

"Hopkins, Hopkins!" I cried, "have you got your eyeglass fixed?"

"Yes; why?"

"This is Mrs. Tubbs."

I introduced my friend, and we hovered about the lady and her family, paying her a court which I imagine that few English women have received off the stage since the days of Elizabeth.

"Where is Emma?" said the lady, interrupting me, in the middle of a somewhat high-flown compliment.

"Emma! where has the child got to?"

"Here she is; come along, my little darling," cried Hopkins, who had heard the maternal voice, and remembered my injunction; and as he spoke he came up to Mrs. Tubbs, leading by the hand—the monkey!

"How dare—" Mrs. Tubbs began, but her rage was such that she could not articulate. As for ever being returned for Bulflow, I might just as well oppose Lord Palmerston for Tiverton.

Well, after a while I forgave Hopkins yet again only as his extreme shortsightedness and obstinacy in not wearing glasses renders him as easy to cut as a boiled fowl, I could not resist the temptation of passing by on the other side whenever I met him; not I protest, from any feeling of omity, but merely out of precaution. I had tried the good Samaritan's system with him, it had failed, so now I pursued the Levites', in vain. My first wife had been dead for some years; I took a second, but no one could now say that I married for money, oh, no; the Lady Augusta had a Roman nose, and protracted pedigree, but no fortune, and I promised myself that I would not play second fiddle this time. It was in the month of May; I stood in the exhibition room of the Roy al Academy, before an historical picture, and was expounding the story of it to my lady wife and certain of her noble relations, when I was suddenly startled by a slap on the back, and the voice of Hopkins cried,—Ah! my boy, I have not seen you for an age. Let me congratulate you, old fellow. How's the now missus?"

Lady—was so offended by this piece of vulgarity on the part of my friend, that it was months before I could restore her equanimity, and by the time had succeeded she had established a sort of indescribable supremacy in the household (my married readers will know what I mean) which has brought it about that I am playing second fiddle in this domestic concert also.

Hopkins perceived that he had put his foot in it at the time, and was so distressed, and called himself such dreadful names, that I once more forgave him.

But my patience was well-nigh spent, now it is thoroughly exhausted; Stephen Hopkins is no longer my friend, but my foe; he has caused the finger of scorn to be pointed at me throughout the country; it is his fault that at our public dinners they drink the health of honest John Bull, and couple my name with the toast! Let me explain. I am now middle-aged, I am very stout, and I reside upon an estate I have in Norfolk. Last year I sent some beasts I was very proud of to our agricultural show, where they attracted great attention, and I was engaged in pointing out their beauties to Lord Exmore and a select circle, when I received a violent poke in the ribs, and, looking round saw my *bete noir*, Hopkins, with his useless glass dangling as usual, and his speculative eyes glaring in my direction, acting *cicerone* to a party of ladies.

"This," said he, "is the beast that has got the first prize," indicating me and not the animal which stood close by me. "Observe the straightness of his back and look at the meat on the ribs. Firm, you see," here came another terrific poke, "quite—halloo!"

For when I saw all the people about me tittering, and Lord Exmore himself hardly able to refrain from bursting right out, I lost all patience, and snatching the aggressive umbrella from Hopkins' hand, I broke it across my knee, and tossed the mangled remains away, an action which, as he really thought that he was poking the ox which he had seen before him while his eyeglass stuck, must have surprised him not a little. When he found and applied that instrument, and so discovered what he had done, and to whom, he shouted "Kismet!" and fairly turned and fled.

But I have been the laughing-stock of Norfolk ever since, for jokes are rare in the country, and "once a butt always a butt" is the rule there; so whenever I appear at the cover side, I am asked some fifty times over how much meat I have on my ribs, whether I have been exhibiting myself lately, why I do not now wear my prize medal. And at public dinners they propose the health of honest John Bull, as I said above, and shriek, and thump, and break wine-glasses, until I return thanks.

I will never forgive Stephen Hopkins, never; unless indeed he repent, and do penance, and wear spectacles.

## MODERN FRENCH MARRIAGES.

THE strategy of the matrimonial campaign is this:—A young man, getting on for thirty, tired of a single life, without parents, or expecting soon to lose them, exercising a profession whose seriousness is more suited to a family than to a bachelor or possessing a handsome competency of which a wife alone can do the honours—this young man desires to marry. In his more or less extended circle of acquaintances, he does not know a single girl whose outward charms have made much impression on him, or whose fortune is large enough to tempt him; nevertheless, he wishes to get married. He confides his intentions to two or three friends. Oh! mon Dieu, he will not be over particular, provided the young lady belong to a well considered family, in a social position equal or superior to his own; provided that a similar concordance exist between their fortunes, and finally, it possible that the person herself be not altogether repulsive, he will require nothing more. Be she tall or short, fat or lean, fair or dark, well educated or ignorant, gentle or cross-grained, healthy or sickly, it is all one to him. Equality of fortune and position are the two grand items; all the rest are accessories.

The friends, then, are on the look-out; they soon discover a score of marriageable girls. The postulant has no other difficulty than that of making his selection. A fête, a ball, a call, a dinner, a simple meeting brought about a third party, bring the two enemies face to face. The word "enemies" is not employed by chance.

When two armies, or two diplomatists, have met, what is their first, their only care? Of course to obtain the best possible conditions at the expense of the adverse party. And what means do they employ to accomplish that end? They conceal their forces and their lowest terms, which they only allow to appear when all is over. In all the matrimonial negotiations whence marriages of reason result, matters are conducted exactly as they are by diplomatists. Both of them, suitor and maid, paint—not, perhaps, their faces, although the least said about that the better; but their looks, their words, their attitude, endeavouring to adorn themselves with moral and physical advantages, of which closer intimacy will show that they are utterly devoid.

What does it signify? A good opportunity offers itself, no time is to be lost in striking the bargain. Nobody can live on love and spring water. Money in the funds, farms in Normandy, vineyards in the Côte d'Or, a notary's office with plenty of clients, are precious things of the very first importance. If, by-the-by, the house becomes unbearable, the fortune with its little additions can be divided into two equal shares, and all will go on smoothly again.

The young couple, then, are brought together; the combat is about to begin; for an hour or two, the suitor, without coming forward or compromising himself, is able to scrutinize with his eyes the person proposed to him as his wife. If the eyes are satisfied—and little caution is to be expected in an eye ready to be pleased—it is possible, amidst the confusion of a crowd, by means of a polka, to obtain the favour of a few minutes' tête-à-tête.

All goes well. The young man, enamoured with his partner's charms, returns to the common friend, and says, "I have no objection to conclude the match. But I must have two hundred thousand francs; you know that sum is indispensable."

"Yes, my dear fellow; but no one is compelled to perform impossibilities. We can give only a hundred and fifty thousand."

"Show me, then, another pearl out of your stock of jewellery."

"Easy enough. Did you remark, sitting by the side of your rejected fair one, a very dark complexioned girl?"

"Yes; and the least in the world avry"

"She has two hundred and fifty thousand francs!"

"If she will accept me, the business is settled."

Fresh presentation, fresh dissimulation. During a month, three times a week, for two hours at a sitting, the lover pays his respects to his affianced bride. On the day when, hand in hand, they swear before God and man to take each other for husband and wife, they have been twenty-four hours in each other's company, and that in the presence of witnesses.

Unhappy creatures! They have not had the time even to think of what they are doing. For a month their thoughts have been occupied with everything excepting marriage. The young man has been meditating solely how he will employ his dowry; the young lady has been considering the items of her "corbelle" or wedding presents. But if a dowry and a corbelle are things not to be despised, it is difficult to believe that they alone constitute the whole of marriage. And yet, that is what is called a marriage of reason!

## THE YOUNG CHEMIST.

THE great importance of a knowledge of chemistry to persons of all classes of society, and the necessity of making it a fundamental branch of popular education in our schools, are becoming more and more apparent each day; and it seems certain that the time is not far distant when, along with grammars and geographies, elementary treatises on this delightful and eminently useful science will also be placed in the hands of children.

The chief aim of the articles, which, from time to time, will appear in this periodical, is to present the subject in such a manner as will engage the attention of beginners, as well as those who probably desire to know something of chemistry, but who are deterred from studying it under the too prevalent but false idea that it is a science peculiarly difficult, and one which belongs exclusively to professors and lecturers. The writer of this article, from a long experience, can completely controvert this idea, having practically proved that the fundamental laws of chemistry, which are clear and simple, can be as well understood, even by children, as any other science or branch of education.

In agriculture, a knowledge of chemistry is perhaps indispensably necessary; every farm is, so to speak, a laboratory, and every farmer a practical chemist. But it is not in agriculture alone that it is useful and of advantage; in physics, mineralogy, geology, &c., it is equally useful; indeed the applications of this science are so numerous that there are few circumstances in life in which the chemist does not see its principles accomplished.

Chemistry is the science which teaches us of what the different substances in nature are formed, of the changes they undergo, or constantly undergoing, of the laws by which their union and separation are governed, of the manner of analysing, and also of reuniting the constituent parts of matter.

Chemists divide all bodies into *simple* and *compound*. Simple bodies are those which cannot be resolved into any other substances, such as gold, iron, tin, zinc, oxygen, hydrogen, &c.

Now do what we will with any of these bodies, they still resist all agencies which can be brought to bear on them to decompose them; the gold still remains gold; the iron, iron, &c.

Compound bodies are those which can be resolved into other substances having totally different properties, such as water, limestone, brass, &c.

Now water can be resolved into the two gases which form it, oxygen and hydrogen; limestone into lime and carbonic acid gas, and brass into copper and zinc, the two metals of which it is composed, brass itself being never found as a natural production.

At first sight it may be supposed that the number of simple elements is infinite, judging from the great diversity of substances which are seen around us; but chemists have reduced the number down to sixty-five; and further researches may prove that many of these elements, which we at present regard as simple, may in reality be compound bodies.

Of the sixty-five simple bodies, thirteen are called non-metallic, the remaining forty-two, metallic.

Chemistry is usually divided into two branches, organic and inorganic, merely as a convenient mode of classification, for in reality the organic and inorganic so merge into each other, that many of the so-called organic substances are found capable of being prepared by inorganic methods.

Organic chemistry treats of those substances which are the products of the vital process in animals and vegetables; while inorganic chemistry treats of minerals, water, and air. We shall confine this article to the study of the latter.

The following is a list of the principal simple elements divided into metallic and non-metallic, with their symbols and equivalents: