

tion. It was one of the eccentricities of Monsieur to love to astonish and perplex his neighbors.

While the appearance of Lisette at the Chateau was a signal for the strictest espionage to be exercised on her by the different coteries, it was also not without its effect on Monsieur Henri. Without so much as even an idea on the subject of honor, and afflicted with an overweening conceit, being struck with her personal beauty, he hesitated not for a moment to exercise all his little cunning, in the opinion that he would achieve an immediate conquest, and bring her to his feet as his slave. The opinion of Lisette on this matter was entirely different. To her, by whom character was quickly read, and who had seen far more of the working of humanity in its multifarious phases, he appeared a fit subject for being played upon. On every occasion he could command he placed himself in her path, and showed her a thousand little attentions. These were received by her with an astonishment in perfect accordance with the part it was her intention to play, and she hung her head and blushed, as though she felt her modesty to be outraged by the strains of flattery he sought to insinuate in her ear.

Although Monsieur Henri had been baffled, and was consequently disappointed in his first attempt to gain an influence over Lisette, it was by no means his intention to abandon his effort. His pride and his conceit, both opposed him giving up. Neither was it the intention of the domestic that he should do so. Lisette wished simply to impress on him the self-respect she possessed, and while leading him on, to oppose his cunning and to employ him as the willing agent to aid in effecting the purpose of her heart. The fact of his nephew remaining at the Chateau so much longer than was his habit, excited the curiosity as well as the surprise of Monsieur du Bonlay.

Monsieur du Bonlay resolved to take into his confidence the old woman, who in some things was practically the mistress of the Chateau. Sitting one evening with her in the dimly lighted salon, he began to tell her the cause of his distress; but hardly had he begun his story when the door opened and Lisette herself appeared. In obedience to the wish of Madame, that she might help her finish some work which had been too long on hand, and not knowing of anything special taking place, she had entered the apartment. Although loquacious in the style of his dress, and frequently laughing in his manner, his mode of living, except on extraordinary occasions, was exceedingly plain and homely. Ordinarily the three occupants of that dreary dwelling, as much for company as from economical considerations, spent the evenings of winter in the same room. Their employment differed. Madame and the servant would generally be engaged in knitting or sewing, while Monsieur would play on the violin, or sing to the guitar, or read the latest news from the seat of war, or the last thing in politics, commenting on the latter subject for the entertainment of his listeners, a virtue not always appreciated by them.

On seeing Lisette enter the apartment at a moment so inopportune, and take her seat by the side of Madame, Monsieur became seriously vexed. He was positively annoyed at the circumstance, but was far too polite in his manner to permit his emotion to appear. Seeing no reason for dismissing her, and not wishing to excite suspicion, lest the feeling being once created should increase in strength and stretch itself to embrace what he might desire to hide, he permitted her to remain, and concealed his feelings as best he could. Sitting perplexed with the thoughts which assailed his brain, and until his mind had become thoroughly perturbed, a fortunate idea arose which furnished him relief. He often conversed with the old woman in English, and why not now?

From the idiomatic style in which Lisette usually spoke, he had not doubted her story, that she was a peasant girl from a rural district. Having his mind fixed on this idea, he felt himself safe in employing in her presence a foreign language, although the subject spoken of should be one of the deepest importance. Still, with the usual caution which characterized all his proceedings, after playfully apologizing in French, he commenced a trifling conversation in English, and watched the effect of it on his domestic. On hearing this effort Lisette gave a slight start, but not sufficient to attract the attention of her master, who kept his gaze steadily settled on her. Feeling herself to be watched, and guessing the cause of it, she felt that more than ever she had a difficult part to play. Indeed, did she wish to maintain her disguise, she plainly saw that she must sit with the utmost inattention to all that was passing, and should she raise her head at all, it could only be to smile with vacant astonishment.

Being satisfied that a foreign language was only an amusing sound to Lisette, Monsieur entered fully into the subject perplexing him. It was quite a lengthy speech on the folly and danger to them all, for his nephew to make overtures to Lisette because of her personal charms, as under the excitement of fascination he might let drop a word which would explode the scheme whence they drew their resources, and should such ever be, he must either beg his bread, or shoot himself, for he never would submit to worse. How then was it best to act under the circumstances?

During this speech, delivered in tolerable English, he had worked himself to a pitch of intense excitement, and when, under the power of feeling he was vehemently denouncing the folly and

madness of his relative, Lisette looked up into his face with such a vacant smile of being amused, without appearing to be interested, that Monsieur felt however he had spoken in her hearing, he was safe from having betrayed himself or his doings.

Before returning anything like a formal answer to his enquiry, Madame requested if he knew how the overtures of Henri were regarded by Lisette, and whether it would not be better before becoming so serious and earnest on the subject to ascertain if such were the case? For her part she thought the girl knew far too well the market value of her good looks to accept any one for a husband with no better prospect than he had; and did he imagine he could captivate the stranger, it was only another abortive effort of his conceit, an affliction so frequently placing him at a discount, in leading him to indulge the vain expectation of succeeding where there was no chance.

The accent of Madame surprised Lisette more than anything she said. There was nothing foreign in the tone of her English, and as she looked into her face, for the instant astonishment almost robbed the expression of her countenance of that want of interest she had maintained. The manner in which she spoke convinced her that France was not her birth-place, and she felt ready to challenge her with being an Englishwoman.

The suggestion offered by Madame had never entered the brain of Monsieur. He had rushed to the conclusion that she would at once become flattered by the attentions of his nephew and leap with eagerness to accept them, whatever consequences might ensue. This new idea led him, therefore, to reflect, and immediately to request the old woman to interrogate Lisette on the subject.

Having listened to the conversation of that evening, Lisette learnt that something secret was being practised at the Chateau. The knowledge of this fact led her to hope that some clue had been obtained toward effecting her purpose, and made the prohibition to approach a certain building situated at the extremity of the slender grounds to appear of importance to her.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DINNER PARTY.

It was not long after the conversation between Monsieur and Madame that the latter undertook to interrogate Lisette on the subject proposed. Making an arrangement for themselves to spend an evening together in quiet work, when it came, and they were busily employed in cheerful labour, suddenly, and as though without any forethought, Madame enquired:

"Is it true, Lisette, that Henri has been making overtures to you?"

"Why should Madame ask me such a question?"

"It is a candid one; and as I have the fullest confidence in your integrity, I will assign my reason for enquiring."

"Thanks, Madame."

"It has not remained unnoticed both by Monsieur and myself, that Henri has of late tarried longer at the chateau than is his habit, and that Calais has less attractions for him than formerly. Moreover, it has not escaped us how attentive he has been toward yourself, and how frequently he has detained you on the most trifling matters."

"Madame is very watchful; but what you say is true."

"From observing these things, Lisette, we have reached the conclusion that your personal charms, of which you cannot be ignorant, and it would be folly to affect to think lightly of them, have captivated his youthful mind."

"Madame flatters her humble servant."

"I do not; neither can you seriously think that I do; therefore, as a good and faithful girl, I request you to inform me if Henri has made approaches to you?"

"I blush to acknowledge that he has."

"And you—?"

"Feel myself overwhelmed with the condescension."

"And have encouraged his addresses?"

"By no means. I should tremble so far to forget my station as for a moment to give countenance to the exercise of any youthful emotion on his part toward myself."

"You are good, Lisette; Monsieur Henri could never become your husband. Circumstances you are unacquainted with preclude such a possibility; and it is, therefore, well that you have not listened to his flatteries."

"Thank you, Madame; but when Lisette marries she will seek among her own class for a husband."

"You are wise."

This little dialogue ending, Madame quickly made an excuse for leaving the room. She was overjoyed at the discovery she had made, the truth of which she did not for a moment suspect. Having sought the salon where Monsieur was sitting in a state of feverish excitement, varying his employment between twirling his thumbs and reading scraps of intelligence from an old newspaper, she at once reported to him the result of her conversation with Lisette. On hearing it, he looked at her for a moment with an incredulous stare. He was not prepared for any such conclusion to his fears, and during the time he had been waiting, he had in fancy sketched more than one plan to oppose their designs. Being assured of her honesty, he became extravagant in his praises, and with that exuberant excitement of his nation attending a

pleasurable feeling, expressed a moveless determination to invite a number of friends to dine with him.

Never did Lisette appear more beautiful than at that dinner-party. Plain and neat in her attire, she attended to the duties of the table with modesty and grace enough in themselves to command the attention of the guests, but, when added to her personal charms, excited the admiration of the most stoical. Amidst the warmest discussion as to whether politics, philosophy, or fighting, was to be considered the greatest blessing to the human race, expressions of admiration at her personal appearance passed in quiet remarks around that little circle.

The vanity of Monsieur was not a little flattered by this praising his domestic, and, in her absence, that he might excite the envy of his guests, told of her virtues in a manner most elaborate. What a fund of speculation for the coterie was that night being gleaned from the personal appearance and character of Lisette!

Among the most ardent admirers of Lisette that evening was Monsieur Henri. To him she had never appeared so beautiful, and a chord of far deeper feeling was struck in his little soul than had ever been moved. A holier—if holier be a proper term to employ in connection with such a person—passion was being excited toward her, and an earnestness to be regarded favourably was filling his mind with an unusual reflectiveness.

The thoughts of Lisette rolled back to her native land, to the friends she had left behind, and then returned and rested on the purpose which had brought her there, and had placed her in the position she occupied. As she thought the tear-drop arose in her eye, and for the moment a shade of regret overspread her features. But this feeling was only transient, and, recovering herself, she exclaimed:

"Coward! to enter on a task and then to falter. Who solicited my interference? who requested my aid? Is not the work a self-imposed one? and shall I, as many do, practice virtue only when it is pleasant so to do, and forsake it when it leads in rugged paths, or calls for self-denial? Away! intrusive thoughts, and leave me to the enjoyment of a reverie, which shall conduct me into a region of pleasant imaginings far away from the ruder scenes of every day existence."

Scarcely had she uttered these words in a half-audible whisper, when she heard the sound of footsteps and saw approaching Monsieur Henri. On seeing him, Lisette started, and sought to escape by immediately retiring within the chateau. But, anticipating this movement, he had measured his distance, and readily placed himself as easily to cut off all retreat.

"Stay, Lisette!" he exclaimed.

"What does Monsieur Henri now desire?"

"Lisette, your appearance, and your manner to-night have aroused within me emotions to which, up to this hour, I have been a stranger. Tell me that you will regard me with esteem, that you will love me!"

On hearing these words, and beholding his rueful countenance, Lisette burst into a short laugh, and replied:

"The heated room and the good company have slightly excited your brain; the evening air will quickly remove such enthusiasm."

"Lisette, will you never hear reason?"

"I am all attention when Monsieur turns homilist."

"Why this trifling? why this scorn? On my honour, I love you!"

"If Monsieur swears so frequently by his honour, he will wear that virtue threadbare."

"Lisette, will you forever scorn me?"

"Pardon me, Monsieur, but the farce is so well sustained that I cannot forbear laughing."

"I swear by Saint Peter that I love you!"

The fisherman will, doubtless, feel flattered by the compliment you are paying him."

I will swear by the whole calendar of saints that I love you."

"I am afraid they are a little too far off to regard your oath."

"Lisette, will you love me?"

"No."

"You will not?"

"Why should Monsieur Henri wish to impose on me, a poor domestic, the fiction that he loves me? I know but little of the world, but I know sufficient to prove the impossibility that such can be the case. Were we placed beyond the limits of society, such a thing might be possible; but, while the world loses sight of the person in the condition, it would simply be to impose on oneself to imagine such a thing."

"What can I do to assure you that I love you?"

"Wait until your brain cools before you again mention to me such a subject."

While engaged in this colloquy they had been strolling in the direction of the laboratory. Before they were aware of it, they found themselves approaching near to the dreaded building. Feigning an alarm, Lisette uttered a subdued shriek, and when her companion discovered their position, he turned quickly and began to retrace his steps. At this moment a noise, as of the low wailing of a human voice, fell upon the ear of Lisette.

"What noise is that?" she enquired.

"Noise!"

"Did not Monsieur hear it? It was as the voice of a human being."

"Ha! ha!" he replied, with a forced laugh;

"Lisette has lived in the country all her life without knowing the voice of an owl."

"Is it an owl?"

"Certainly; my uncle keeps all sorts of

strange things in that building, and owls among the number."

As Henri uttered these words, Lisette fixed on him her piercing glance, and by the light of the moon read through his countenance the depth of his soul.

(To be continued.)

PROOF OF DEATH.—Those timid beings who are haunted by apprehensions of being buried alive, and who make testamentary provisions against such a contingency, may now take courage, for science has supplied an infallible means of determining whether or not the vital spark has quitted the mortal frame. Electricity enables us to distinguish with absolute certainty between life and death. For two or three hours after the stoppage of the heart, the whole of the muscles of the body have completely lost their electric excitability. When stimulated with electricity they no longer contract. If then, when Faradayism is applied to the muscles of the limbs and trunk, say five or six hours after supposed death, there be no contractile response, it may be certified with certainty that death has taken place, for no faint, nor trance, nor coma, however deep, can prevent the manifestation of electric muscular contractility. Here there is no possibility of mistake, as there certainly was when the old tests were employed. Muscular contractility under the Faradayic stimulus disappears gradually after death. It is instantly diminished, but only finally extinguished in about three hours; and hence Dr. Hughes Bennett has suggested that electricity may sometimes be of use in medico-legal investigations, by affording evidence as to the time of death.

HUMOROUS.

THE elevator boy has much to do toward the elevation of the masses.

FISH-WORMS are beginning to chin the surface of the earth and look around for boys with spades and an old oyster-can.

AMONG the first vegetables of the season is the man who comes into town from a distance of ten miles to take his girl to a circus.

A FAMILIAR instance of colour-blindness is that of a man taking a brown silk umbrella and leaving a green gingham in its place.

THE only thing American about a brass band is the way small boys paddle through mud and dust to catch enough of the tune to whistle.

THE mule puzzle.—Draw a circle fifteen feet in diameter, place a mule in the centre, and walk around him without getting out of the circle.

AN exchange speaks of the "reboomitization" of Grant. The foe for shooting the English language full of holes has got to be increased.

HERE is a subject for debate for next winter's college associations: "Has a man with a bass voice who tries to sing tenor got any principle?"

DON'T be afraid," said a snob to a German labourer: "sit down and make yourself my equal." "I would half to blow my brains out," was the reply of the Teuton.

"WHAT am I offered for this lot of calamity?" inquired an auctioneer at a sale of household effects recently. The lot consisted of a wash-tub and wash-board.

JOURNALISM is to be a branch of study at Cornell University. A broken-down editor is wanted for the chair of morning papers. First-class in mental scissors and practical paste will please step forward.

"Do you use many flowers on your table?" asked Mrs. Murray Hill of a Southern visitor. "Well, yes," was the reply. "we have wheat and rye bread for breakfast, but the old man will stick to corn dodgers."

THEY must have a humourist among the painters in Newport. One of them painted "Pond's Extract" in big letters on the door of an ice-house. He added: "Good for burns," but the ice-house burned down all the same.

"GEORGIE," said a fond mamma to her little son, as they were walking on the beach, "see what a lot of nice little stones!" "Yes," grumbled Georgie, as he cast a searching glance around, "and not a living thing to throw 'em at!"

A MAN from Central New York, having more money than anything else, endured a tour through Europe because he thought he must. In speaking of his trip upon his return, he exclaimed: "The happiest day of it all was when I stepped on my own native vice versa."

"WHY, Jimmy," said one professional beggar to another, "are you going to knock off already? It's only 2 o'clock." "No, you mutton head," responded the other, who was engaged in unbuckling his crutch, "I'm only going to put it on the other knee. You don't suppose a fellow can beg all day on the same leg, do you?"

A REWARD having been offered for a rhyme to Arkansas, the Arkansas Traveller set his machine to work and ground out the following:

There is a young man here in Arkansas,
Who can saw as much as his ma can saw;
But give him an ax,
And with one or two whacks,
He'll chop up more logs than his pa can saw.

"KRUPP has invented a needle-gun warranted to kill two hundred men a minute," but we shall not purchase one of them until he has experimented with his gun a couple of hours and proves to our satisfaction the truth of his claim. If a man were to buy his needle-gun and discover that it would kill only one hundred and ninety-nine more a minute, would Krupp take the fraud back and refund the money? There are so many things warranted nowadays that turn out to be failures, that a man can't be too careful when he makes a purchase.

Shrewdness and Ability.

Hop Bitters, so freely advertised in all the papers, secular and religious, are having a large sale, and are supplanting all other medicines. There is no denying the virtues of the Hop plant, and the proprietors of these Bitters have shown great shrewdness and ability in compounding a Bitters, whose virtues are so palpable to every one's observation.—Exchange.