

## PHRYNETTE MARRIED

beings. Nature has given me the right to, but my human conscience, my pity, recoils.

"That is why, though the death of little H  l  ne has made an old sad man of me, I am glad for her sake she died. She only knew the beauty of life, guessed at its passion, and went undeceived, with all her joys and all her illusions. Why are you crying, *mon petit* ?"

"I am thinking, then, ought I to have had the twins, if you who are so wise are not sure that life is good. Oh, oh !"

"Hush, *mignonne*, don't cry. Life will be good to your children, very good, I am sure."

"Why for them specially ?"

"Oh, because they will have some of that healthy animal selfishness without which one finds life cruel."

"And why, if you please, should my twins be healthy, selfish animals ?"

"My dear little girl, you see that as soon as I treat you seriously, as grown-up to grown-up, the lady-idol in you resents it. I did not say the twins would be animals—that is the feminine version of my warning. How long shall we admit feminine witnesses in the name of justice, I wonder ? What I said and meant was that your children will be, as far as one can bind Heredity to her task, perfectly constructed to meet life as it is. They will have bodily appetites and enough vitality to satisfy them. They will not be hampered by too much spirituality, and what they might have been afflicted with from the artistic vein on your and your father's side will be counterbalanced not only by the excessive sanity of your husband's, but will merely add to their