

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER.

THE PAST—THE PRESENT—FOR THE FUTURE.

Vol. I.

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY, BY Freeland, both of them with open and honest hearts, ready to join issue and proceed with the doubtful contest.

TERMS OF THE "MESSENGER."

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From the Saturday Evening Post.

MY PENCIL.

"—tis but Jane's sketch."

THE SPIDER CAUGHT IN HIS OWN WEB.

"Yes, 'd in the net himself had twin'd!"—Rokeby

(CONCLUDED.)

It was in vain to attempt at that time to get any thing farther out of Wormsly, and young Clermont, therefore took his leave and went home rather disappointed, but waited patiently for to-morrow or next day, but several to-morrow's came and brought not the expected message from Wormsly.

A month elapsed, and still the promised satisfactory information was withheld. Clermont became uneasy—unbosomed himself to a friend, an eminent counsellor at law; that friend heard his story with astonishment, and still recommended to him, as a duty he owed to himself and sisters, to reiterate his request to Mr. Wormsly, and even formally demand the required explanation, and the evidence upon which it was founded, as a matter of unquestionable right.

But if Wormsly used prevarication and evasiveness when asked civilly to state the desired information, the authoritative demand made for it excited his ire and wrathful displeasure; and chuckling at the idea that he had entrenched himself behind an impenetrable barrier that no mortal could remove, he gave a reply to Clermont couched in terms which, if not absolutely insulting to his feelings, were evidently dictated by a temper far from conciliatory or accommodating.

Mr. Attorney Freeland, on being made acquainted with this reply, strongly pressed upon young Clermont the apparent mystery that hung over this strange transaction.—"And, my young friend," he continued, "I advise you from the bottom of my heart, not to suffer the matter to rest here, but as you are thus denied the reasonable request you have made in a spirit of amity, I say it is your duty you owe to the memory of your parent, to compel this man without further delay, publicly and before a legal tribunal, to satisfy you he has a clear and honorable title to the estate he holds."

"But, sir, the will—I have seen the will."

"Let him, however, produce it in open court; there is, there must be, in my opinion, something in this transaction not exactly correct; you are welcome to my services should you think proper to resort to the course I recommend, and that you ought to do so, is my firm and honest conviction."

These words sunk into the heart of Clermont, and revolving in his mind the strangeness of the whole affair, and the uncommunicating disposition of the possessor of his father's estate, he at length came to the determination of pursuing his friend's advice, and immediately took the incipient steps necessary to a suit at law for the recovery of final surrender of the property in question.

Wormsly laughed in his sleeve at the temerity of the young man: "Have I not," he asked himself with confident self-complacency, "have I not the power easily to sustain my claims?—who shall dare to question facts, the truth or falsity of which it is impossible can be known to any earthly being but myself? Have I not, hewn the will, first to the children, then to Hartley, who, poor fool, recognized it instantly as the identical one he witnessed, and then to others? And who has ever doubted its authenticity? No! it shall be shown in court, and if the young gentleman will have law, why let him have it to his cost."

The day of trial came, and there was Wormsly and his talented counsel, with looks that spoke the confidence of their cause, and there was young Clermont and his friend

and, perhaps, perplexity of Wormsly, I had made some years afterwards for the who was puzzling himself to discover what purpose of — a — of — but that is the possible end was to be attained by the testimony of one he had never before heard of, and who he thought could know no more of

Mr. Clermont's will than a man in the moon.

However, there he was, and was duly sworn.

"Your name is John Van Alsten?" said Mr. Freeland.

"It is, sir."

"And your profession?"

"A manufacturer of paper."

"Yes, sir," said Freeland, carelessly, "then I presume you are a good judge as to the

quality, and of the prices of that useful article:—will you have the goodness to look

at this, on which this will is drawn, and just give me your opinion of it, if you please, sir?"

Wormsly chuckled, and his counsel betrayed a smile of derision, while the Judges could not conceive what the learned and distinguished barrister was aiming at.

"It is good paper, sir," returned the witness, as he examined it in compliance with the request made of him—"very good paper," said he, smiling, "it is some, I perceive, of my own—some of my earliest manufacture."

"Some of your own manufacture, is it, Mr. Van Alsten?—Pray how long have you been a maker of paper?"

"I commenced in the year eighteen hundred and three, sir."

"In eighteen hundred and three;—but you mean that you then entered into business on your own footing:—you do not mean to say that you manufactured no paper previous to that time?"

"I made my employer's paper, sir, as an apprentice; but none which I called my own."

"What am I to understand by paper that you called your own?"

"Such as come from my establishment, having my name and other marks upon it."

"But you manufactured paper, with your name and marks upon it so early as seventeen hundred and ninety-six—did you not, sir?"

"Sir!" said the witness in astonishment, "seventeen hundred and ninety-six, sir!—why, sir, that was before I entered on my apprenticeship."

"And the paper on which this will is written is your own manufacture?—you are certain of that?"

"Aye, sir, I make oath to it confidently, for it has a private mark known only to myself—besides, sir, you observe there is my name, and the —"

"Year in which it was manufactured!" interrupted Freeland, with an emphasis that caused Wormsly to shake to the inmost recesses of his soul—"eighteen hundred and four!" he continued—"a will drawn up and executed on paper which was not in existence till eight years after its date!—a most wonderful miracle this, may it please your honors!"

Wormsly turned pale with conscious guilt; but in a moment recovering from the agitation into which he had been thrown, he thought of the possibility which still existed of escaping from this tremendous dilemma. The first copy he had made of the fraudulent instrument not pleasing him, he drew another, and had filed them both, as he supposed, carefully away together, while he gazed with inexpressible delight on the flames of his chimney fire devouring the third one.—Hastily drawing another paper from his pocket, therefore, he observed—

"Really, sir, I may have given you, sir, a copy of that gentleman's will instead of the original—look at this, if you please, sir."

He trembled as he handed the paper over to Freeland, for it was indeed a desperate effort;—the paper might or might not contain the same evidence of forgery as the other—if the former, he must have stood self-condemned—but in the latter case, he had still a chance left, and a good one too, of coming off conqueror over the victims of his avarice.

Freeland opened and keenly glanced at the material upon which this instrument was written, under the hope of detecting a like proof, upon that also, of the iniquitous deception; but alas! there was indeed the date of its manufacture, and that was a year anterior to the date of the instrument itself.

"There is no such mark upon this!"—he at length said, heavily and thoughtfully.

"Is there any mark?" inquired one of the judges.

"Yes, your honor."

"What is it?"

"Seventeen hundred and ninety-five."

"Aye, aye," exclaimed Wormsly, chuckling, "that is the real, original will, sir—that

is it, sir—how ridiculous is me to hand you

the copy, sir—this is the copy only, sir, which

he saw the child himself, and that it was not

larger than a goose egg."

L. S.

We learn from the Albany Daily Advertiser

that a fracas took place there on Wednesday

between Mr. Merdeau Myers, a member of the

Assembly from New York, and Richard M'Carthy,

the flour inspector of this city. The former

made an assault on the latter, with a cow skin

in South Market street. Blows and fistfights ensued, and the parties were separated. The

cause of the quarrel is not stated.

A child was born about three or four weeks

since somewhere near Athens, Tenn. whose

head was double. It had two mouths, two no-

des and four eyes—but had only two ears, two

legs, and one arm. Mr. W. J. Bowman, the

gentleman who gave us this information, says

he saw the child himself, and that it was not

larger than a goose egg.