

in the west end. I handed my card to a waiter and after a brief delay was ushered into a well furnished apartment on the second flat. Summer was still lingering, but a fire was burning in the grate. I looked at the flames and waited, filled with horrible presentiments, of I knew not what. In a few minutes the door opened and for the second time I stood face to face with Ida de Riche. It was the same tall dark woman with the same strange, fascinating beauty, that beauty which seems not merely on the surface, but which is suggestive of something deeper and almost indefinable. But the face was changed; instead of the nervous irresolute expression I had noticed before, the woman who stood before me had written upon every curve of her clear cut lips an imperiousness that was altogether new to me.

Her expression had become harsh and sinister, and as I looked at her it seemed to me impossible that she could have written certain passages of that paper, but there were others which could only have been penned by such a woman.

She greeted me with an icy bow, but in the flash of her dark eyes I read in my misery the glance of scorn.

"I have the pleasure of speaking to Miss de Riche?"

"To Miss de Riche," she smiled ironically. This smile maddened me more than any words could have done, but I managed to master myself and to speak at least coherently.

"I have to apologize to you, madam, for a piece of negligence which has probably done infinitely more harm to me than to yourself." I pointed to the lost manuscript which I still held in my hand. "I do not think so," she stood there in front of me speaking almost mechanically. I handed the manuscript to her.

"You do not wish us to use it now?" I asked. "I do not."

She walked quietly to the fireplace and commenced slowly tearing it up page by page, watching the flames devour it with a kind of fierce amusement and apparently utterly oblivious of my presence. I followed her movements in a dull stupor, feeling utterly powerless to prevent her.

"You will never learn the history of that paper," she remarked coolly, once more turning her dark eyes full upon me.

"God help me, I believe I know it already. It has haunted me—that manuscript." Something in my voice startled her in spite of her self-possession.

"Mon Dieu! But you are serious—Isn't that rather silly, especially for an editor?" "I do not know if I am silly, but I do know that I am in earnest."

The woman's face seemed to soften, it was like the melting of marble. Her voice shook slightly as she said half to herself, "It was my last chance, and heaven knows that I had done my best. Without hope this abstraction of duty is lifeless—it is the heart and not the brain which has to answer the *a quoi bon* of philosophy."

"I think there is the pith of that remark amongst those ashes," and I pointed in the direction of the fire-place.

"The real ashes are here," and she pressed her heart with the intensity not of melodrama, but of conviction.

And it seemed to me that in this one tearless face the losing battle of woman's existence was drawing to a close.

"Must it end like this?"

"Miss de Riche!" I cried imploringly.

"Malheureuse," she replied, motioning

me to sit down and gazing dreamily at the flickering flames that had destroyed so lightly what meant so much for both of us. And then I told her of my wretched mistake, it seemed such a miserable, trifling affair that my hopes rose, as I told it. "You understood it then? somehow I thought you would."

"Thank you for that—for that if for nothing else."

"She looked thoughtful for a moment and sat down opposite to me. "You will write again?" I cried eagerly. "You have the power, the gift. Others repeat glibly the superficial phrases of the day; when you write, it is from the soul, it is part of yourself. There is life before you—hope."

"Hope!" she repeated after me, "hope." Her eyes had grown wonderfully tender, the sinister expression had died away; new possibilities seemed to struggle into consciousness. I drew nearer to her, "Tell me that the past is dead," I whispered, and then a cold chill passed through my whole being. A change had come over her, she threw her head back and stood once more erect, cold and beautiful as a Grecian statue. At this juncture a man entered the room without being announced. He was a tall good-looking man with a blase expression, and a certain equivocal cynicism around the corners of his lips which were slightly apart.

Miss de Riche did not so much as turn her head to look at him, but he advanced towards us with an air of being perfectly at home.

"Cara Mia," he said out loud in tones of easy self-assurance and ignoring my very existence. "I am bored, won't you amuse me?" I looked at the man, I marked the curve of his thin underlip, I watched the subtle gleam, dark and treacherous of his steely grey eyes, and I read Ida de Riche's story more clearly than any words could ever have told it to me. Then I looked at her, her face was turned towards me, and I saw in her glance nothing but an infinite pity.

"This is Count ———!" She mentioned a foreign name familiar at that time to all Europe, and only familiar because it was notorious. "Let me order the scoundrel out of the house," I shouted hoarsely. A look of genuine amusement passed over the Count's face.

"Pardieu," he exclaimed, "but you and I should be friends. Is it the wrestle you want or the box a l'Anglais?"

He was rolling a cigarette between his fingers and I looked at Ida de Riche without answering him.

"It is no use, it is too late."

"It is not too late to rid you of that man for ever. Monsieur, I will meet you where and when you will."

"If you are in Paris next February I shall be glad to accommodate you, till then I remain in England and I cannot disarrange my plans even for your convenience. *En passant* let me remind you that this is my apartment and that if you annoy me I shall most certainly ring the bell. Violent exercise, so early as this, has been positively forbidden me by my physicians."

He spoke quite gently, an amiable smile playing upon his lips, but with his hand upon the bell.

"Good bye," I said hoarsely, "Good bye for ever."

"Pour jamais."

The word haunts me still as I write these lines far away in a foreign land. It has rung in my ears as time has glided on,

and now that the end is not far off, I can afford to tell this story, and to bid farewell to the hopes and the longings of the past, *pour jamais*.  
Toronto.

L. J.

## SIR GERALD PORTAL AS LITTERATEUR.

The fragment of narrative which, like a broken column above a young man's grave, Sir Gerald Portal has left us of his mission to Uganda, illustrates anew a truth respecting which there exists one of the commonest of popular fallacies. The fallacy is that the temperament of the man of action and that of the literary man are incompatible; that there is necessarily a divorce between words and deeds, so that a man skilled in the one cannot be great or efficient in the other. It would be interesting to trace the causes which tend to give this notion currency at various times. Of course qualities have their defects; and the mere man of action may be a mere machine of silent motion, the mere man of words a hollow vessel of sound, *vox et præterea nihil*; and between these extremes there are numerous gradations in which the contrariety is also visible. In our day Carlyle, with his worship of so-called inarticulate heroes—neither Cromwell nor Frederick the Great was inarticulate, and the latter was a *litterateur*—and his denunciations of Parliaments, is responsible for giving a good deal of emphasis to the fallacy; the more so as the quantity of ineffectual wind he expended himself seemed to offer an illustration of his theory. But, as a matter of fact, history has a refutation of this fallacy on every page. Cæsar was a brilliant orator before he became conqueror of Gaul and founder of the Empire; and he wrote a great book. Perhaps Cicero was rather under the sway of the word; but there is no denying he was a great statesman, and though he has said it himself, he did save the city when he was consul. Napoleon's proclamations, carefully calculated for the effect of their phrases, are pieces of literature. No one can read Prince Bismarck's speeches or his letters in Busch's "Memoirs" without perceiving that he has the literary gift in great force; and so far from being a silent person, he has probably as great a propensity to garrulity as his present Emperor. One has only to think of the Sir Philip Sidneys, the Sir Walter Raleighs, and the Elizabethans and Cavaliers generally, and the numerous soldier-scribblers of other countries—coming down to the present, by the way, there is that excellent journalist and author Lord Wolseley—to realise how baseless is this notion that because a man is effective in the world of action he cannot talk and write and *vice versa*. The truth is, that for action in the highest sense a strong infusion of what is usually known as the literary, and even the artistic, temperament is necessary. In other words, imagination, sympathy, and even sensibility, are necessary to the understanding, and consequently to the management, ruling or leading of men. The theme would be an interesting one to pursue—examining the gifts of orator-statesmen whose speeches are a form of action, of artist-ambassadors like Rubens, and artist-engineers and astronomers like Leonardo, of great travellers like Burton who have also been great writers—but already this is too long a digression from Sir Gerald Portal.

Sir Gerald, in his brief but eventful career, had sufficiently proved himself an