

VIE DE BOHEME! OR THE NOCTURNE IN G.

(In the Latin quarter.)

Vie de Bohème! Curious, are you?
Really, earnestly want to know all
About it? Well, you needn't go far, you
Have only to step across the hall.

This mountain of trunks outside the door!
Perhaps you might care to investigate these,
But I'll not risk becoming a bore—
Here, the door is open! *Entrez.* (Sneeze!)

Snuff and scissors, and salt and Strauss—
The last weak opera—have you seen it?—
All on a chair, and a little dead mouse
Underneath in a trap, where the hangings screen it.

The chair itself, though, you don't see daily.
Look at the carvings in the middle
Of the back—all the others are occupied gaily,
While the lounge has a tray, a dog and a fiddle.

There's nothing to sit on but the bed.
"But Madame will object!" Not she. Asleep
At twelve of the clock! What a heavy head!
I'd wake her, but you are an artist,—Peep

For a minute longer at curve of wrist,
And hair outstretched upon the pillow!
Is there anything there that will assist
Your latest dream of women and willow?

How sad she looks! Very sad for her,
That never sorrows a moment awake;
Now, could you fasten that mouth's demur
On your canvas, *mon cher*, you were made! Crimson lake?

And your elbow went into it? All my fault!
I should not have entered Bohemia so,
With a sensitive Sybarite not worth his salt—
Well, I'll take that back, and you too, if you'll go.

But not just at present. Why, pocket the stain!
'Twill come out quite easily by-and-by;
And whether it come out, or if it remain,
In Bohemia does not in the least signify.

Look out for your head, for the ceiling's low,
And out of three globes on the chandelier,
Only one is left, and it's cracked, will go
To pieces almost if one looks at it near.

The pinned-up blind and the breakfast tray
Are not things wherewithal to boast,
But the Dresden and Derby in shining array,
Will surely obliterate hardening to last,

And long-poured-out coffee. At last! She stirs!
Madame is awake. Good day! "*Bonjour!*"
"*Mon Dieu*, it is late, and the friend infers
That so late every day, I must sleep *toujours!*"

"I am an object? Quick, say!" Ah, Madame!
One of grace and delight you always must be,
And most of all now; 'tis not often *les femmes*
Look so well upon waking. Is it, Lee?

Lee is my friend, and a fast rising painter;
Does things which outrival your matchless Corot;
Murky gray skies, with a curious fainter
Lighter green gleam on the landscape below.

Though, is it Corot that I mean? Lee is shocked.
Suffice it, we saw you last night in the play,
In a pink and white poem so charmingly frocked,
O happy, thrice happy *Théâtre Français!*

He begs for a sitting, and let me suggest
That you stay as you are with those fair frills of lace
Brimming over the coverlet—Why, you are dressed
With all that soft whiteness beneath your face,

And the bright bloom of Eos on either cheek,
And a most divine violet-black in your eyes,
As liquid as childhood's—there's no need to seek
The embrightening drugs' and the rouge-pots' lies.

But later, Madame, you'll be pale, no doubt.
No? Not when the afternoon shadows fall,
In the *triste* interim when old loves are about,
And old voices and footsteps are heard over all!

The playing of Monsieur Diabolus? Ah!
He is here as I speak, and now, friend Lee,
Whom I think, Chevalier, you yesterday saw
In my room downstairs, recollect? No. 3?

We'll leave you to settle your palette and plushes,
To frown and reflect, then to rumple your hair,
And presently actively bristle with brushes.
So; practise, Chevalier, while I will prepare

Quelque chose pour Madame. Not a word, my own way.
The coffee is cold, but—I have it! *Maryaux!*
In one pocket you see; in the other a stray
Find of fresh plums and a tiny *gâteau*

Picked up at Victor's. A glorious cook!
No Frenchman, believe me, though here in the heart
Of your Paris he works since the day he forsook
The fluctuate fortune of Poland for Art.

You laugh, *mes amis*. Well, it is this. He's a Pole,
Therefore illusory; Poles always are;
He puts into pink butter roses his soul,
And it is not a common one. Follows some star

Or Muse in his cooking; is the better for blood
As brains always are when together you find them;
The Regent had loved him; put poison for cud
Had Carême in his *bouquets garnis* as he twined them.

Now Chopin and he were great friends in their way,
And Victor has told me, his ices and cakes
Of the best inspiration, *sûlms, entremets*,
Of the rarest, he owed to the delicate shakes

And the marvellous touch of *ce pauvre Frédéric*.
So eat up your cake, Madame, every crumb!

Value its shape and its colouring, seek
(It is not unworthy your finger and thumb)

For its meaning, its essence—no, not the vanilla,
Go on with your sketching, and Lee, look here!
Madame does not exile the darling Manilla,
You may puff away with your conscience clear,

If you want to and can with this in your ears,
The sad soul of Chopin on violin strings!
Ah! Paint me the picture the most full of tears,
Tear your own heart out and pluck off your wings,

Let the down that was snowy and dowers I as your own
Feed your ne'er dying worm as it rears and recedes,
Let the blood that once warmed you through breast to cold
bone
Flow out and delight but not drown as it feeds—

Not the grave-worm, Madame—Ah! would God that it were!
(My worm and your's Lee, are both of a gender),
A live thing so harmlessly, holily fair!
(No. We were enthralled with a mirage of splendour).

And it dies not; it dies not; it will push its way,
And here we are, slaves to its growth and its power;
To the worship of Art were we both called one day,
For the worship of Art have we lived till this hour.

Feed your worm then, I say, with superlative pain,
Paint me the picture the most full of tears—
You will never attain to that wonderful strain
The musician alone through the hurrying years

Can give us, the wistful, the cry of all souls,
Inarticulate, helpless, abandoned and blind,
To the *Dieu inconnu*, the Unknown that controls
All the joy and the pain of our poor human kind!

But Madame there grows restless, declares I am *triste*;
I am old, *chers amis*, but not cynical, no!
You have finished, I see, my ingenious feast,
If I had now but purchased another *gâteau!*

And now let us see the result of it all
Come and look here Chevalier, there's nothing to dread,
Ah! No colour, my friend! Here's a red parasol,
Stand it open at back of Madame's little head!

Then give her the "ruby" in one slender hand,
Let her bury the other beneath her hair—
You've a picture the *Salon* will quite understand,
And accept with *éclat*, for your subject is rare,

You have gone to real life, the true critics will say,
Heart, and not Art, is the luckiest creed.
Apropos, you may think of the lines that, one day,
To you in some *café* I once tried to read.

They ran—Now, mark me, Lee, you'll never paint
Until you learn more daring. Dare to fling
Those golden-threaded pretty stuffs away!
Strip down the flecked Madras and tear the eyes
From yonder ceiling peacock feathered! Sell
Your china *châp* and curtains, amber plush
And ruby, making sunset in the room!
I did not come to see a splash of west,
Except, I own, upon your canvas here.
Bury your bronzes—curse the *bric-à-brac*,
You've learned to draw it. Good! Now go your way
Into the world, the street, the omnibus,
Shall Lee—no name to conjure with as yet—
Refuse to follow where *Detuille* has led?

But Madame, I digress, and the time, how it goes!
Adieu for the present, one wish—might I claim
This smallest, most withered and least little rose,
With the *beauté altière* and the difficult name?

Twelve bouquets, observe, Lee, all thrown in one night;
Who were guilty of some is quite easy to see;
Here's a note, there's a case—oh! we must take our flight,
And thanks, Chevalier, for the Nocturne in G.

SERANUS.

THE EVOLUTION OF WOMAN.

A PHANTASY.

I.

UPON a gentle slope in Eden old,
Slept Adam, first of men;
(His origin by Darwin has been told,
But mine shall be the pen
To tell how woman was evolved, and when).

When Adam first to consciousness awoke
The wonder of it all!
The sky—the sea—the birds that silence broke,
The trees so green and tall,
The flowery peace soft brooding over all!

The animals, strange restless breathing things,
With liquid eyes;
That in his steps with wistful following
Came fitfully; the bright sun glancing wings
Clearing the skies.

The wonder of it all was so entrancing;
Held with its spell,
He saw the lambskins in the meadows prancing,
The merry gnats in the long sunbeams dancing,
Brooks in the dell.

The beauty of the vision filled his soul,
Man's hour had come!
Suns set and night unfurled her starry scroll,
Thought dawned and through his brain began to roll,
But he was dumb.

His hunger he appeased with pleasant fruit;
But in his heart
There woke another hunger, voiceless, mute
As is the music in an untouched lute
Lying apart.

He was alone and felt his loneliness:
Only in sleep
He knew a something sweeter far than this,
A full completeness he did, waking, miss,
But could not keep.

To explain this strange phase of his history:
When his first sigh
Was heard in heaven's great whispering gallery,
Which still surrounds earth with its mystery,
One spake on high.

Lo, I am Love, and for my love prepare
Creatures to fill my sole necessity;
Because of this my love they are and were;
All things that live in earth and sea and air,
But chiefly man, heir of eternity.

Go, therefore, thou, my gentlest spirit mild,
Thou of the beauteous brow and loving eye;
In Eden's garden hover near my child,
My first of men, born of the ages wild;
Unto him minister, in sleep be nigh.

This was the presence, subtle, unconfined,
Which Adam felt;
The unconscious influence of mind on mind,
Causing him with a longing undefined,
To yearn and melt.

It troubled him: a sadness vague and strange
Haunted his face;
The angel, pitying, noted the wan change
And round him close would sheltering wings arrange
With pitying grace.

At last, it grew so, he would moan and sigh
In sore unrest;
His unseen guardian, watchful, saw his eye
Now bent on earth, now raised unto the sky
With grieving breast.

Seeing him thus the angel saddened too,
Though 'twas amiss;
Desire to comfort Adam woke and grew,
Till one day o'er him her warm wings she threw
And pressed a kiss!

A shock magnetic vivified his frame
With magic *verve*,
And with a thrill that never yet knew name,
Though most men once in life have felt the same,
Leapt every nerve.

Athwart his soul's profundity of sadness,
A rainbow gleamed;
Stole o'er his senses an unwonted gladness,
A new delight half bordering on madness,
And lo! he dreamed

A vision ravishing, most lovely, chaste;
One such as he had seen,
Like yet unlike, when in the mirrored waste
Of tranquil waters he beheld, amazed,
Himself amid the scene.

The joy awoke him with a blissful start,
When lo! sweet wondering eyes
Looked into his. He knew his better part,
And with ripe instinct drew her to his heart,
In rapture loving wise.

"Oh, my beloved? where wert thou concealed?"
He cried in bliss.
Till now the lips of Adam had been sealed,
But speech brake forth when Woman was revealed
In loveliness.

II.

The Angel, when her lips did Adam's touch—
Strange sense of loss—
A consciousness of having given too much,
Instinctive made her swiftly turn to clutch,
Her wings across.

But lo, the wings were gone! and with them fled
All memory.
Before her Adam slept on mossy bed
With smiling lips and arm-empilowed head,
A mystery!

A Woman now, an Angel nevermore,
So Eve stood
In wondering innocence on Time's far shore,
While Adam clasped and kissed her o'er and o'er
In rapturous mood.

But, ah! her spirit vision, pure and keen,
Was lost for aye;
Evil could now in Eden creep unseen,
To mar the charm of each delightful scene,
And cloud the day.

Then spake the VOICE: "Oh, Spirit, not lost but strayed!
From Heaven's estate;
Since not through pride, but love thou thus art made
An angel in humanity arrayed;
Be Adam's mate.

And this thy punishment; To love and weep
Because of love;
Forever to bequeath with sorrow deep,
The kiss that Adam woke from loveless sleep,
In Eden's grove.

Yet, to console thee down the ages long,
I name by thee,
All that to strength and beauty doth belong;
Thus Truth, Grace, Wisdom, in immortal song
Shall be named *She*.

Yea, even the immortal essence which is mine,
Undying, pure,
Shall henceforth evermore be feminine.
Woman, Love, Immortality shall thus entwine,
And so endure."

JAY KAYELLE.