NATURE VERSUS ART.

[illegible]

"Yes" "Yes" "Yes"

"But what does thou wish, my Francois?" asked the mother. "Let us see; there is certainly something them wouldst like to have. Tell it tell it me! to me, thy mother." As she laid her cheek on the pillow of the sick boy and whispered this softly in his ears it if was a secret. Then the child, with an old ancient straightening himself up in his bed and stretching out his hand eagerly toward some invisible thing, replied suddenly in an ardent tone, at the same time supplicating and imperative:

"I want Bozo Bozo!"

Bozo Bozo!

Poor Madeleine threw a frightened look toward her husband. What do the little one say? Was it the delirium, the frightful delirium, which had come back again?

Bozo Bozo!

She did not know what that meant, and she was afraid of these singular words which the child repeated with a sickly persistence, as if, not having dared until now to formulate his dream, he grasped the present this with irritable obstinacy.

"Yes, Bozo-Bozo! Bozo-Bozo-I want Bozo-Bozo!"

The mother had seized Jacques' hand and spoke very low, as if demented.

"What does that mean, Jacques? He is hot?

But the father laid on his rough, workingman's face a smile almost happy, but astonished, but the smile of a gentleman-poet who foresees possibility of liberty.

Bozo-Bozo! He remembered well the morning of Easter Monday when he had taken Francois to the circus. He had still in his ears the child's outcrops of joy, the happy laugh of the animed boy, when the clown, the beautiful clown all spangled with gold and with a great gilded tatter-fly sparkling, many colored, on the back of his black costume, skipped across the ring, gave the top to a rider or held himself motionless and out on the sand, his head down and his feet in the air. Or again he bowed up to the chandelier some soft kiss kiss which he caught adroitly on his head, where they formed, one by one, a garland and at each jest, like a refrain belabouring up his intelligent and droll face, he uttered the same cry, repeated the same word, accompanied now and then by a burst from the orchestra, Bozo-Bozo!

Bozo-Bozo! and each time that it rang out, Bozo-Bozo, the audience burst out into laughter and the little one joined in with his hoarse little laugh. Bozo-Bozo! It was this Bozo-Bozo, it was the clown, the circus, it was this favorite of a large part of the city that little F[illegible] wished to see and to have and whom he could not have and could not see. Since he was lying here without strength in his white bed.

In the evening Jacques Legrand brought the child a pointed clown, all studded with spangles, which he had bought in a passageway and which was very expensive. It was the price of four of his working days! But he would have given twenty, thirty, he would have given the price of a year's labor to bring back a smile to the pale lips of the sick child.

The child looked at the plaything a moment as it glittered on the white cover of the bed, then said sadly:

"It is not Bozo-Bozo! I want to see Bozo-Bozo!"

Ah! if Jacques could have wrapped him up in his blanket, could have carried him to the circus, could have shown him the clowns dancing under the lighted chandelier and have said to him, Look! He did better, Jacques, he went to the circus, demanded the address of the clown, and timidly, his legs shaking with fear, he climbed, one by one, the steps which led to the apartment of the artist at Montmartre. It was very bold this that Jacques was going to do. But after all the comedians go to sing and recite their monologues in drawing rooms, at the homes of the great lords. Perhaps the clown—ah, if he only would—would consent to come and say goodby to Francois. No matter, how would they receive him, Jacques Legrand here at Bozo-Bozo's house!

He was no longer Bozo-Bozo! He was M. Moreau, and, in the artistic dwelling, the books, the engravings, the elegance was like a choice decoration around the charming man of his present Jacques in his office like that of a doctor.

Jacques looked, but did not recognize the clown, and turned and twisted his felt hat between his fingers. The other waited. Then the father excused himself. "It was astonishing what he came there to ask; it could not be pardon, excuse. But, to object, it was concerning the little one. A sick little one, monsieur. And so intelligent! Always the first at school, except in arithmetic, which he did not understand. A dreamer, this little one, do you see? Yes, a dreamer. And the proof, wait, the proof."

Jacques now hesitated, stammered; but he gathered up his courage and said brusquely:

"The proof is that he wishes to see you, that he thinks only of you, and that you are there before him like a star which he would like to have and that he looks"—

When he had finished, the father was deadly pale, and he had great drops on his forehead. He dared not look at the clown who remained with his eyes fixed on the workman. And what was he going to say, this Bozo-Bozo! Was he going to dismiss him, take him for a fool and put him out the door!

"You live!"

"Oh, very near! Street of the Abesses."

"Come!" said the other. "Your boy wants to see Bozo-Bozo! Ah, well, he is going to see Bozo-Bozo."

* * *

When the door opened and showed the clown, Jacques Legrand cried out joyfully to his son:

"Francois, be happy, child! See, here he is, Bozo-Bozo."

A look of gladness came into the child's face. He raised himself on his mother's arm and turned his head toward the two men who appeared, questioning for a moment, who it was to the side of his father—this gentleman in an overcoat, whom good, pleasant time he did not know.

When they said to him, "It is Bozo-Bozo" he clearly felt back on the pillow and contained Bozo, his eyes fixed, his beautiful large, blue eyes which seemed beyond the walls of the little room and were always seeking the spangles and the butterfly of Bozo-Bozo, like a lover who pursues his dream.

"Yes," replied the child with a voice which was no longer dry, but full of despair, "yes, it is not Bozo-Bozo."

The clown, standing near the little bed, threw it on the child an earnest look, very grave, but of an inexpressible sweetness.

He shook his head, looked at the anxious father, the great sorrow mother, and said, smiling, "He is right, this is not Bozo-Bozo!" and then he went out.

"I cannot see him, I will never see Bozo-Bozo any more!" repeated the child whose little voice spoke to the angels. "Bozo-Bozo is perhaps there, there, where little Francois will soon go."

And suddenly—it was only half an hour since the clown had disappeared—the door opened quickly and in his black, spangled clothes, his yellow cap a-his head, the gilded butterfly on' breast and on his back, with a [illegible] as big as the pomm of a money sex and a painted face, Bozo-Bozo, the true Bozo-Bozo, the Bozo-Bozo of the circus, the Bozo-Bozo of the popular neighborhood, the Bozo-Bozo of little Francois—Bozo-Bozo appeared.

Lying on his little white bed the child clapped his thin little hands, laughing, crying, happy, saved, with a joy of life in his eyes and cried "Bozo!" with his arms your gaiety which all at once kindled up like a torch.

"Bozo-Bozo! It is he, it is he, this time! Here is Bozo-Bozo! Long live Bozo-Bozo! Good day Bozo-Bozo."

And when the doctor came back he found seated by little Francois' bedside a clown with a pale face who made the little one laugh again and again, and who said to the child while he was stirring a piece of sugar into a cup of medicine:

"Thou knowest if thou dost not drink, little Francois, Bozo-Bozo will not come back any more."

So the child drank.

"It is not good!"

"Very good! Thanks, Bozo-Bozo!"

"Doctor," said the clown to the doctor, "do not be jealous. It seems to me that my grimaces will do him as much good as your prescriptions!"

The father and mother wept, but this time from joy.

Until little Francois was on his feet again a carriage stopped every day before the dwelling of a woman in the street of the Abesses at Montmartre, and a man got out with a gay, pensive face, enveloped in an overcoat with the collar turned back, and underneath it one could see a clown's costume.

"What do I owe you, monsieur?" said Jacques at last to the master clown when the child took his first walk, "for now I owe you some thing."

The clown stretched out his two soft, herculean hands to the parents.

"A shake of the hand!" said he.

Then placing two great kisses on the once moon rosy cheeks of the child,

"And," laughing, "permission to put on my visiting cards

BOUM-BOUM,
ACTOR OF THE CIRCUS AND PRINCIPAL OF THE ACADEMY OF LITTLE FRANCOIS

—Translated from the French of Jules Claretie for Yankee Blade by Mary Stuart Symonds.

A Time of Failing.

It is rather unpleasant to be a public speaker remark, "My friends—or—I wish to say a few words—or—in this occasion—or." But then it should be remembered that to err is human.—Boston Transcript.

Where Cooling Stations Should Be.

Admiral Bowden-Smith, Royal navy, says that because coal deteriorates very rapidly in hot climates the coaling stations for the British fleet should be on the main routes of ocean commerce, where there will be constant demands for it in peace times, and where a quantity of coal of the best steam quality will always be on hand.—New York Times.

Too Much Risk.

Dickey—What do you think? A man at the door asked me to change a five dollar bill.

Helen—Did you do it?

Dickey—Of course not. He might not have given me the right change, don't you know?—Life.

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