

MY BEARDED MAID

capacity for appreciation. Thus, instead of merely tasting a peach with their palate as any donkey can, their sense of colour will also enjoy, and their pagan intellect will love the sun that has ripened it. Also, the blending of two races produces, as a rule, very satisfactory subjects."

"Subjects? Why not say cases?"

"And, after all," went on Médor, squashing blonde tobacco in his pipe with a square, thick, capable index, "it's only ugly people with ideals and ideas who find life cruel, and your *gosses* won't be ugly—that is certain."

"Ah, but the boy's nose is most irregular."

"He'll be all the more conceited, which is still better than being an Adonis."

On this an Arab "buttons," all teeth and eyes, entered with a letter and a parcel for me. I read half of it, said "Ah," and fainted gently with my nose in Médor's left whisker.

As I was floating upwards, coming up to the surface of life and understanding, I called Austen twice, and then opened my eyes and felt very sick.

"There, there, *voyons*," Médor was saying as I became quite conscious again, "better now? Austen is not here, but poor old Médor is. Give him a pretty smile. That is it; now drink this, there; now close your eyes, and don't think for a while."

I was smiling. I knew something had happened, and that I would be sorry as soon as I remembered, but I felt too lazy to try and remember.

Médor put his large hand on my left hand and I