

THE STUPID MAN AND THE CLEVER JUG.

HE was tramping restlessly to and fro in the front drawing-room of an old house, such as abound in the purlieus of McGill University, and are remarkable only for size and ugliness.

IT was lying broken, in the pantry of a smart flat in Westmount, regarded with ruth and rue but not despair, by the guilty party, who knowing her mistress was out for the afternoon, was hastening to go out too, indifferent to the claims of door bell and telephone, bent only upon repairing breaches in the shattered one, as soon as might be.

SHE (the Inevitable) was breathlessly running to catch a "Mountain Belt Line"—which, though not very convenient, was the car best suited to her purpose, that purpose leading her towards the unfashionable house where the Stupid Man nervously awaited her coming.

He tried to read the Morning's Gazette again for the twentieth time, but already fully aware of the sins committed by Sir Wilfrid and the Government Party, and versed in the complications of the latest financial fraud, he found no "balm" in that ungenial "Gilead."—He threw the paper down, then picked it up seeing that it destroyed the rigid order of the rooms. Those rooms! How commonplace. How mannish! How unattractive! They had not seemed so last winter! Not uncomfortable, of course, the Phe Phi Pho Fraternity demanded comfort, but surely comfort was not incompatible with something else, which this soulless habitation plainly lacked. Here he stopped for a moment—frowned—then muttered impatiently—"Nonsense, not at all!"—in answer to the inner voice which hinted at the cause of discontent, an almost unconscious comparison he was drawing between his present surroundings, and that ineffable abode of Magic, the Cottage in the Laurentians, whose witchery (the witchery of the Cottage mark you!) was turning upside-down his previously well-balanced views of life. It was a simple summer cottage that filled the narrowing horizon. He had spent many golden hours there, not as the sister's guest, but the guest of her brother, his sometime Lecturer. He knew that the only definite points of excellence he recalled were of a simple nature. There were no loose things on the floor to trip the unwary visitor in the dusk of a summer night. There was always a waste paper basket at hand, to receive crumpled uninteresting communications from town, or hastily torn-off newspaper wrappers. One never needed to look vaguely, hopelessly about for receptacles for burnt matches and cigarette ends, the suitable haven seemed ever to wait under one's very hand. The appeal to the masculine heart and judgment was not made (apparently) through any medium distinctly feminine, but a woman's sympathy and intelligence pervaded all and the result was!—well something different from these dreary wastes where he stood discontented, ready to quarrel with himself, fate,