

WOMAN'S ART.

(In Bologna.)

More than three hundred years ago
(Hunt for the place where it tells you so
There in your Baedeker), lived and wrought.
Here in Bologna, a girl, whose thought,
Carved on the stone of a plum, survives
The volumed records of a thousand lives.

Yes, you were shown the frieze, you say.
In San Petronio, the other day.
And the pair of angels that bear her name
Properzia—marvellous works these same,
Being a woman's. But did you know,
Praising the antique cuttings so,
Who made them? Maestro Amico,
Her artist-neighbor, refused to see
Rareness in any work that she.
A woman might plan. "A woman's power
Bends to the sway of the passing hour:
Achieves, but never creates." The stone
Of the quarries was meant for men alone,
Whose genius had gift to shape it: walls
Of churches, basilicas, palace-halls,
Only were ample enough to yield
To limitless skill, the nobler field:
But woman—... a cherry-stone might well
Hold whatsoever she had to tell!"

Misprized and taunted, the maiden's pride
Would none of the marble thus denied.
Nor the canvas grudged. Henceforth she wrought
On the kernel of olive and apricot,
Marvels of frost-like carvings—such
As grew under Benevenuto's touch.
Goto the Casa Grassi: see
The scene of the Passion on Cavalry:
Mark, as you may, the sacred head,
And the Godlike look o'er the features shed.
And honor the art that skilled to trace
Such miracles scarce in an inch's space.

Now puzzle the guide by asking where
Are the wonderful frescoes, vast and rare,
Of her neighbor, the jealous artist, who
Flung her his scorn—... Just so! I knew
His name would be strange to the Bolognese,
—Did ever it reach us over the seas?

Yet woman is weak for Art, you prove,
Since her genius works in a narrow groove;
But if, as the crucial test appears,
It ever outlives three hundred years,
Better thus work than chafe or starve.
—Give her the plum-stone and let her carve!

MARGARET J. PRESTON.

PECCADILLE.

OR, THE THREE DIPLOMATISTS.

(FROM THE FRENCH.)

The following charming story, so characteristically French, is taken from a translation in *Appleton's Journal*.

It was after the events of 1830. The leading question of the day was to persuade Austria to accept the Revolution of July, and the change of dynasty. To conduct this difficult negotiation, the government had chosen Marshal Maison, a brave old soldier of the empire, but more used to the tactics of war than to those of diplomacy and politics. The marshal accepted reluctantly the post confided to him, and, before his departure, he turned his steps toward the hotel of Prince Talleyrand, in order to receive from the Machiavel of the Rue St.-Florentin, his last secret instructions.

When the marshal was announced, the prince was at work in his library. When he heard the name of his visitor, his sly little face assumed an expression of malicious glee, like that which is visible on the features of a naughty child when he sees a chance of tormenting a dog or a bird.

He hastened to change his dressing-gown of wadded brown silk for a more appropriate garb, and he then limped to the *salon* where the marshal awaited him. The latter was standing, clad in the uniform of his grade. His stern, manly face framed in long, white hair, gave him, in spite of his rather ordinary aspect, an appearance of simple, rough dignity.

The prince opened the conversation. It was at first unimportant, as are all conversations. The marshal tried to lead the talk gradually toward politics, but then the prince instantly changed the subject. The marshal's efforts to accomplish the aim of his visit were utterly vain. The more serious he was, the more frivolous became his adversary. There was a sort of struggle between them, a struggle in which, as may be imagined, M. de Talleyrand had all the advantage. If the marshal attempted to speak of alliances to conclude, or of treaties to sign, the prince talked of the *corps de ballet* of the opera, or of other things of the same diplomatic importance.

"How shall I open the question with M. de Metternich?" said the marshal, at last, out of patience.

"Come and see my cabinet of Chinese curiosities," answered Talleyrand, coolly.

The prince had really a very fine collection. Poor marshal! he was obliged to endure all the pagodas, to admire all the teapots, and go into ecstasies before all the screens. Talleyrand watched maliciously the ill-disguised impatience of the old soldier, who silently but heartily cursed all the lacquered waiters and mandarins past, present, and to come!

"That is all," said the prince.

"At last! Heaven be praised!" thought the marshal, and his face beamed with satisfaction.

Talleyrand saw this gleam of joy, and he hastened to add:

"Ah! I think that I have forgotten the most curious thing in my collection, the right slipper of the Princess Fo-Aio, the daughter of the Emperor Ton-Kang. I forgot also the little sailing vessel, which is an exact model in miniature of those that navigate the Yellow River."

And Talleyrand related the history of the slipper, and then entered into a long dissertation upon the progress of navigation in China. The marshal, who could no longer restrain his impatience, fidgeted nervously from one leg to the other.

"You are tired," said the prince, bringing forward a chair. "Will you not take a seat?"

At this the marshal lost all patience. "Sacred! he cried; "for more than an hour you have been telling me stories that do not concern me, and showing me toys that I despise! And whenever I try to talk of my mission you instantly beat a retreat. Do you know that I strongly suspect you, M. le Prince, of making a fool of me?"

These words were uttered still more energetically than we have written them.

"Your mission!" replied Talleyrand, calmly. "Ah! of course, my dear marshal, let us talk of it. Why did you not mention it sooner?"

"How sooner? For more than an hour—"

"I did not understand. I was afraid of boring you by talking business. What I did was for your sake, for you know that business is my element. You were about to remark—"

"That I am about to leave for Austria, and that—"

"Austria—a fine country! a very fine country!"

"And that in Vienna—"

"Vienna, a charming city! I am confident that you will like it!"

"I will see M. de Metternich—"

"An excellent fellow, though perhaps a little ceremonious. We led a very joyous life together. That reminds me of an adventure—"

"Allow me to observe, M. le Prince, that we are talking of my mission."

"Well."

"What I am to say to M. de Metternich?"

"What you are to say to him?"

"Yes."

"I really do not know."

"What! you do not know?"

"I had not reflected when I told you that. You will say to him—"

"Well?"

"Only one word?"

"And that is—"

"Peccadille!"

"Peccadille?"

"Yes."

"Permit me to take my leave of you, M. le Prince," said the marshal, perfectly beside himself, taking up his hat and going toward the door as he spoke.

"I wish you a pleasant journey. Above all, do not forget to say 'Peccadille' to Metternich, and to say it from me."

The marshal departed in a tremendous rage, and Prince Talleyrand returned to his library, rubbing his hands gayly.

Arrived in the Austrian capital, the French envoy was extremely well received; he was loaded with all sorts of attentions, and entertainments without end were given to him, but of any interview with the minister there was not the slightest question. More than once already he had solicited an audience, and his request had always been refused under one pretext or another.

The old marshal cursed diplomacy, and loaded it with all the insulting epithets of which he had made a rich collection in the course of his military career. Driven out of all patience by these delays, he solicited an audience in such a pressing manner that it was at last accorded to him. The day was fixed as well as the hour.

"At last," thought the marshal, "I shall be able to explain myself."

At the moment he entered the minister's cabinet, Prince Metternich was in the act of crushing a dispatch between his fingers. On seeing the marshal enter, he glanced at the clock, and said:

"Marshal, I regret deeply that I am able to give you but very little time. His Majesty the Emperor has sent me an order which summons me to him in a few moments: I can only devote half an hour to you to-day. Another time I may be more fortunate."

"A great many things can be said in half an hour," thought the marshal.

A great many things may be said in half an hour, it is true, and, above all, a great many things foreign to the subject under discussion. Talleyrand had already proved that to the marshal, and Metternich proved it to him anew. It was impossible for him to introduce a single word of politics during the thirty minutes that the interview lasted.

"I am obliged to leave you, sir," said the minister; "the half-hour is past."

"The die is cast," thought the marshal; "I have nothing more to do but to return to France."

Suddenly a thought struck him. M. de Metternich was on the point of leaving the room.

"I have a message for you from M. de Talleyrand."

"What is it?"

The marshal hesitated.

"What is it?" repeated the minister.

"Peccadille," said the marshal, in desperation.

At these words, M. de Metternich let go the door-knob, which he had already grasped, and quickly retraced his steps.

"Peccadille, did you say?"

"Yes, M. le Prince, from M. de Talleyrand."

"Oh, then that is very different. Why did you not say so before? To-day it is impossible

for me to remain with you, because, as I have already told you, the Emperor is waiting for me, but to-morrow I will receive you, and we will converse long and seriously, and believe me, sir, I will do all that is in my power to aid the success of your negotiation."

The marshal remained utterly bewildered by the mysterious effect of the name he had pronounced.

That evening there was a ball at the Court. M. de Metternich approached the marshal, humming, as he did so, an old opera air:

"Peccadille,
Si gentille," etc.

He seemed in high good-humour, and conversed for a long time with the French envoy. The next day the promised interview took place. Shortly afterward the marshal returned to France, having accomplished his mission in the most satisfactory manner possible.

It now only remains to us to solve this riddle, which is what we are about to do.

In 1814, three statesmen, namely, MM. de Talleyrand, de Metternich, and de Nesselrode, were met together in Paris, and were engaged in settling the grave questions which had arisen out of the fall of Napoleon and the entrance of the allied powers into France.

Those grave interests took up nearly all their time, and yet they occasionally found means to escape from the preoccupations of diplomacy, saying among each other, "Let us put off serious matters till to-morrow."

One day the three diplomats were assembled at a gay dinner. Toward the end of the repast, they dismissed the servants in order to talk more freely; and certainly no one could have recognized in the jolly comrades, saying merrily all the foolish things that were inspired by the fumes of wine, the grave men who, that very morning, had been occupied by the affairs of a part of the world.

The conversation, after roving from one frivolous subject to another, finally turned upon women.

"Oh," said Prince Talleyrand, "I know a marvel of beauty to whom nothing is comparable."

"I," said M. de Metternich, "know a woman who is fairer than the fairest!"

"And I," said M. de Nesselrode, the envoy of Russia, "can cite a person who certainly has no rival!"

"There exist apparently three incomparable beauties," then said M. de Talleyrand, who had spoken first; "but I do not doubt that mine is the handsomest of the three."

"No; it is mine."

"No; mine."

"It is easy to see that you do not know the person of whom I speak."

"Nor you the one whom I mean."

"If you had seen mine, you would not talk so enthusiastically of the beauty of the others."

Thus commenced, the conversation gradually grew animated, and finally degenerated into a quarrel.

"We are absurd, gentlemen," said at length M. de Talleyrand; "there is a very simple means of solving the difficulty: let us bring these three mysterious beauties together."

"An excellent idea, but difficult of execution."

"Not in the least. This is opera-night; I offer you my box. Each of us will write to his goddess, and, when the three are met together there, we will arrive."

"Bravo!"

Talleyrand rang, and sent for pen, ink, and paper. Each of the men wrote a note and gave it to a footman, ordering him to take a circuitous route when he left the hotel, in order to baffle the curious in case he was followed.

Another hour passed, and then the three guests set off for the opera.

Arrived at the door of the box, M. de Talleyrand motioned to M. de Metternich to enter first, who in turn went through the same ceremony with M. de Nesselrode. Each of them repeated:

"After you, sir."

"M. le Prince, I could not think of it."

At last, Prince Metternich entered.

In an arm-chair at the front of the box sat a solitary lady, but one, we must say, of the most dazzling beauty.

"What does this pleasantry mean sir?" asked M. de Metternich, brusquely, of Prince Talleyrand, who followed him.

"I was about to ask you the same question," said at the same time, M. de Nesselrode.

"And I was about to address it to you, gentlemen," replied Talleyrand.

"Why did you send off my note only?"

"It was mine."

"You mean mine."

"Frankly, gentlemen, I do not understand the situation."

"Here is the explanation," then said the fair unknown; and, drawing from her glove three little folded papers, she presented one to each of the three statesmen.

All the notes bore the same address.

That address was "Peccadille."

When MM. de Metternich and de Nesselrode were about to leave France, they met for a last conference with Prince Talleyrand.

"We are about to separate," said the latter.

"Do you not think that it would be as well to establish a means of understanding each other from afar as we do when we are together?"

"We can write."

"A letter may be lost, and that is compromising."

"We might establish a correspondence in cipher."

"That has the same drawback. There are keys to all known ciphers."

"Let us invent a new alphabet."

"That is not much more certain."

"Then what can we do?"

"Might we not, as is the custom during war, fix upon a common watchword, and accord all credit to the envoy who shall repeat to any one of us this word from one of the others?"

"Let us choose a word, then. But what shall it be?"

"Let us see."

"Patriotism?"

"Bad."

"Fraternity?"

"Loyalty?"

"Impossible."

"Then what can we take?"

"A proper name would be best."

"Very well, then, let it be a proper name—but there are so many. Could not a mistake arise through a lapse of memory?"

"I have it, gentlemen—I have it!" said Prince Talleyrand, at that moment. "I will give you a name which neither of us three will ever forget, I am certain."

"What name is that?"

"PECCADILLE!"

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

MR. DUTTON COOK has resigned the post of dramatic critic of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which he has held since 1867, and has transferred his services to the *World*.

It is said that a son of Mr. Sims Reeves will shortly make his first appearance as a tenor vocalist. Mr. Sims Reeves has another son with, it is said, an excellent baritone voice.

OLE BULL, has been giving concerts in Stockholm recently. The "Paganini of the North," as he is called, will make a farewell tour in Europe shortly, with Signor Bach as pianist.

THE Paris journals state that Signor Rossi has resolved to pay the £2,000 forfeit to the Americans and to remain in Paris. To this end he is in treaty for the Salle Ventadour for five months.

WEBER, of New York, offered the managers of Von Bülow 10,000 dols. if they would use his piano; he was outbid by Steinway, who offered 12,000 dols.; but Chickering offered 20,000 dols., and thus secured the contract.

THE Italian opera season at Vienna will commence earlier this year than usual, and will last two months. The manager has collected an excellent company, in which the names of Mesdames Patti, Lucie, MM. Capoul, Nicolini, and Faure appear.

THE Viscountess Vigier (the charming Cravelli) is said to have become able to sing as a male tenor, and those who do not see the singer would never believe that it was a female voice. The visitors to Nice will have a charm the more—a rarity found—a beautiful tenor.

A committee has been formed at Florence for the purpose of celebrating, next May, the centenary of Cristoforo, the inventor of the piano. The principal feature of the celebrations will be international concerts on a large scale. The Abbé Liszt has promised to play.

THERE has just been an "international choral competition" at Brussels. The first prize went to France, won by the orphéon of Valenciennes; the second to a Belgian society; the third to a German *manngesangsverein*; and the fourth to a Dutch *liederafel*.

M. GOUNOD, the composer, whilst leaving the house of a friend, M. Commetant, with a bundle of manuscripts under his arm, slipped, and on reaching the last step fell heavily. When raised he was found to be unconscious; but his injuries only consist of his right arm being broken.

FRANÇOISE SARCEY having warmly praised certain points in *La Dame aux Camélias* of Mademoiselle Tallandieri, the grateful actress sent him a diamond ring, which the great critic sent back at once, accompanying the returned offering with a very stern and severe letter.

M. THEODORE DE LAJARTE, a gentleman employed in the archives of the Grand Opera, Paris, is preparing for publication an annotated catalogue of the musical library of that institution. The catalogue will form no less than five duodecimo volumes, the first of which is expected to appear early in the winter.

Mlle. TITIENS is said to be obliged to undertake manual labor on the days when she is about to assume a new rôle in order to dispel her nervousness. Cleaning a chandelier or weeding a flower-bed has been known to produce the required result, but there is nothing like beating a manager or shaking up a critic.

THE Government of Spain has opened a competition for a national air: the one selected is to be adopted by the State and all the regiments of Alfonso XII. Hitherto the bands have played by turns the hymn of Riego, of Espartero, Prim, Pierrard, &c., but none of them is considered suitable to the present order of things.

EDWIN FORREST's desire to found the "Edwin Forrest Home," at Springbrook, near Philadelphia, for which purpose he left the bulk of his fortune, will probably be carried into effect soon, all obstacles having been removed by the settlement of the right of dower which Mrs. Sinclair claimed in the estate.

ONE of the tableaux of the *Voyage dans la Lune*, which will be brought out at the Gaité at the end of the month, represents a lunar landscape, after photographs of the satellite from the earth, which are exhibited in the promenade room of the theatre. This scene, called "Fifty degrees below zero," is the work of M. Cheret, and is said to be marvellously beautiful.

RESPECTING the production of "Queen Mary" in London, difficulties have arisen. Miss Bateman, who was to personate the *Queen*, objects to many of the lines, and much of the sentiment put into the mouth of *Mary*, and positively refuses to make that speech which tells the audience *Mary* is about to become a mother. Mr. Tennyson, knowing nothing about stage "business," the "effects" of stage language, or the demands of audiences, refuses to "cut" his drama. It is said now that the play will not be produced in England, owing to the poet's unwillingness to change the drama to suit actors, and the impossibility of playing it as originally written.