

hail from Russia, Sweden, England, or Spain, we all have something wrong with our respiratory organs. A man is better known here by his cough than by his name. Then we all drink the sulphur waters. Ah! what a merry gurgling resounds through the establishment! There you may hear the tenor gargle, and the baritone gargle, and the soprano gargle; but Dr. Manes informs me that a bad gargle is prognostic of grave disease. We playfully christen the place 'La Ville de Expectoration.' But we are happy. We take our little walks; we eat our little dinners; we listen to our good band; we— But what is the matter?

What was the matter, forsooth! The matter was, that on the very next chairs to ours were seated Mrs. Brockbuck and her daughter. The older lady pretended not to see me, but continued talking to her daughter, who still wore the dreadful red berret. Their presence put a stop to all my enjoyment. It turned suddenly chilly; the band became discordant; Pascal resumed his revolting cynical smile and said nothing. I—well—I could not trust myself to speak, so retired quickly to my room. Even there the red berret fascinated me; I could not take my eyes from it. I saw it from my window, now in one seat and now in another, or promenading round the enclosure with my nephew. It acted on me like the scarlet flag on a Spanish bull; so at last I pulled down the blind and set to work considering what should be done. Presently a tap at the door, and enter Dr. Manes to pay his usual visit. Here was a chance of getting out of the dilemma. "I was anxious to return home," I said; "was my throat sufficiently restored for me to take the journey?"

"Ah, no," he replied. "Monsieur is better—is much better—but the cure will not be thorough unless more time is given to the waters. Ah, what a pity not to complete the cure! Has monsieur bad news from home?"

"No; but I was anxious to leave Eaux Bonnes for a little."

"Ah! that could be managed now. Would monsieur like to rest a little at Eaux Chaudes—a charming place—but five kilomètres hence! Madame Baudot of the hotel would make monsieur so comfortable and so happy. He would feel at home and could take the waters there. Should he give monsieur a letter of introduction to Madame Baudot of Eaux Chaudes?"

The very thing! I would not procrastinate for one moment, so then and there got the letter, and after dinner told Pascal and Charles of my resolve.

"Your uncle," said Pascal, "is a psychological study. He has got—ah! what has he got?"—(here was a pause for the horrible meat munching)—"he has got Exclusiveness on the brain. If he had his way, I believe he would admit none but what you English call the Upper Ten to drink the waters here. You notice he cannot breathe the same air as our friends the Brockbucks."

"Dr. Pascal," I said emphatically, "I cannot permit you to make these personal reflections. I surely may be permitted to take my own course in the matter."

"I am not sure, sir," he replied, "that I can permit my friends to be slighted."

"Come, come! you must not quarrel about them," broke in Charles. "I should like you to know them, uncle; but if you don't wish it just now, I have no doubt it will be all right by-and-by."

"If you think, sir, that I shall ever be intimate with them, you are mistaken: I don't intend to be."

"Ah!" said Pascal, "that is what you grand people would call Firmness or Determination; with common folks it would be called Obstinacy."

"I cannot and will not submit to be insulted," I said, jumping up; "and as for you, Charles, it comes to this: you must just choose between me and these Brockbucks. You know what you have to expect from me, but if you persist in this intimacy our relations must be changed."

"My dear uncle," he replied, "if I were to give up my dear old friends for such considerations as you hint, you would be the first to call me a blackguard."

"We shall see, sir—we shall see!" And off I went without bidding them good night. Next day it rained, but notwithstanding this I set off before breakfast, leaving my servant to follow with the luggage. He found me moderately comfortable in one of the upper sitting-rooms of the Hotel Baudot, and in the evening Charles and Pascal actually appeared as if nothing had happened! Of course I was not going to make an open rupture, but contented myself with an attitude of reserve. By tacit consent we avoided the obnoxious topic, taking our meals and making excursions together as usual.

I well remember how we had returned from Gabas rather early, owing to the heat. My servant had unpacked the luggage, and there it was lying all about the room, with sundry loose straps and ropes. I had taken my coat off, and was reading the paper when I became aware that my nephew was speaking to some person out of the window. He held a coil of small rope in his hand, one end of which was out of the window, the other on the floor.

It was enough; I recognized Miss Brockbuck's voice! "Come away directly, sir!" I exclaimed, snatching at the rope and giving it a good tug. There was a scream.

"Hillo, uncle!" said Charles, "you have caught her wrist. Hold on while I go and loosen it."

He was off like a shot, and when I looked from

the window there sure enough was Miss Brockbuck below, vainly endeavoring to release her hand from the slip-knot. I loosened the rope and this made matters worse. Somehow or other it caught round her neck, and in trying to free it I knocked off the red berret and half strangled her.

Another little scream, and out ran Dr. Pascal and Mrs. Brockbuck.

"Good heavens!" she cried, putting up her double eye-glasses; "what dreadful thing is happening! Is he killing my child?"

"I assure madam," I began solemnly.

"Hillo, Stonnor! are you emulating the Thugs?" shouted Pascal.

"I assure both," I cried; but here, horrible to relate, came a chorus of jabbering and laughter from a crowd of muleteers and women who had congregated in front of the hotel.

"Ah! look at him!" said one. "Regard the way in which Les Anglais catch their women!"

"The assassin is strangling her!" said another.

It was a most undignified position—I, in my shirt-sleeves, holding on to the rope; Miss Brockbuck with disarranged hair, and her book and red berret in the dust; her mother too much alarmed to do anything but stare, and Pascal grinning with cynical delight.

To this day I don't know how I kept up through it all, but when Charley freed her at last I simply fell back into the chair in a dead faint. He dashed into my room.

"I say, uncle, what on earth made you jerk the rope like that?"

"Why, on earth, sir," I gasped, "were you at the window? What were you doing with that rope?"

"Doing? All I did was to let down the Tauchnitz book that Annie wanted, and while she was taking it you nearly dislocated her wrist."

"I believe you will drive me mad, sir," I said. "These friends of yours have chased me out of Bordeaux, out of Pau, and out of Eaux Bonnes. I did think I should find rest here; instead of which you come and create a complete fiasco. I am covered with shame and confusion. I will never forgive you!"

"Who speaks of forgiving?" And in walked Pascal, looking more like Mephistopheles than ever. "It strikes me that Mr. Peter Stonnor is the one to sue for forgiveness."

"Now, once for all, sir," I cried, starting up, "I shall not permit you to interfere with my affairs any longer."

"Be tranquil, be tranquil!" he replied. "Let us consider this affair dispassionately. Do not let us show any temper. What is the history of this case? First of all I wish to introduce you to two charming lady friends of mine and you refuse. This is insult No. 1. Then you run away from them. You avoid them pointedly and rudely. This is insult No. 2. Then you see one of them here in her quiet promenade, and you play your practical joke. You catch her with the—ah! what is it?" (here he actually stopped for his loathsome meat-gnawing)—"yes, sir, you catch her with the noose. You are pleased to practise the old savage custom of capture of women with the lasso—but it won't do, sir; and, as a friend of these unprotected ladies, I say you must apologize."

"I shall not do so at your bidding, sir!"

"Then, sir, I shall expect the satisfaction which one gentleman expects from another who has insulted him."

"I am at your service, sir."

We bowed, and he stalked grandly out of the room.

"For goodness' sake, uncle," said Charles, "don't get into any ridiculous row! The whole thing is absurd. I'll arrange it all."

"You will do nothing of the kind, sir. You now see to what a dilemma your conduct has brought me. I cannot as a gentleman do otherwise than apologize to Miss Brockbuck; not at Dr. Pascal's bidding, but of my own accord. I will do it once. Where is she?"

"Just crossing the little bridge towards the summer-house."

Putting on my coat, I hurried after her. The red berret was a good guide, but what with the late excitement and the pace she walked, the steep ascent was almost too much for me. She went into the summer-house, and after a pause to recover my breath, I followed. Here, to my misery, I was confronted with Mrs. Brockbuck and Dr. Pascal. My apologies were not made with the ease and readiness I could have wished. The situation was trying. Pascal, however, smoothed matters considerably by promptly coming forward and expressing his sorrow for having caused me any annoyance.

"But did I not tell you," he said, "that you were fighting your fate? Just see what has happened! You—"

"Ah! never mind what has happened," said Mrs. Brockbuck. (And it is only fair to state that she spoke with a lady-like grace I was unprepared for.) Don't think any more about it. Really, now one recalls that scene at the window, it was most laughable."

And they laughed; but I couldn't. Indeed, after this I felt there would be little more comfort for me in the Pyrenees.

Again I tried Charles, but might as well have spoken to a stone. When I became more exigent he said, "Remember 'Stonnor et Honor,' uncle; would you have me break my word? Would you have a Stonnor throw over an engagement for any worldly consideration?"

I hate this kind of argument, so left him in a sort of huff. His father (to whom I had telegraphed from Paris) was waiting for me when I

returned home. I told him all the circumstances.

"You must interfere peremptorily," I said. "You have authority with him, I have none. Write at once—I am certain the Fortons would jump at the match."

"Adelaide Forton is a mere child," he said.

"But she won't always be a child," I replied; "this is just what I pointed out to Charles. With a little tact the affair can be managed."

"If you move a finger in the matter you will be a bigger fool than I took you for," he said coarsely. "I shall let Charley do as he likes. The Brockbucks are as good as the Fortons any day."

"How can you compare these Liverpool crane people with the Fortons?" I cried, in warmth; "but you were always impracticable, and always will be."

I then bethought me of our old vicar, Mr. Temple. He held the living from the Stonnors and had been Charles's tutor. If anybody could influence him it would be he. When I had narrated the case, I said, "Write to him paternally, Mr. Temple, and prevent this falling into this error. He has an affectionate regard for you and will heed your words."

"Even if I did write," he rejoined, "I could not give him the advice you wish—you must forgive me for saying, and mind I speak as an old friend, that I don't think you are acting quite fairly to him. Charles is a fine young fellow, much beloved here by rich and poor. He is not at all likely to make a bad choice in a wife. I happen to know that the Brockbucks are superior people. I am sure you will think differently about it by-and-by."

I left him with frigid courtesy. It was very hard, this meeting with no sort of sympathy in the matter. It worried me and made me ill. One more letter to Charles and then I shut myself up for some weeks.

His answer came at last, worded properly enough, but enclosing an invitation from Mrs. Brockbuck to the marriage.

Here then was an end to all my hope! While desponding over it the Fortons called.

"Come to congratulate you, Stonnor," began his lordship; "only heard of it this morning and drove across directly. Capital thing to get our friend Charley settled!"

"Altogether a very nice match," chimed in his wife.

"Well, I'm not quite sure," I said.

"But I am sure," interrupted Forton. "I know the girl and you don't. She is charming, I assure you; so is her mother."

"You are right Forton," said Lady Forton; "they are delightful people, and depend upon it, Mr. Stonnor, when you know them you'll think the same."

"I cannot look forward to it with much pleasure," I rejoined; "besides, I had hoped—"

"What could you look for better or more desirable?" she asked.

"He might have looked nearer home," I said meaningly.

"I should like to know whom he could have found nearer home," said Forton.

"Ah, there is just one," I said.

"Who on earth is it?" asked her ladyship.

"Your daughter Adelaide, Lady Forton. You don't know how I have looked forward to it. It would have been so pleasant."

"Adie!" she cried; "why, she is a child. I never heard such nonsense."

"Pity you haven't got a nephew for the baby, Stonnor," said Forton.

Here they both laughed merrily.

"Ah," said her ladyship presently, "never mind, Mr. Stonnor; young people are apt to settle these matters for themselves, and perhaps it is right they should."

They drove off, but I could not bring myself to answer the latter and invitation that lay before me. It was wrong and churlish, it was ill-mannered; but I could not bring my mind to it. Day after day, as the wedding approached, I felt the matter more keenly, and grieved to think what might have been.

Two days before the marriage I had a surprise. My butler informed me that a deputation was waiting on me. In the hall I found quite a large party of my tenants, headed by Dawson, the gamekeeper. They had brought with them a handsome silver ewer, which they desired me to convey to Charles and his bride with their good wishes. I was quite unprepared for this expression of respect, and, indeed, so touched by their simple words of affection that my whole feelings on the matter seemed suddenly to change. My heart was so full I scarcely knew how I thanked them, but remember saying I would at once convey their gift and good wishes to the bride and bridegroom. An uncontrollable impulse seized me. I telegraphed an acceptance of the invitation, started to London by the first train, bought there the handsomest set of pearls I could find, and arrived at Aigburth Vale, near Liverpool, in time to present them to the bride before the wedding.

"How happy they all were, and how glad to see me!"

As to the wedding it was a beautiful sight, but nothing compared to that when a week or two later the young couple paid me their promised visit.

Quite a cavalcade met them at the Dorton station. As I stood anxiously awaiting them at my door, the small birds were singing and the Grange rooks screaming their welcome.

Presently, when the carriage entered the park gates, the horses were unharnessed, and a dozen willing hands pulled the carriage up the avenue. Then the band struck up, and the bells from

Mr. Temple's church burst into a joyful peal of welcome to the young wife.

She looked like an angel of light as she stepped out in the glorious sunshine, with the flowers at her feet, and has been the light of my house ever since.

# ECHOES FROM PARIS.

Paris, Oct. 14.

THE Prince Orloff has managed to get well just in time to be ready for Paris life, which has recommenced. *Voilà* the Prince returned and cured. Everyone is glad to see him socially; diplomatically—that is another affair.

THAT most enterprising American gentleman, Mr. Francis B. Uffner, generally considered the second T. P. Barnum, is, we believe, about to give Parisians an opportunity of seeing his wonderful collection of enormous giants and diminutive midgets. His household is certainly unique, comprising the largest and the smallest people in the world.

M. DUVAUX, the present Minister of the Fine Arts, energetically repudiates the allegation that he authorized the sorceress Mme. Cavaillat to search with a magic wand for treasure in the vaults of St. Denis, but the fact that searches were lately made by her is not denied. She had a treaty occupying twenty-five folios of legal phraseology from M. Jules Ferry's Ministry.

PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA, whose health is at present considerably affected, was visited last week by the ex-Empress Eugénie, who had come to Paris for that purpose from Mouchy, where she is staying at present. The Empress was accompanied by a Maid of Honor, by Count de Turenne, and by M. Rambaud. Prince de la Moskowa is at present aged seventy-one, and it is feared that his life is approaching its close.

WE must have had vulgar ancestors in England, according to the recent researches of an Italian *savant*, who says the British ate with their knives till the seventeenth century, when the fork was first introduced into this country. He states that the first user of the fork in Italy was a Byzantine Princess living in Venice (we know Italians have always used the knife). The Germans ate with their fork in the sixteenth century. The French also put that instrument into their mouths about the same date, but used it for other purposes than conveying food.

THE Prague farmer must be a man of culture. One of them advertises in a French paper for a dairymaid. Besides being clever with cows she must speak good German, French, and English. If, says the advertiser, she can play the piano it would be taken into consideration as an extra inducement for her selection. Any young and larkish young actress out of work might find a good joke in assuming the part of Martha—perhaps she might discover a Tristan. As to milking cows, that can be learned by aid of a wooden fac-simile in a few hours.

AN interesting matrimonial engagement has just taken place in the American colony, namely that of Miss Lillian Norton (Mlle. Nordica) to Mr. Allan Gower. The fortunate bridegroom, though a man of large wealth, will not, it is said, insist upon taking his gifted *fiancée* from the stage, as he was at first desirous of doing, for she is naturally anxious to continue in the artistic career which she has so brilliantly commenced. Owing to the great personal loveliness and charming intellectual and moral qualities of the young *prima donna*, such a consummation was to have been expected, though not perhaps quite so early in her career. Miss Norton has commenced her studies of *Françoise de Rimini* under the personal supervision of Ambrose Thomas. But before assuming that character she will appear at the Grand Opéra as Mathilde in *Guillaume Tell*.

# HUMOROUS.

APPROPRIATE name for a bull-dog—Agrippa.

THE comet has a very long tail, but a very short period.

THE difference between a dandy and a fat hog—one is dressed to kill and the other is killed to dress.

AN engaged girl is happiest when she is telling about it to another girl who is not engaged and is not likely to be.

QUERY, Three-Legged Stool!—Wiggins writes to a friend that his honeymoon's over, and that it's the comb now.

WHAT is the difference between a timid child and a shipwrecked sailor?—One clings to his ma, and the other to his spar.

AN old bachelor says, "It is all nonsense to pretend that love is blind. I never yet knew a man in love that did not see ten times as much in his sweetheart as I could."

A FASHIONABLE lady in boasting of her new "palatial residence," said the windows were all of stained glass. "That's too bad!" cried her mother. "But won't soap and turpentine take the stains out?"

"How have the mighty fallen?" Well, some slip up on a banana skin, some use the money of the bank for speculation, and fail to connect, and others fall in coal chutes in the dark.