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### PERFECTLY SAFE.

"I reckon you have to watch your pocketbook an' overcoat an' watch, an' so on, pretty close, don't you?" a Western visitor to New York asked a friend, a native of that metropolis, as they were starting out to view the city; and, despite the citizen's assurance that no more than ordinary vigilance was required, the Westerner proceeded "to keep his eye skinned," much to his friend's amusement.

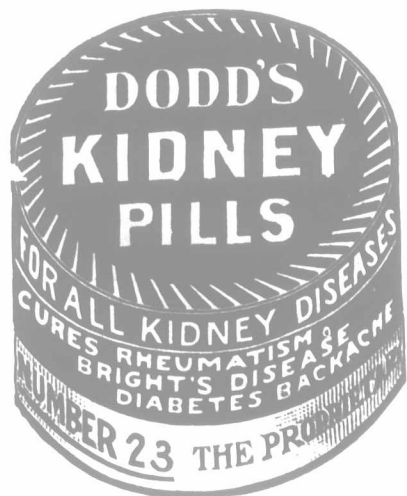
Presently they entered a cafe for luncheon. The New Yorker was discoursing gayly upon the greatness of his native city, when he observed that the other had an expression on his face much like that of a cat at a mouse-hole.

"What are you watching so closely," he inquired.

"Just keeping an eye on my overcoat," the other replied.

The New Yorker laughed. "Oh, the coat's all right. I'm not worrying about mine, you see, and they're hanging together."

"No, they ain't," the Westerner drawled. "Mine's still there, but yours is gone—feller walked out with it 'bout ten minutes or so ago."



tion was embarrassed, and almost ceased.

To extricate herself from her momentary confusion, which she was very conscious had not escaped the observation of Pierre—and the thought of that confused her still more—she rose and went to the harpsichord, to recover her composure by singing a sweet song of her own composition, written in the soft dialect of Provence, the Languedoc, full of the sweet sadness of a tender, impassioned love.

Her voice, tremulous in its power, flowed in a thousand harmonies on the enraptured ears of her listeners. Even the veteran card-players left a game of whist unfinished, to cluster round the angelic singer.

Pierre Philibert sat like one in a trance. He loved music, and understood it passing well. He had heard all the rare voices which Paris prided itself in possession of, but he thought he had never known what music was till now. His heart throbbed in sympathy with every inflection of the voice of Amelie, which went through him like a sweet spell of enchantment. It was the voice of a disembodied spirit singing in the language of earth, which changed at last into a benediction and good-night for the parting guests, who, at an earlier hour than usual, out of consideration for the fatigue of their hosts, took their leave of the Manor House and its hospitable inmates.

The family, as families will do upon the departure of their guests, drew up in a narrower circle round the fire, that blessed circle of freedom and confidence which belongs only to happy households. The novelty of the situation kept up the interest of the day, and they sat and conversed until a late hour.

The Lady de Tilly reclined comfortably in her fauteuil, looking with good-natured complacency upon the little group beside her. Amelie, sitting on a stool, reclined her head against the bosom of her aunt, whose arm embraced her closely and lovingly, as she listened with absorbing interest to an animated conversation between her aunt and Pierre Philibert.

The Lady de Tilly drew Pierre out to talk of his travels, his studies, and his military career, of which he spoke frankly and modestly. His high principles won her admiration; the chivalry and loyalty of his character, mingled with the humanity of the true soldier, touched a chord in her own heart, stirring within her the sympathies of a nature akin to his.

The presence of Pierre Philibert, so unforeseen, at the old Manor House, seemed to Amelie the work of Providence for a good and great end—the reformation of her brother. If she dared to think of herself in connection with him, it was with fear and trembling, as a saint on earth receives a beatific vision that may only be realized in Heaven.

Amelie, with peculiar tact, sought to entangle Le Gardeur's thoughts in an elaborate cobweb of occupations rivaling that of Arachne, which she had woven to catch every leisure hour of his, so as to leave him no time to brood over the pleasures of the Palace of the Intendant or the charms of Angelique des Meloises.

There were golden threads, too, in the network in which she hoped to entangle him—long rides to the neighboring seignories, where bright eyes and laughing lips were ready to expel every shadow of care from the most dejected of men, much more from a handsome gallant like Le Gardeur de Rebertus, whose presence at any of these old manors put their fair inmates at once in holiday trim and in holiday humor; there were shorter walks through the park and domain of Tilly, where she intended to botanize and sketch, and even fish and hunt with Le Gardeur and Pierre, although, sooth to say, Amelie's share in hunting would only be to ride her sure-footed pony and look at her com'ers; there were visits to friends far and near, and visits in return to the Manor House

and a grand excursion of all to the lake of Tilly in boats—they would colonize its little island for a day, set up tents, make a governor and intendant, perhaps a king and queen, and forgot the world till their return home.

This elaborate scheme secured the approbation of the Lady de Tilly, who had, in truth, contributed part of it. Le Gardeur said he was a poor fly whom they were resolved to catch and pin to the wall of a chateau en Espagne, but he would enter the web without a buzz of opposition on condition that Pierre would join him. So it was all settled.

Amelie did not venture again that night to encounter the eyes of Pierre Philibert—she needed more courage than she felt just now to do that; but in secret she blessed him, and treasured those fond looks of his in her heart, never to be forgotten any more. When she retired to her own chamber and was alone, she threw herself in passionate abandonment before the altar in her little oratory, which she had crowned with flowers to mark her gladness. She poured out her pure soul in invocations of blessings upon Pierre Philibert, and upon her brother and all the house. The golden bead of her rosary lingered long in her loving fingers that night, as she repeated over and over her accustomed prayers for his safety and welfare.

The sun rose gloriously next morning over the green woods and still greener meadows of Tilly. The atmosphere was soft and pure; it had been washed clean of all its impurities by a few showers in the night. Every object seemed nearer and clearer to the eye, while the delicious odor of fresh flowers filled the whole air with fragrance.

The trees, rocks, waters and green slopes stood out with marvellous precision of outline, as if cut with a keen knife. No fringe of haze surrounded them, as in a drought, or as in the evening when the air is filled with the shimmering of the day dust which follows the sun's chariot in his course round the world.

Every object, great and small, seemed magnified to welcome Pierre Philibert, who was up betimes this morning, and out in the pure air, viewing the old familiar scenes.

With what delight he recognized each favorite spot! There was the cluster of trees which crowned a promontory overlooking the St. Lawrence, where he and Le Gardeur had stormed the eagle's nest. In that sweep of forest the deer used to browse and the fawns crouch in the long ferns. Upon yonder breezy hill they used to sit and count the sails, turning alternately bright and dark, as the vessels tacked up the broad river. There was a stretch of green lawn, still green as it was in his memory—how everlasting are God's colors! There he had taught Amelie to ride, and, holding fast, ran by her side, keeping pace with her flying Indian pony. How beautiful and fresh the picture of her remained in his memory!—the soft white dress she wore, her black hair streaming over her shoulders, her dark eyes flashing delight, her merry laugh rivaling the trill of the blackbird which flew over their heads chattering for very joy. Before him lay the pretty brook, with its rustic bridge reflecting itself in the clear water as in a mirror. That path along the bank led down to the willows, where the big, mossy stones lay in the stream, and the silvery salmon and speckled trout lay fanning the water gently with their fins as they contemplated their shadows on the smooth, sandy bottom.

Pierre Philibert sat down on a stone by the side of the brook and watched the shoals of minnows move about in little battalions, wheeling like soldiers to the right or left at a wave of the hand. But his thoughts were running in a circle of questions and enigmas, for which he found neither end nor answer.

For the hundredth time Pierre pondered himself the torturing en-

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