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PHILOSOPHY.

I shut my heart against all sorrow, and I said,
"I will be happy whatever befall."
Aloof between the darting of my flock was laid
Beneath the sombre pall.

Then grieved my aching heart in vincerant despair;
My tears gushed from their source in sudden stream.
Thus passed, once more I made resolve that naught should vex
Disturb my tranquil dream.

I neared Joy, but thence came a pilgrim grey;
And brought such griefs as ordinary we've felt yesterday
A bed of violets.

At last, full tired of seeking Joy and failing therein,
I said, "Oh, thing of hate! I rather come
With me today—for God is good, one on the morrow—
Made of my heart thy home."

Then Joy outspread her wings to follow where I fled;
And thus flew by as in a fairy's dream;
The Pleasant sky seemed filled with songs melodious;
And life was for supreme.

There's wealth in poverty how rich are they who own
Contented hearts, and strength to bear their lot.
And scarce, yet great—prophets a throne—
Were happier be a cot.

So would I teach my heart the sweet philosophy
That chooses blessings on the lowest rung;
If rightly seek, the man's best principle to die
And see his Maker's face!

Of what avail is it to know that life shall end?
Our lives are reckoned but by deeds—not years
Enough to know that God to every heart will send
Its share of joy and tears.

—R. H. Remington in Good Housekeeping.

A MARITAL EPISODE.

Yes, Raoul had certainly married for love, and he had thrown himself with such enthusiasm into his new life that in a day all his relations with the outer world were shattered—like glass. He shut himself in blissfulness, turned the key on the inside and tasted his happiness drop by drop. When by chance you encountered him he hardly gave you a word; he seemed to be afraid of his past, and took care to avoid all those who could possibly recall it to mind.

Raoul was thus for some eight months. Toward the middle of the six he had a relapse into former habits. One met him more frequently. He had resumed his cigars, walked more leisurely and did not disdain to cast an occasional glance at a pretty woman.

This was not because he was less happy in his home or loved less his pretty little wife. Oh, no, not at all; for whenever I met him he assured me earnestly "that his wife was a treasure."

When a husband says this so positively there is no room to doubt that he is still a lover. You do not agree with me? A man, you say, who announces thus that his wife is a treasure is a man who blows upon ice or ashes already cold. Ah, well, perhaps you are right; when the fire flames you warms himself and generally says nothing.

To tell the truth, Raoul & I began to blow upon his fire. The sweetness that had intoxicated him nine months ago appeared to him now a little insipid, the warm temperature about him a little heavy, and when his wife came softly behind him and kissed him on the brow he began to gather what he had never noticed before—that she ruffled his hair. He said nothing, but was irritated, annoyed; all the more so as the tender little woman, being nothing herself, after her kiss would close his eyes with her little hands and laugh like a gleeful child.

"Come, come, Louise," said he one morning, finding it impossible to be silent longer, "do you not see that I am reading?"

"Then say, 'My dear little wife, I adore you' and I'll let you go," Louise returned, with the pout of an angel.

"But I have said it five hundred and one times already, and to be frank, Louise, I desire to be forced to repeat it every quarter of an hour." And he stooped for his book, which had fallen to the floor, and closing as it fell, slipped him to lose five minutes more seeking the place where he had left off, which so much increased his bad humor that ten minutes later when they sat down to lunch he found the soup decidedly too salt, and said so.

"Why, no, Raoul; I do not find it so," Louise returned innocently.

"But I do, and that settles it," Raoul declared peremptorily, pouring water in his bouillon with a determined air. "The Tuileries of his balance, he did not look up the note, as one usually does with letter's effusions, but replaced it carefully in the envelope and slipped it into his pocket. Stranger still, and a still more difficult thing to explain, he was charming all the rest of that evening.

That letter and Amanda—whom he could not recall the least in the world—passed to him, apparently, the gayest moments. He was flattered, though he would never have admitted it, that there were some who did not believe the old spirit entirely dead in him.

"I shall certainly go to that rendezvous," he told himself, "and it is well for me that I am not like some men. Very few indeed could resist a moment of coldness, which for me will be only a moment of frolic. To go as I am is to cast out like dross. Ah, how lucky it is for me, too, that my wife is an angel! She does not suspect, poor darling, that the best in the world." He turned to look at her bending tranquillity over her embroidery and murmuring upon, "No, not the best in the world!" And with exaggerating air he began to pace the salon, humming to himself with satisfaction like one who is armed to the teeth and who tells himself, "I fell to one; it is only because I am good—how good they do not know." And really, feeling himself at that moment of a generous essence, he was happy as a king.

Next morning, while breakfasting, Raoul could not resist the temptation to express what a rock embankment was, and how to cook it.

"If you would like one this evening," said his young wife, "suppose I try it."

"No, thanks. I prefer it it, but do not work it. Moreover, it would not be possible this evening," and he thrilled with pleasure at putting his finger on the right place, remembered that he at least would not fail.

"But why not this evening?" Louise persisted.

"Have I not told you, then? I met Paul Vaucourt today, and promised to dine with him tonight. His brother, he says, has just returned from Mexico. I tried to excuse myself, but he insisted so much that I couldn't get out of it, you know."

"Indeed!" said Louise.

Presently Raoul rose, kissed his wife and started out, turning carefully as he drew by call back that may be he would not go after all, he really could not tell.

Nevertheless toward 8 o'clock the jaded husband returned.

"I'm going," said he. "Paul would be sorely vexed if I failed to dine with him. And you, my little Louise, you are not to worry. Besides, I've thought of something—go to your aunt's at dinner. Jean will bring you home, and I'll take you there before I start. How does that suit you?"

"Perfectly; but it is needless to trouble yourself to escort me there I can easily go alone."

But a hot tear bore Raoul, from a sense, perhaps, of duty, suddenly disappeared into a corner, and set out for the Bois de Vincennes.

He was fifty paces farther it seemed to him, as he hastened to the appointed place, when he saw a lady with a cloak, and a cane, and set out for the Bois de Vincennes.

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"Monsieur is alone?" asked one of them affably, advancing to meet him.

"Yes; but I expect some one. No. 24 free, is it not?"

"Yes, monsieur." He threw open the door, and Raoul entered joyously.

"Ah! monsieur will not order meat?" demanded the man, dispelling the moon with a flourish.

"Not now. I'll wait," and he threw down his hat and looked about him.

The same central cabinet that he had seen a quarter of an hour before, the paper and gilt, a sofa, with three cushions, some two with a clock in gilt bronze, two flower pots with flowers, an upright piano out of tune, a carpet where all the colors of the rainbow fought to be their frame, and a table in the center, laid with covers for two. The forks were rubbed and tarnished from service in hundreds of months, the crystal heavy, before each a "serviette" and on the edges of the plates and the rim of the "serviettes" ran the name of the restaurant swelled in gilt.

Something in the surroundings recalled to Raoul the disgust that he had once felt, but certainly would feel no more; nevertheless he got up and opened wide the window to freshen the atmosphere, which was unbearably a little clean.

"How curious!" he murmured, "that I had forgotten all this!"

And he began to whistle softly to chase away fancies so pleasant that seemed coming to mind. Somehow or other his gayety, too, seemed leaving him. He drew out his watch to see the time—a quarter past 7, and he was distinctly hungry. What if that letter after all was a joke? A joke! He had not thought of it that way, but maybe after all it was better it should be so.

Quiet as it was now—and to say aloud—to No. 3 it was very gay indeed in the adjoining cabinet, the loud clatter of plates and clinking glasses mingling at times with gay bursts of laughter.

At last a rustle of skirts approached in the corridor. At the same moment the door flew back, a lady entered precipitately and fell, evidently a prey to force embarrassment, heaviously upon the sofa.

A lady—undoubtedly. Uneasy and puzzled—why he knew not—Raoul advanced to meet her. She raised her hand, the veil was off, and—Louise was before him!

Louise, serene, smiling, unruffled as ever and sweetly murmuring:

"I was dying, you see, Raoul, to taste a filet chateaubriand, "superb prepared."

How they settled it and what explanations were made I have not an idea. But one thing is certain, Raoul no longer "thinks over the traces," he is happy and content as the day is long, and Louise, as generous as she was wise, has never once since that little dinner in a restaurant so much as whispered "filets chateaubriand" in her husband's presence.

—Translated for Argonaut from the French of Gustave Droz by E. C. Waggener.

A Bear That Selects for Charity.

A passenger on the Fulldonne train was telling about a collie dog that is passed all over England to the railway guards and has collected as much as $1,000 a year for a charitable institution. The collie carries a money bag on his collar and with a pleasant look and wag of his tail invites strangers to drop a coin in the slot. With another wag he expresses his thanks and trots off to collect in front of some one else.—New York Sun.

Shoes with Stone Soles.

A Berlin shoemaker has invented an artificial stone sole for footwear. It is made of a solution of some kind of powdered cement and pure white quartz sand. A pair of such shoes will last for years on any pavement and are said to be elastic and easy on the feet.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The development of the petroleum interest in Peru has been sufficient to warrant the laying of pipe lines between the wells and the seaports.

NERVOUS DEBILITY.

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