

ROSALIE AND THEODORE.

"Will you remember me, Rosalie?" "Yes!" "Will you keep your hand for me a year?" "Yes!" "Will you answer me when I write to you?" "Yes!" "One request more—Oh, Rosalie, reflect that my life depends upon your acquaintance—should I succeed, will you marry me in spite of your uncle?" "Yes," answered Rosalie.

"Twas in a green lane, on a summer's evening, about nine o'clock, when we, like a gale of wind, had shut upon the retiring sun, that Rosalie and her lover, hand in hand, walked up and down.

Rosalie was upwards of five years the junior of her lover. She had known him since she was a little girl in her twelfth year. He was almost eighteen then, and when she thought of more about a doll than a husband, he would set her on his knee and call her his little wife. One, two, three years passed on; and still, whenever he came from college, and as usual went to pay his first visit at her father's before he had been five minutes in the parlor the door was flung open, and in bounded Rosalie, and claimed her accustomed seat. The fact was till she was fifteen, she was a child of a very slow growth, and looked the girl whom many a companion of her's of the same age had begun to appear the woman.

When another vacation, however, came round, and Theodore paid his customary call, and was expecting his little wife as usual, the door opened slowly, and a tall young lady entered, and, courtesying, colored, and walked to a seat next the lady of the house. The visitor stood up and bowed, and sat down again, without knowing that it was Rosalie.

"Don't you know Rosalie?" exclaimed her father. "Rosalie!" replied Theodore in an accent of surprise; and approached his little wife of old, who rose and half gave him her hand, and, courtesying, colored again; and sat down again without having introduced a word with him.

Theodore felt disappointed. He had never anticipated that the frankness of girlhood would vanish. At the next vacation, when he paid his first visit, he absented himself from the vicinity of Rosalie, who resolved, if possible, to ascertain the cause, and persuaded her mother to give a ball, and specially invite the young gentleman. He came; she watched him; observed that he neither inquired after nor sought for her; and marked the excellent terms that he was upon with twenty people, about whom she knew him to be perfectly indifferent. Women have a perception of the workings of the heart, far more quick and subtle than we have. She was convinced that all his fine spirits were forced—that he was acting a part. She suspected that while he appeared to be occupied with everybody but Rosalie, Rosalie was the only body that was running in his thoughts. She saw him withdraw to the library; she followed him; found him sitting down with a book in his hand; perceived, from his manner of turning over the leaves, that he was intent on anything but reading. She was satisfied that he was thinking of nothing but Rosalie. The thought that Rosalie might one day become indeed his wife now occurred to her for the thousandth time; and a thousand times stronger than ever, a spirit diffused itself through her heart which had never been breathed into it before; and filling it with hope and happiness, an unutterable contentment, irresistibly drew it towards him. She approached him, scooped him and in a moment was seated with him, hand in hand, upon the sofa.

As soon as the dance was done— "Rosalie," said Theodore, "his almost as warm in the air as in the room; will you be afraid to take a turn with me in the garden?" "I will get my shawl in a minute," said Rosalie, "and meet you there;" and the maiden was there almost as soon as he.

They proceeded, arm in arm, to the farthest part of the garden; and there they walked up and down without either seeming inclined to speak, as though their hearts could discourse through their hands, which were locked in one another. "Rosalie!" at last breathed Theodore. "Rosalie!" breathed he a second time, before the expectant girl could summon courage to say "Well!" "I cannot go home to-night," resumed he, "without speaking to you." Yet Theodore seemed to be in no hurry to speak; for there he stopped, and continued silent so long, that Rosalie began to doubt whether he would open his lips again.

"When we have done with our girlhood, we have done with our plays," said Rosalie. "I do not mean in play, dear Rosalie," cried Theodore. "It is not playing at man and wife to walk, as such, out of church. Will you marry me, Rosalie?"

Rosalie was silent. "Will you marry me?" repeated he. Not a word would Rosalie speak. "Hear me!" cried Theodore. "The first day, Rosalie, I took you upon my knee, and called you my wife, just as if my heart was, my heart was never more in earnest. That day I wedded you in my soul; for though you were a child, I saw the future woman in you, rich in the richest attractions of your sex. Nay, do me justice; recall what you yourself have known of me; inquire of others. To whom did I play the suitor from that day? To none but you, although to you I did not seem to play it. Rosalie! was I not always with you? Recollect now! Did a day pass, when I was at home without my coming to your father's house? When there were parties there, whom did I stand beside, but you? Whom did I start behind at the piano forte, but you? Nay, for the night, whom have I danced with, but you? Whatever you might have thought then, can you believe now, that it was merely a playful child that could have so engrossed me? No, Rosalie! it was the virtuous, generous, lovely, loving woman that I saw in the playful child. Rosalie! for five years I have loved you, though I never declared it to you till now. Do you think I am worthy of you? Will you give yourself to me? Will you marry me?"

Three or four times Rosalie made an effort to speak, but desisted, as if she knew not what to say, or was unable to say what she wished; Theodore still holding her hand. At last, "Ask my father's consent!" she exclaimed, and tried to get away; but before she could affect it, she was clasped to the bosom of Theodore, nor released until the interchange of the first pledge of love had been forced from her bashful lips! She did not appear that night in the drawing-room again.

Theodore's addresses were sanctioned by the parents of Rosalie. The wedding day was fixed; it wanted but a fortnight to it, when a malignant fever made its appearance in the town; Rosalie's parents were the first victims. She was left an orphan at eighteen; and her uncle, by her mother's side, who had been nominated her guardian in a will, made a several years, having followed her brother-in-law and sister's remains to the grave, took up his residence at B—.

Rosalie's sole consolation now was such as she received from the society of Theodore; but Theodore soon wanted consolation himself. His father was attacked by the fever, and died, leaving his affairs, to the astonishment of every one, in a state of the most inextricable embarrassment; for he had been looked upon as one of the wealthiest inhabitants of B—.

This was a double blow to Theodore, but he was not aware of the weight of it, till, after the interment of his father, he repaired, for the first time, to resume his visits to his Rosalie. He was stepping up without ceremony to the drawing-room, when the servant begged his pardon for stopping him, telling at the same time, that he had instructions from his master to show Theodore into the parlour when he should call.

"Was Miss Wilford there?" "No." Theodore was shown in to the parlour. "Well, young gentleman, is the salutation which Theodore received when he entered the parlour, "pray what brings you here?" Theodore was struck dumb; and no wonder. "Your father, I understand has died a beggar? Do you think to marry my niece?" If Theodore replied with difficulty before, his breath was utterly taken away at this. He was a young man of spirit; but who can keep up his heart when his ship all at once is going down?

The human dog went on. "Young gentleman, I shall be plain with you, for I am a straight forward man; young women should mate with their matches—you are no match for my niece; so a good morning to you?" One may easily imagine the state of the young fellow's mind. To be driven with insult and barbarity from the house in which he had been received a thousand times with courtesy and kindness—which he looked upon as his own! Then what was to be done? Rosalie's uncle, after all, had told him nothing but the truth. His father had died a beggar! Dear as Rosalie was to Theodore his own pride recoiled at the idea of offering her a hand which was not the master of a shilling. Yet was not Theodore portionless. His education was finished; that term he had completed his collegiate studies. If his father had not left him a fortune, he had provided him with the means of making one himself—at all events, of commanding a competency. He had the credit of being a young man of decided genius too. "I will not offer Rosalie a beggar's hand!" exclaimed Theodore; "I shall ask her to remain true to me for a year; and I'll go to London, and maintain myself by my pen. It may acquire me fame as well as fortune, and then I may marry Rosalie!"

This was great deal of work to be done in a year; but if Theodore was not a man of genius, he possessed a mind of that sanguine temperament

which is usually an accompaniment of the richer gift. Before the hour of dinner, all plans were laid, and he was ready to start for London. He waited for nothing but a message from Rosalie in answer to a desire he had expressed to the servant at the house to see herself. They met, and Theodore's wishes, as already stated, were granted. She promised to wait for him in a year. In another minute they had said good-bye, and parted.

Theodore thought himself a happy fellow to find himself in such a place as London! He was certainly happy in one thing; the vehicle in which he came set him down at a friend's, whose heart was large. Strange that, with all the attentions of hospitality at its command, abundance should allow it to be said that the kindest welcome which adversity usually meets with, is that which it receives from adversity! If Theodore found that the house was a cold one to what he had been accustomed, the warmth of the greeting made up for it. They breakfasted at nine, dined at four, and, if he could sleep upon the sofa, why, there was a bed for him! In a day he was settled and at his work.

And upon what did Theodore found his hopes of making his fortune and rising to fame in London? Upon writing a play. At an early period he had discovered, as his friends imagined, a talent for dramatic composition; and, having rather sedulously cultivated that branch of literature, he thought he would now try his hand in one bold effort, the success of which should determine him as to his future course in life. The play was written, presented, and accepted; the performers were ready in their parts; the evening of representation came on, and Theodore, seated in the pit beside his friend, at last, with a throbbing heart, beheld the curtain rise. The first and second acts went off smoothly, and with applause.

Two gentlemen were placed in front of Theodore. "What do you think of it?" said one to the other. "Rather tame," was the reply. "Will it succeed?" "Doubtful." The third act, however, decided the fate of the play; the interest of the audience became so intense that at one particular stage of the action, numbers in the second and third rows of the side boxes stood up, and the clapping of hands was universal, intermingled with cries of "Bravo!" from every part of the theatre. "Well do," was now the remark, and Theodore breathed more freely than he had done some minutes ago. Not to be too tedious, the curtain fell amidst shouts of approbation, unmingled with the slightest demonstration of displeasure, and the author had not twenty unfriendly critics in the house.

The play had what is called a run, but not a decided one. Night after night it was received with the same enthusiastic applause; but the audiences did not increase. It was a victory without the acquisition of spoils of territory. "What can the meaning of this be," exclaimed Theodore; "we seem to be moving, and yet do not advance an inch!" "They should paragraph the play as they do a pantomime," remarked his friend. "But then a pantomime is an expensive thing; they will lay out thousands of pounds upon one, and they must get their money back. The same is the case with their melodramas; so, if you want to succeed to the height, as a playwright, you know what to do."

"What?" inquired Theodore. "Write melodramas and pantomimes?" Six months had now elapsed, and Theodore's purse, with all his success, was rather lighter than when he first pulled it out in London. However, in a week two bills which he had taken from his publisher would fall due, and then he would run down to B—, and perhaps obtain an interview with Rosalie. At the expiration of the week his bills were presented, and dishonored! He repaired to his publisher for an explanation—the house had stopped, Poor Theodore! They were in the Gazette that very day. Theodore turned into the first coffee room to look at a paper; there were, indeed, the names of the firm. "I defy fortune to serve me a souvenir trick!" exclaimed Theodore, the tears half starting into his eyes. He little knew the lady whose ingenuity he was braving.

He looked at one side of the paper and now at the other, thinking all the while of nothing but the bills and the bankrupt's list. "Splendid feat at B—," met his eye, and soon his thoughts were occupied with nothing but the young lord of the manor, having just come of age, had given a ball and supper, the former of which he opened with the lovely and accomplished Miss Rosalie—. The grace of the fair couple was expatiated upon; and it was hinted that a pair so formed by nature for each other might probably, before long, take hands in another, a longer, and more stately dance. What did Theodore think of fortune now?

That day Theodore received a letter from Rosalie. "Welcome, sweet comforter!" ejaculated Theodore, as he kissed the cyphers which his Rosalie's hand had traced, and the wax which bore the impress of her seal. "Welcome, O welcome! You come in time, you being an ample

solace for disappointment, mortification, poverty—whatever my evil destiny can afflict! You have come to assure me that they cannot deprive me of my Rosalie. Bright was his eye, and glistering while he spoke; but when he opened the fair folds that conveyed to him the thoughts of his mistress, its radiance was gone!

Theodore—I am aware of the utter frustration of your hopes; I am convinced that at the end of a year you will not be a step near to fortune than you are now, why then keep my hand for you? What I say briefly, you will interpret fully. You are now the guardian of my happiness—as such I address you. Thursday—no consent—will be my wedding day.

Such was the letter, upon the address and seal of which Theodore had imprinted a score of kisses before he opened it. "Fortune is in the mood," said Theodore with a sigh, so deeply drawn that anyone who had heard it would have imagined he had breathed his spirit out along with it—"Fortune is in the mood, and let her have her humour out! I shall answer the letter; my reply to her shall convey what she desires—nothing more! She is incapable of entering into my feelings, and unworthy of being made acquainted with them; I shall not condescend even to complain."

Such was the answer which Theodore despatched to Rosalie. His feelings were unsupportable. On the second day afterwards, as he was crossing a street, he was nearly run over by a vehicle and four. This for a moment awakened him. He saw London and B— upon the panels of the coach. The box seat was empty; he asked if it was engaged. "No," he sprang up upon it, and away they drove. "I'll see her once more," exclaimed Theodore; "it can but drive me mad or break my heart."

The moment the coach stopped at B—, he alighted; and with misgiving mind he stood at the door which had so often admitted him to his Rosalie. "Was opened by a domestic whom he had never seen before. "Was Miss Wilford within?" "No." "Whom would she return?" "Never." She had once that morning to be married! Theodore made no further inquiries, neither did he offer to go, but stood glaring upon the man more like a spectre than a human being. "Anything more?" said the man, retreating into the house, and gradually closing the door, through which now only a portion of his face could be seen. "Anything more?" Theodore made no reply; in fact, he had lost all consciousness. At last, the shutting of the door, which, half from panic, half from anger, the man pushed violently to, aroused him. "I shall knock at you no more!" said he, and departed, pressing his lips with his hand, and moving his limbs as if he cared not how, or whether they bore him. A gate suddenly stopped his progress; 'twas the entrance to the green lane. He stepped over the stile—he was on the spot where he had parted last from Rosalie—where she had flung her arms about his neck, and wept upon it. His heart began to melt, for the first time since he had received her letter: a sense of suffocation came over him, till he felt as if he would choke. The name of Rosalie was on his tongue; twice he attempted to articulate it, but could not. At last, he fell into a convulsive sob, which was followed by a torrent of tears. He threw himself upon the ground—he wept on—he made no effort to check the flood, but let it flow till forgetfulness stopped it.

He rose with a sensation of intense cold. "Was morning! He had slept! "Would he have slept on!" He turned from the sun, as it rose without a cloud, upon the wedding morning of Rosalie. 'Twas Thursday. He re-passed the stile, and in a few minutes was on his road to London, which he entered about eleven o'clock at night, and straight proceeded to his friend's. They were gone to bed. "Give me a light," said Theodore; "I'll go to bed." "Your bed is occupied sir," replied the servant. "Is it?" said Theodore; "well, I can sleep upon the carpet." He turned into the parlour, drew a chair towards the table, upon which the servant had placed a light, and sat down. All was quiet for a time. Presently he heard a foot upon the stair; 'twas his friend's, who was descending, and now entered the parlour. "I thought you were a bed," said Theodore. "So I was," replied his friend, "but hearing your voice in the hall, I rose and came down to you. I drew a chair opposite to Theodore. Both were silent for a time; at length Theodore spoke.

"Rosalie is married," said he. "I don't believe it." "She is going to be married to the young lord of the manor." "I don't believe it." "She came to town with him yesterday." "I don't believe it." Theodore pushed back his chair, and stared at his friend. "What do you mean?" said Theodore. "I mean that I entertain some doubts as to the accuracy of your grounds for concluding that Rosalie is innocent to you."

"Did I not read the proof of it in the public papers?" "The statement may have been erroneous."

"Did not her own letter assure me of it?" "You may have misunderstood it." "I tell you I have been at B—, I have been at her house. I enquired for her, and was told she had gone up to London to be married!" "My friend," continued he, covering his eyes with his handkerchief, "tis useless to deceive ourselves. I am a ruined man! You see to what I have reduced me. I shall never be myself again! Myself! I tell you I existed in her being more than in my own. She was the soul of all I thought, and did; she the primal, vivifying principle! She has murdered me! I breathe, it is true, and the blood is in my veins, and circulates; but everything else about me is dead—hopes! wishes! interests! there is no pulse, no respiration there! I should not be sorry were there none anywhere else! Feel my hand." He felt a tear drop upon the hand which he extended—the tear was followed by the pressure of a lip. He uncovered his eyes, and turning them in wonderment to look upon his friend, beheld Rosalie sitting opposite to him.

For a moment or two he questioned the evidence of his senses, but soon was he convinced that it was indeed reality; for Rosalie, quitting her seat, approached him, and breathed his name with an accent that infused ecstasy into his soul, threw herself into his arms, that doubtfully opened to receive her.

Looking over her father's papers, Rosalie had found a more recent will, in which her union with Theodore had been fully sanctioned, and he himself constituted her guardian until it should take place. She was aware that his success in London had been doubtful; the generous girl determined that she should not be subjected to mortification and disappointment; and she playfully wrote the letter which was a source of such distraction to her lover. From his answer she saw that he totally misinterpreted her; she resolved in person to disabuse him of the error; and offering to become his wife, at once to give him the most convincing proof of her sincerity and constancy. She arrived in London that very day that Theodore arrived in B—. His friend, who had known her from her infancy, received her as his daughter; and he and his wife listened with delight to the unfolding of her plans and intentions, which she freely unfolded to them. Late they sat up for Theodore that night; and when all hopes of his coming home were abandoned, Rosalie became the occupant of his bed. The next night, in a state of most distressing anxiety, in consequence of his continued absence, she had just retired to her apartment, when a knock at the street door made her bound from her couch, upon which she had at that moment thrown herself, and presently she heard her lover's voice at the front of the stair. Scarcely knowing what she did, she attired herself, descended, opened the parlor door unperceived by Theodore, and took the place of their friendly host, who, the moment he saw her beckoned her, and resigning his chair to her, withdrew.

The next evening a select party were assembled in the little drawing-room, and there, the lady of the house motioned the latter to approach her; and she rose and was crossing Theodore, when he caught her by the hand, and drew her upon his knee. "Theodore!" exclaimed the fair one, coloring. "My wife!" was his reply, while he imprinted a kiss upon her lips. They had been married that morning.

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THE CHURCH IN FRANCE.

A Serious Religious Crisis—France. It still Catholic.—Pastor of Cardinal Richard. The Paris correspondent of the Liverpool Catholic Times writes: It is no exaggeration of language to speak of the religious crisis in France. What is, actually taking place in this country at this time is likely to occur during the year 1896 are a witness of history. Only circumstances of exceptional gravity could have called forth such exceptional appeals to the piety and fervor of the faithful at this hour. The Church in France feels that a momentous struggle with the secular power, supported by all the forces of modern inquiry, is at hand, and that all the religious institutions of the country are threatened with extreme peril. It has been customary for some years past for special prayers to be said in the churches on the occasion of the opening of the new Session, to obtain the blessing of God on the work of the nation's representatives, but those which have been enjoined this year, and especially the episcopal utterances proceeding therefrom, indicate the gravity of the conflict that is approaching. Cardinal Richard, in his pastoral address to the clergy, in alluding to the efforts which the Masonic sects have put forth during the last twenty years to efface from our laws their Christian character, we are consoled and strengthened by the thought that France is, and desires to remain, Christian. The words which an eminent statesman (Portalis) spoke at the beginning of the century are still true: "Can we refuse to recognize the beneficent influence of Christianity without repudiating all our masterpieces of every kind, without offending the monuments of our glory and condemning them to oblivion?" His Eminence proceeded to remark that it was not surprising to find the elite of the nation upholding the use of prayer on various occasions, or associating with the festal of public life. He referred especially to the custom of the magistrature of opening their legal years by attending Mass (known as the Mass of the Holy Ghost) in the Sainte Chapelle, and the funeral service on behalf of departed members, which recently brought the five Academies of the Institute together on the occasion of its centenary.

Mr. Dauban: "I'm going to have the ceiling of my dining-room scraped, and then I shall paint a fresco on it." "Candidate!" "My dear fellow, why don't you paint the fresco first, and then have the ceiling scraped?"

UNSANITARY WALL COATINGS CONDEMNED BY THE BIBLE.
"And behold if the plague be in the walls of the house which he shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place."

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