Deborah.'

'The elderly lady whom you see on the terrace is really my Aunt Deborah Vaughan, after whom, and after my dear uncle's wife, Agnes, I am called,' now said Agnes. 'Only uncle, and aunt, and Walter, ever called me Debby. It was their pet baby name for me. To every one else I am Agnes.'

'And why have you concealed all this from me?' inquired Rives, reproachfully.

'Let Walter explain,' was the half shy answer. 'I am going home now to tell Aunt Deborah that you gentlemen will come to tea in an hour, seven o'clock, Walter, sharp! You know we keep early hours here. And so, au revoir!' she added, half-saucily, as she disappeared amid the laurels.

And then Vaughan explained to his friend that no deceit had, in the first instance, been practiced upon him. Rives had simply himself fallen into the error of mistaking 'Aunt Deborah' for an old maid, on which it had occurred to Walter that it would be a good joke to allow him to remain under that impression until introduced to the lady at Elmwood. He had, in writing to his youthful aunt, informed her of his plan, and also of the horror with which Rives had spoken of marrying for money.

'You see,' Vaughan continued 'my little aunt—who is barely twenty, by-the-by—ever since she came into this property, has had the greatest dread of being courted and married for her money. And when, accidentally meeting you in the wood, she discovered that you took her for a poor relation of the rich Miss Deborah Vaughan, and that despite this supposed poverty you evidently liked her—why, how can you blame her for allowing you to remain under that delusion, especially when I, to whom she wrote all about it, advised it? Why don't you see, my dear fellow, that nothing could have turned out more happily, since you have unconsciously proven to Debby that you love her for herself alone? And you've got a treasure, Phillip, worth all the fortunes in the world; for, as I told you, she is the best, and cleverest, and sweetest little soul on earth.'

'So she is—bless her!' interrupted Rives. 'Only,' he added, almost regretfully, 'I could almost wish that she was the poor girl I took her for. I had formed such a delightful picture of what our life would be—a cottage, beautified with roses—I supporting her by the work of my own hands, and she—'

'Bending over a hot fire in summer, cooking pork and cabbage. Come now, be satisfied with things as they are!'

'I will try,' said Rives, with a look of resignation. 'And my uncle—'

'Your uncle I have seen, and he is all remorse for what he calls his harshness to you, and is eager to see and embrace you.'

And Philip Rives certainly did look very happy, as that evening he for the first time entered the mansion of Elmwood, and was met on its threshold by his betrothed and her stately aunt.

A Pen Behind A Mask.

BY EDWARD S. GREGORY.

Many of the older readers of the Golden Days have doubtless heard often the name of 'Junius,' and know that he was a great writer on political subjects in England about a hundred years ago, and that his real name was never discovered. They know, too, that his writings were distinguished by their severity, bitterness, and boldness, and by their free attacks upon great men of the kingdom at a time when the press was under many restraints, which have since been removed.

It will gratify intelligent boy-readers especially, to hear something more, told in a plain way, about the mysterious satirist and his times.

Junius began to write for the Public Advertiser, a newspaper published in London by S. H. Woodwall