

Suddenly a tremendous jolt awoke Blanche, followed by leaps and jerks, as if they were passing over heavy ruts.

"We are arriving! look up, Blanche!" cried her husband, in an excited voice. They were passing up what seemed to be an embryo street—the road not yet made, the houses all detached from each other, and in different stages of development. They turned a corner, and now faced the sea; a sudden sweep round, and they drew up before one of a row of houses which faced the beach, and appeared more finished than the others. Monsieur Legros was eagerly gazing out of the window; with a bound he leapt out of the carriage.

"Excuse me, *ma chère amie*," he cried suddenly. "But I see such mischief going on in that villa yonder—all the painting wrong. One moment only," and without a moment's pause he had darted away, leaving her startled, bewildered, not knowing what to do.

"Madame had better descend," said the coachman; "I have a long way to drive back."

"Yes, yes," cried Blanche. She got out, had her trunks removed from the roof of the carriage, and watched the man mechanically as he rang the bell and left her, driving off without waiting to be paid.

The young bride stood on the threshold of her new home, and the tears gathered fast in her eyes. She drew her shawl more closely round her; the wind was tearing it from her, and it was very cold.

It seemed a long time before the bell was answered. The door opened, and a little withered old woman in a loose wrapper appeared.

"Who is it?" she asked, in a shrill voice. My *bonne* has gone off, and left no one at home. They are all alike, these *bonnes*; but Rosalie is much the worst—*oui, dame*, much the worst."

"It is I, madame—Blanche Legros," said the poor, little weary, trembling bride. The old woman gave a little cry.

"Ah! Madame Camille! my boy's rich wife! Come in! Come in! And where is he, where is he! when didst thou arrive?"

She held out her hands, embraced Blanche warmly, and retreated through the house, uttering shrill calls—"Rosalie! Rosalie! silly one! quick, quick, Rosalie! Madame Camille is come, and we not expecting her this hour or more."

Rosalie appeared at last, and, helped by the two ladies, drew in one of Blanche's boxes. The others being too heavy, were left outside for the present.

In a few moments they were seated in the *salon*, and Blanche had leisure to look about her. The drawing-room and dining-room were one; only divided from each other by a curtain, which was drawn back. Both were somewhat scantily furnished—a few hard-backed arm-chairs, a round centre table; a very large alabaster clock, with vases to match, on the mantel-piece. Blanche's eyes took it all in at a glance; then she stooped over the very small fire of damp, hastily kindled logs. Madame Berthe wore broad carpet slippers; she rested the bellows on the wide square toe and blew away at the faint sparks in the grate while she talked.

"So Camille left you at the very door! That was just like him, his whole heart he has thrown into this place with his money. *Dame, oui!* his whole heart and his whole fortune. So he saw something wrong, did he? Well, how could it be expected otherwise, when he had been away more than three weeks! All the workmen ceased to work, and idled about all day; the coachman drove out his friends in the carriage. A lady and gentleman came and looked at villa La Rochelle, and nothing came of it. Wasted chances! wasted chances!"

Blanche hung her head, she felt guilty of this sad waste of time. Madame Berthe rubbed her hands with a little chuckle.

"But the season is coming on—the fine season!" she said, "when all the world will be here, and St. Didier will be as gay as Dieppe itself—a little Paris, indeed."

Time passed on, and Camille Legros did not come in. Weary, faint and exhausted, it seemed to Blanche as if the chuckling talk of Madame Berthe would never end. At six o'clock came dinner, but she was too tired to eat. When it was nearly over her husband came in; there was a cloud on his brow she had never seen before.

"Everything has been going wrong," he said, tucking the end of his napkin under his chin, and devouring great spoonfuls of soup. "Jean Marie has not looked after the *mon*. The work at the *château* is where I left it. The walls of the villa No. 3 are not a foot above the ground. I have lost two good lets. Truly, I should never have been away."

Blanche winced again; he went on grumbling about neglect and carelessness, while Madame Berthe watched him, nodding like an old bright-eyed bird with her head on one side. After dinner he went out again,—not a moment given to sentiment, not a caress to his young wife.

When he was gone Blanche pleaded to be shown her room, and was taken up-stairs. "Good night, sleep well," said Madame Berthe, with a friendly nod; and she went off, muttering to herself.

"He has chosen well—she will look very well on the promenade; much too fine a lady to look after the *ménage*. Yes, yes; we will go on as before, and her money will keep us all straight till the *locataires* come!"

Blanche unpacked the ivory crucifix that always hung over her bed, placed it at her head,

and then lay down, too utterly weary to realize that she was not happy to-night.

The next morning Blanche was up betimes, eager to see everything, and make acquaintance with her new home. It was a great pity that the sky continued to be of one uniform dull grey colour—that the sea was restless and sullen—and the rocks and islands, which made the coast so picturesque, were half shrouded with mist; but a good night's sleep had refreshed the little bride completely, and renewed all her bright castles in the air.

Madame Berthe's welcome to her this morning was far less cordial than it had been the night before, and a little startled Blanche; but she soon forgot it in watching her husband eat his breakfast, and ministering to his wants to save time, for he said he had but five minutes to spare, and nothing must keep him waiting. Before he had swallowed his last mouthful he was off, and Blanche and her mother-in-law were left alone.

"My husband is always busy like this!" asked Blanche, timidly. Madame Berthe nodded.

"And need he should be," she said, grimly. "It will take all his energies to keep things going."

"But are they not going well?" cried Blanche very much startled. "I thought everything promised so wonderfully."

"There is a vast difference between promise and fruition. It is a great fortune my son lays out, and we must wait, wait—*oui, dame*, we must wait to realize any profits."

She began to take away the coffee-cups as she spoke, and for the moment Blanche did not speak,—then she said, timidly—

"Will you tell me something about my husband's affairs, dear madame? I have been told nothing."

The old woman looked at her sharply, and hesitated. "I think," she said, "that if they had thought that you were to be trusted they would have told you all about it."

The tears rushed to Blanche's eyes.

"I am to be trusted," she said, pleadingly.

"Well, then, I may as well tell you. At present, Camille is embarrassed for money. Don't start and turn so pale, my dear," she said, harshly. "Of course it is only a momentary embarrassment; but he has placed his whole fortune in this affair, and of course it demands time, much time even."

"But has he no partners? does no one share the outlay and the risk?" asked Blanche, with a little of the shrewdness of her commercial birth.

"No one—no one," said his mother, her voice growing shrill. "Every Saturday he pays his wages, two francs a-day per man, and a hundred men are working on the place now; and besides that, for the houses that are furnished there are the *menuisiers*, the *citriers*, the *tapissiers*. Oh! the money flows night and day; and every house on the place must be let well and for long before it can do more than even pay the interest of this fortune. And you," cried the old lady, harshly,—"you who might have helped him, have failed; and his very marriage has turned out a wasted opportunity: the poor boy has no chance!"

"What do you mean, madame?" cried Blanche, shocked beyond measure.

"I mean, of course, that when a man makes a marriage he expects to find something; not that his wife should bring him nothing, her hands empty."

"And I have I nothing?" faltered Blanche.

"Nothing; actually not one *sou* till your good father's death. Bah! he is not five years older than Camille himself."

"And then?"

"Ah, then! but what will it avail—double, treble the *dot* then—when my Camille is a millionaire! It is now, now, now," she shrieked; "where money is going out on every hand and none coming in. *Va! va!* thou also art a failure, *ma bru!*"

Blanche burst into tears, and fled away in grief to her own room.

In the afternoon she timidly ventured downstairs again, terribly afraid of meeting Madame Berthe. The door of the kitchen was wide open, and she could not help hearing some of the conversation from within. Her mother-in-law was speaking.

"Yes, yes, Rosalie—a helpless fine lady. We will go on just as we did before; we must make our economies, thou and I, just as we did; and I will teach Madame Camille to put up with them too. Yes, yes; why should she not? she brings nothing to the *pot-au-feu*."

Blanche went boldly into the kitchen with a sudden impulse.

"I will make any economies you will," she said, sweetly; "anything to please you and to save money."

"Ah, bah!" said Madame Berthe, contemptuously. "Professions are all very well, but when it comes to actions—"

"You will not find me wanting," said Blanche, with gentle dignity; and she left the kitchen. Madame Berthe hurried after her, and, catching hold of her arm she said eagerly—

"But see I see, *ma petite bru!* they say your father adores you. Write to him, tell him you want money; he will send it to you."

"I will; I will tell him how important it is just now for Monsieur—that it will be of such service."

"You must not! you shall not!"

"But what, then, am I to do?" cried Blanche, bewildered.

"Tell him you want it for yourself; tell him

you find that you must make great toilets here; that you want a piano; that—that—there, can you invent nothing?"

"No," said Blanche, quietly; "I can invent nothing. I must tell the truth, or I will not ask."

"But you will keep all our conversation secret? you are to be trusted. No, do not look offended; but if any one knew that Camille has begun to borrow for his week's wages, that would be the end of St. Didier."

"Of course, I will say nothing," and Blanche drew away her arm and went out of doors.

The grey fog was still over everything, a wet sea-fog, so that the water dripped off all the houses and saturated everything. In the distance Blanche caught sight of her husband with his collar turned up round his ears, and the perpetual cigar in his mouth. She went up to him; she forced herself to smile and speak gaily as she joined him.

"Will you show me the town now, Camille?" He was quite pleased. "Ah! you are like an Englishwoman," he said—"not afraid of the weather."

"I am generally," she said; "but not today, for I want so much to see St. Didier."

There was a square garden facing the sea surrounded by houses, and from each corner of this square ran two boulevards of detached villas, each with a tiny little garden running down to the cliff, from which a small flight of steps led to the beach. These houses were in all the varied stages of completion, but swarming with workmen. The newly planted trees were struggling into leaf. All round were the commencements of buildings. The English Church which had been so prominent a feature in the plans, was just one foot out of the ground. The Casino was completed, and was gorgeous. Young gardens and a lawn-tennis, grounds were marked out and planted with baby-trees, all top-heavy with their large-leaved scanty foliage and dripping with the salt sea-fog.

"Are any of the houses taken yet?" asked Blanche timidly.

"Yes; that house is occupied by a very rich American lady, but, oh, so exacting—she has asked for so much, and I have given her all—everything," he cried, throwing out his hands. "It shall be said of me that no landlord ever was so amiable or gave so much." The house he pointed out was one of the largest in the place, and looked somewhat older than the others. A very magnificent lady was standing at the window. She beckoned to Monsieur Legros.

"I must go in," he said, discontentedly. "I am sure she wants something more from me."

The lady beckoned again, and Monsieur Legros went in. Blanche waited patiently till he reappeared on the steps of the house, accompanied by the lady.

"So that is Madame Camille!" cried the latter, in a strong foreign accent, and Blanche found her hand warmly clasped.

"Your husband is the best landlord I know, Madame," she went on. "I have had much experience, and have never met with a kinder one. He has just promised me a conservatory, but it shall be worth his while."

And all the time Monsieur Legros continued making obsequious bows; but when he walked on with his wife he ground his teeth.

(To be continued.)

## ECHOES FROM PARIS.

THE unfortunate Tunis war has made the Parisians perfectly mad upon Africa. Old pictures of Algerian battles and the portraits of Arab chiefs crowd the shops. The Kroumir has replaced the Turk, at whose battered features persons used to shy as many sticks as they had sous to waste.

THE Christian Brothers are allowed to travel on the French railways at half-price, on account of their alleged poverty. A petition has been presented to the Government, signed by some thousands of citizens, demanding to be accorded the same favour on account of their wretchedness. It is odd to encounter Carmelites and Capuchins travelling in the first class at the reduced fares.

AMONG eccentric visitors to Parisian libraries, a French paper mentions a monomaniac who frequented the Arsenal library for twenty years for the purpose of reading and re-reading "Paul and Virginia." He knew the tale by heart, and recited it on summer evenings as he paced to and fro in the Jardin des Plantes. When M. Victor Masse's opera was brought out at the Gaité, he was present in the theatre, but left before the end of the first act, exclaiming, "Your music spoils the whole thing!"

FOR quite a number of years a rich English lady residing at Rome presented herself regularly on Easter Monday at the audience given by the Pope on that traditional day, offering him her contribution to the Peter's pence in a package of bank notes to the amount of 15,000 lire, and in return receiving his Holiness' Apostolic blessing. Last Easter Monday the Pope could not receive the pious donor, and deferred her reception to the following day. The lady did not return to the Vatican, and vows she never will again.

WHEN the Prince of Wales arrived in Paris

on his way homeward from Vienna the journals, with their accustomed accuracy, announced that he came there in his little cigar-shaped steam yacht, effecting the voyage in eight hours. Shakespeare must then have been right after all, there must be some "seaport in Bohemia," whence our Prince embarked. But, as our French friends have supposed the Piræus to be a man, and the famous Venus to be the work of a Greek statuery named Milo, they may be held excused for this little geographical blunder.

It is reported from Rome that a quarrel took place between an editor and a brave and well-known officer of the Italian army. A challenge was, of course, the result, and a duel. The whole press was in anxious expectation to know the result, and telegrams were awaited with impatience. At last the news is wired throughout the country, and such a noise is made about the matter that the authorities intervene. The duellists are charged to appear before the Bench to answer the accusation of criminal duelling. The Court was thronged with people, mostly women, as usual, but who certainly never expected to hear what they heard, namely, that the combatants' witnesses had loaded the pistols with "chocolate drops."

RECENT social scandals in Paris have revealed the existence of certain clandestine associations, which have improved black-mailing into a perfect trade. It has always been thought that establishments of this kind were only to be found in the feuilletons of Emile Gaboriau, Xavier de Montépin, and other prolific sensational novelists; but it now appears that ingenious individuals have chosen as a calling to discover and keep account of any dangerous or derogatory actions in the lives of well-known persons or those likely to become so, in the sole view of driving base bargains with the victims at some given period. It will be difficult for the police to reach these occult organizations, which flourish in mystery; but their effect has been clearly felt in some late painful cases, and any one in Paris conscious of a skeleton in the cupboard will live in dread that the secret black-mailers may have obtained the key of that receptacle, and will assail him with threats to throw it open to the world unless he purchases their silence at an onerous rate.

THERE is not a city in the world where opera-glasses are more extensively used than in Paris. The first thing that strikes a stranger visiting a French theatre is the perfect coolness with which the pit, hat on head, aims its glasses at the galleries, and how the galleries bravely respond. And not in the theatres only. No man can stare at you more audaciously than the *boulevardier*. In the House of Commons it is not considered "good form" to look at the representatives of the nation with an opera glass, and the practice is generally avoided. At the Palais Bourbon, in the Chamber of Deputies, the case is different. In the diplomatic gallery, and in all the galleries, you see a regular battery of opera-glasses turned towards M. Gambetta as he enters, or towards M. de Cassagnac as he speaks. No one objects. This habit of staring with the naked eye, or with the opera-glass, seems to have always been prevalent here. "Paris is full of those un pitying *logneurs* who post themselves before you and fix upon your person a firm and steady gaze." This is the testimony of old Mercier. This habit is no longer considered indecent, because it has become so common. Women do not take offence at it, provided they are looked at in the theatres and in their promenade. But if anyone were to eye them in such a manner in private company, the *logneur* would be taxed with insolence, and treated as impolite.

## HUMOROUS.

A HOST IN HIMSELF.—The cannibal who devoured his entertainer.

DOMESTIC PHILOSOPHY.—When there is a storm in the nursery, the mother will castor oil on the waters in vain.

## ON AN OLD MAID.

Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,

Lies Arabella Young.

Who on the 24th of May

Began to hold her tongue.

A.—"My wife won't even hear of my going to the theatre with another lady!" B.—(slightly to the wrong tack)—"Won't, eh? Don't be too sure of that. I thought mine wouldn't, but she did, and there was the *d—l* to pay. I can tell you!"

SCENE.—Restaurant. Major: "Er—ah, waitah, I wish two chops: the one to be made ready betwixt the othah. Do you heah?" Waiter: "Yes, sir. An' which chop will ye have first?"

THE DESIRE OF THE SONS OF MEN.—"What does *encore menu*?" asks a contemporary. It is only one phase of the universal desire among the sons of men to get something for nothing, and get it at once.

TO A WIDOWER: "Is it true that you are going to marry again?" "It's very true." "And whom do you marry?" "My dead wife's sister." "Is she handsome?" "No." "Rich?" "Not at all." "Then why have you chosen her?" "To tell you the truth, my dear friend, in order not to change mother-in-laws."

## ORGAN FOR SALE.

From one of the best manufactories of the Dominion. New, and an excellent instrument. Will be sold cheap. Apply at this office.