

"One is the work of God, to delight man, and the other is—oh, dear! the other is... well, it's only a mere dead body! None of the great poets have ever written in that dreadful style, Mr. Trevor. Of course, I know that Mr. Corson has done some *powerful* work. But is it right to give people the shudders and the horrors, as he does? Why not have sunshine in poetry, instead of gloom and misery?"

"Sunshine is commonplace," said Arthur Trevor.

"Very," said Mr. Corson.

"Sunshine means hope," declared Leander Sprawle. "It means evolution, development, progress."

"Art is art!" cried Trevor. "Sing of what you please, so long as your *technique* is good, so long as you have the right *chic*, the right *facon*, the right way of putting things!"

"True," said Corson. "I write of skulls and corpses because you can get new effects out of them. They haven't been done to death, like faith, and philanthropy, and freedom. Optimism is so tiresome, nowadays. All the Greeks are dead. Notre Dame stands intact, but the Parthenon is a ruin."

Leander Sprawle shivered. "You can make clever rhymes about charnel-houses," he said, "but that is not poetry. You can deplore the allurements of women with green eyes and stony hearts, but you degrade womanhood while you do so. You—"

"Are you not bored?" whispered Kindelon, in his mellow Irish brogue to Pauline, as he just then stole to her side. "If so, let us walk away together."

Pauline slipped her hand into his proffered arm. "I was not bored," she said, as they moved off, "but I was just beginning to be. Are there nothing but belligerent poets here to-night?"

"Oh, you'll find other sorts of people."

"But, who are these three wranglers,—Mr. Trevor, Mr. Sprawle, and Mr. Corson?"

Kindelon laughed. "They are fanatics," he said. "Each one believes himself a Milton in ability."

"Are they successful?"

"They send poems (with stamps enclosed) to the magazines, and have them rejected. They make believe to despise the magazines, but secretly they would give worlds to see their names in print. Heaven knows, the magazines print rubbish enough. But they are sensible in rejecting Arthur Trevor's poems, which are something in this style—I quote from memory:—

'The hot, fierce tiger-lily madly yearns
To kill with passionate poison the wild moth
That reels in drunken ecstasy above
Its gorgeous bosom....'

"Or in rejecting that bald-pated, posing Corson's trash, which runs like this:—

'Death is far better than the loathsome lot
Of kissing lips that soon must pale and rot,
Of clasping forms that soon must cease their breath
Within the black embrace of haughty death!'

"Or in declining to publish Mr. Leander Sprawle's buncombe, which sounds somewhat after this fashion:—

'Man shall one day develop to a god,
Though now he walks unwinged, unauroled...
To-day we moil and mope—to-morrow's dawn
Shall bring us pinions to outsoar the stars.'

"That's the sort of the thing this brave trio does. All poets are partly mad, of course. But then *they* are mad without being poets; it's this that makes their lunacy so tiresome."

"And are they always quarrelling when they meet?"

"Oh, they do it for effect. They are privately very good friends. They are all equally obscure; they've no cause, yet, to hate one another. If one of them should get a book published before either of the other two, they would probably both abominate him in good earnest."

(To be Continued.)

THE TRIBUNE says that shortly after Miss Alcott's "Little Women" was published, a quiet-looking lady entered a Boston circulating library and asked a lady clerk to pick her out a good book that would rest and amuse her. Naturally "Little Women" was offered, and declined. "It's very nice; you'd like it," urged the clerk. "I should not care to read it," said the other. "But at least look at it." "No," came the answer, firmly and with an odd smile; it is not a book that I should care to read." Then the clerk, pretty angry, walked away to the chief librarian and cried, "There's a woman down there wants a book, and if you want her waited on some one else must do it. I won't." "Why, why not?" "Why, she says, 'Little Women' isn't good enough for her to read." "Do you know who that lady is?" "No, and I don't care." "Well, I'll tell you. That is Louisa M. Alcott. Now go and get her a book."

EVENINGS AT HOME.

GERALDINE.

They nearly strike me dumb,—
I tremble when they come
Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
These boots are Geraldine's—
Think of that!

O, where did hunter win
So delicate a skin
For her feet?
You lucky little kid,
You perished, so you did,
For my sweet.

The fairy stitching gleams
On the sides and in the seams,
And it shows
The Pixies were the wags
Who tipt these funny tags,
And these toes.

What soles to charm an elf!
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
O, how hard he would have tried
For the two!

For Gerry's debonair,
And innocent and fair
As a rose;
She's an angel in a frock,
With a fascinating cock
To her nose.

The simpletons who squeeze
Their extremities to please
Mandarins,
Would positively flinch
From venturing to pinch
Geraldine's.

Cinderella's *lefts and rights*
To Geraldine's were frights;
And I trow,
The damsel, deftly shod,
Has dutifully trod
Until now.

Come, Gerry, since it suits
Such a pretty puss (in boots)
These to don,
Set this dainty hand awhile
On my shoulder, dear, and I'll
Put them on.

—Frederick Locker.

CONCERNING MARK TWAIN.

In 1869 Twain tried journalism for a time in Buffalo, where he held an editorial position on a daily paper. While there he fell in love with a young lady, a sister of "Dan"—made famous in *Innocents Abroad*—but her father, a gentleman of wealth and position, looked unfavourably upon his daughter's alliance with a Bohemian literary character.

"I like you," he said to Mark, "but what do I know of your antecedents? Who is there to answer for you, anyhow?"

After reflecting a few moments, Mark thought some of his old California friends would speak a good word for him. The prospective father-in-law wrote letters of inquiry to several residents of San Francisco, to whom Clemens referred him, and, with one exception, the letters denounced him bitterly, especially deriding his capacity for becoming a good husband. Mark sat beside his fiancée when the letters were read aloud by the old gentleman. There was a dreadful silence for a moment, and then Mark stammered: "Well, that's pretty rough on a fellow, anyhow?"

His betrothed came to the rescue however, and overturned the mass of testimony against him by saying, "I'll risk you, anyhow."

The terrible father-in-law lived in Elmira, New York, and there Mark was married. He had told his friends in the newspaper office at Buffalo, to select him a suite of rooms in a first-class boarding house in the city, and to have a carriage at the depôt to meet the bride and groom. Mark knew they would do it, and gave himself no more anxiety about it. When he reached Buffalo, he found a handsome carriage, a beautiful span of horses and a driver in livery. They drove him up to a handsome house on an aristocratic street, and as the door was opened, there were the parents of the bride to welcome them home. The old folks had arrived on the quiet by a special train. After Mark had gone through the house and examined its elegant finishings, he was notified officially that he had been driven by his own coachman, in his own carriage, to his own house. They say tears