

"O, then, the little fairy knew me before!" exclaimed Mr. Alexander, eagerly. "So we were old acquaintances, Miss Milly!"

Milly said nothing, but appeared to have suddenly remembered that her shop had been left unprotected, and disappeared as if by magic.

"I want to have talk with you, Mr. Compton," said Mr. Alexander, looking after her.

Mr. Compton sighed. "Let us go into the garden," he said; and they went out together.

III.

Two months after this, Milly Dove sat in her little room, reading. Those wondrous fabrics on which she used to labour with such patience were gone. There was dust on the panorama; its single eye was dim and melancholy. No more balls disturbed the repose of the fat old spiders in the panels; the very shop itself seemed to have an unear-d-for look.

The reason of all this was that Milly Dove had become a student,—a hard, close, unwearying student,—and the books that she read were given to her by Mr. Alexander. One author in particular pleased her mightily. A man named Ivan Thorne had lately astonished the world with an alternate succession of works on philosophy and fiction. In both paths did he seem equally at home. His novels were tender, impassioned, truthful, and always breathing the sublimest scorn for everything mean and unholy. His philosophy was still more wonderful, because it was so clear. The progress of man was always his theme. The gradual amalgamation of races; the universal equalization of climate from the cultivation of the entire globe; the disappearance of poverty from the earth before the influence of machinery, which laboured for all; the consequent improvement of the physical condition of our race; the abolishment of crime;—in short, the apotheosis of the world. On all this he expatiated with a profundity of thought and simplicity of expression that made him at once the deepest and clearest of writers. Ivan Thorne, then, opened a new world for Milly. For the first time she comprehended the true beauty of life, and experienced those delicious sensations which one experiences when beginning to observe,—an epoch, let me tell you, that comes much later than one imagines. Thus a trinity of genius and goodness reigned supreme in Milly Dove's little heart,—Mr. Compton, Mr. Alexander and Ivan Thorne,—and although her reason placed Mr. Compton first, as being the oldest friend, and Ivan Thorne next, as being the greatest genius, yet I doubt much if that little maiden's heart did not put Mr. Alexander Winthrop, her affianced lover, high above all.

There was one thing that grieved this dear child, and it was so strange a grief for her to have had at that period that it seems a mystery to me how she ever could have had it. It was that Mr. Alexander was not a great writer. She loved him very dearly, and she knew that Mr. Compton loved him, and they talked very learnedly together for hours at a time. He was very clever, this Mr. Alexander Winthrop; but oh! if he would only write a book like Ivan Thorne! If he would create those dear stories,—so pure, so good, and so true! If he would make those splendid books that made every one love his fellow-men better when he had read them, and which were so purely written that a child might understand them! If he would only do this, she told him many times, as she clung to his breast, she would be as happy as the humming-birds that lived outside, forever in the sunshine! And Mr. Alexander would stroke her brown hair, and kiss her white forehead, and, smiling mysteriously, say, "Some time, perhaps." But he did not write books, and Milly Dove was sad.

Her sadness was now, however, for the moment lost in the perusal of Ivan Thorne's last book, "The Ladder of Stars," a strange mixture of romance and philosophy; and Milly pored over it in her high-backed chair, while the humming-birds outside looked in at her with their sharp, cunning eyes, and said to themselves, as they saw her rosy lips, "Bless us! where there are flowers there must be loads of honey. Let us go in and get it!" But now and then these rosy flowers had a strange way of opening with a laughing sound, and showing rows of white seed inside, in a manner unlike any flower ever before seen; so that the humming-birds thought they might be dangerous flowers, and did not go in. Milly was reading one of the most beautiful passages in the "Ladder of Stars," when she heard a step behind her. She turned, and beheld one of the most beautiful ladies she had ever seen, standing in the doorway. A tall, proud-looking lady she was, with bright eyes and fierce lip, and the smallest hands in the world. And such a dress! So rich and elegant and flowing! Milly thought she was a fairy. Being naturally polite, however, even to fairies, the little maiden rose and advanced timidly to this sultana. The lady did not keep her long in suspense.

"Your name is Milly Dove?" she said, in a commanding voice.

"Yes, ma'am," said Milly, half-frightened at the tone of the question.

"You are going to marry a man calling himself Alexander Winthrop. Is it not so?"

"Yes, ma'am." Milly's limbs began to tremble at this point.

"You must not marry him."

"Why, ma'am?" Milly's strength began to come back a little.

"Because he would make you unhappy."

"How do you know, ma'am?" O Milly Dove! Milly Dove! where did you pick up the Socratic mode of reasoning?

"Because I know it," said the sultana, stamping her foot. "You cannot marry him. He loves me. I know he does!" she continued passionately.

"He loves me better!" said Milly, quietly. "I know it for he told me so."

"You! love you better! Listen, child. You do not know this man. He is proud, wealthy, learned, a genius, and courted by all the world. His sphere in life rolls through another orbit than yours. His genius, his tastes, his friendships, will all separate him from you. He thinks he loves you now; well, in three months he will be disenchanted. He will neglect you,—ill-treat you, perhaps,—laugh at your ill-breeding, sport with your ignorance, and break your heart. Be warned in time. Here! I am rich. You shall have money, as much money as you wish, if you fly this place and promise never to see Alexander Winthrop again. I will make you wealthy, happy, everything you wish, only leave me my love! leave me my love!" She held out a purse to Milly as she spoke, and her splendid form literally shook with passion.

Poor Milly was thunderstruck; she knew not what to do. O, how she wished for either Alexander or Mr. Compton!

"Ma'am," said she at last, "I don't want money. I never knew that Mr. Alexander was rich; but it makes no matter to me whether he is or not. I know he loves me: for he said so, and he never tells a lie. Therefore I cannot do as you wish me. I am sorry, ma'am, that you should love Mr. Alexander too."

"But you must, I tell you,—you must, girl! You shall not wed him! He is mine! Do you not know—?"

"She does not know, Miss Helen de Rham," said Mr. Alexander himself, stepping, at this juncture, out of the shop, and putting his arm around Milly's waist.

"O, you are here, sir!" said Miss de Rham, with a scornful curl of her upper lip. "Enjoying love in a cottage, which, no doubt, you taste merely as a literary experience to be made serviceable in your next book. It is a pretty idyl."

"Madam," said Alexander, "let me hear no unworthy sneers against a love so pure that you could not understand it. Milly, as this lady has thought fit to intrude herself on my privacy and yours, it is fit that you should learn the history of our association."

"Tell it, sir, by all means," said Miss de Rham, seating herself in a chair; "you are accustomed to weave romances."

"I tell the truth, madam, always; and if I did not this pure mind here is too true a touchstone not to detect the falsehood. Milly, that handsome lady there was once my friend. I believe I loved her, for she was beautiful and gifted. We were much together, and I understand that she expressed admiration for my talents. I thought her honest, and I loved her for her honesty; for she was one of those who could talk with that frank bluntness that so well simulates sincerity. Well, she was ambitious; she wanted to be a goddess, when she was only a woman; she wished to write, when God had only given her the power to appreciate. She came to me one day with a poem,—a beautiful poem, which she said she had written. I got it published for her; it was admired everywhere. On the strength of it she rose to the reputation of a woman of genius. Well, Milly, it was all a lie!—an acted, a spoken, a perpetuated lie!—the poem was not hers. It was written for her by a *prophet* of hers, who betrayed her trust, and the deception was discovered. I left Miss de Rham, Milly Dove, to the shame which, if she had a heart, ought to have eaten it out."

"And you could not discover the difference between an innocent piece of vanity and a crime? O Ivan Thorne, in spite of all your knowledge you know not the world!"

"I do not wish to know it better, Miss de Rham. Leave me and my bride in ignorance and peace. Go, madam, back to your town luxury and refined atmosphere, where pretty names are given to bad deeds. I wish to remain unmolested with that pure love which will ever be a mystery to you. Go!"

"What name did she call you?" cried Milly Dove, breathlessly, as the proud lady swept scornfully out through the little shop.

"Milly, you may now know what I have long concealed. I am Ivan Thorne!"

"You? you? O, I am so glad—so glad—so glad! Dear Alexander, I have now nothing to wish for."

"But I have, dear Milly!"

Those who have read Alexander Winthrop's latest and best novel, "The Village Bride," will see there how happily he and Milly and Mr. Compton lived together; and they will recognize in the lecturer on Woman's Rights the portrait of Miss de Rham.

THE END.

FRANÇOISQUE SARCÉY is stupefied at the English newspapers. "I don't see," he says, "how the diavolo the English find time to read those enormous masses of information. Nature or education has endowed them with an insatiable appetite, and a prodigious capacity of stomach. One admires them. It is true that when we return home we begin once more to enjoy better our own journals, so sober, our Parisian life, so amiable, our theatres so just in tone, so exquisite in language."

OUTWITTED BY A GIRL.

A TALK WITH A DETECTIVE.

A talk with a detective is generally interesting and often instructive. We have a very acute officer in London, and from him I learned a little regarding the difficulty experienced in tracking criminals. Some years ago an extensive forgery was reported to the police; and on the evening of the same day a serious burglary was carried out in a jeweller's premises in the city. There was not the slightest trace of the daring criminals. The detective department was in despair; and the usual outcry as to the inefficiency of the police began to make itself heard. The detective told off for the burglary chanced to obtain a slight trace of some of the missing property, suspicion having attached itself to the inmates of a certain house, owing to their lavish expenditure of money. Further inquiries only strengthened the suspicion; but although there was the strongest proof that the police were on the right trail, none of the jewellery or silver plate could be discovered. This was exasperating, more especially as the detective had been assured that the property was actually taken into that house. The officer went to the station very despondent, and sought to beguile his thoughts by reading a volume of Edgar Allan Poe's stories. He had got the length of "The Missing Letter," when he started up, blaming his own folly, and proceeded again to the suspected house. Acting on the suggestion of the tale, he determined, this time, not to look under carpets and into mysterious cavities, or to tear up hollow-sounding portions of the floor. Knowing now that the safest place to hide anything was where people would never think of looking—as in the case of the letter staring the searchers in the face from the mantel-piece—the detective, accompanied by another officer, went into the house; and there, outside of the windows looking to the back-green, and attached by a strong cord to the lintel, they found a bag containing all the silver plate.

But there was no trace of the jewels, some of which were of great value. The officers had another look round, a little encouraged by their partial success. The main room was elegantly furnished, the oriel window being gay with a rich parterre of flowers in handsome Satsuma ware vases. My informant went forward to the window, took hold of one of the plants, when it came away in his hand, revealing the fact that the earth in the pot did not reach the bottom of the vase. In a few minutes the whole property was recovered from the several vases. An arrest and conviction followed, with a sentence of ten years' penal servitude to each of the ingenious thieves.

While the prisoners were awaiting their trial, one of them dropped a hint which rather enlightened a turnkey on the subject of the forgery, which, as above mentioned, had also happened on the same day as the theft. The detective was at once made aware of the information, which at first appeared insignificant. But this "trifle light as air" proved important enough. The slight clue was followed up with relentless perseverance, with the result of bringing to light the fact that the forger had spent large sums of money in the very house where the burglars had been arrested. It was easy to get information from the inmates who had not been taken into custody. The detective at last became aware that the man he was in search of was betrothed to a young lady, the daughter of a very prominent citizen. Curiously enough, the crime had not got into the newspapers; while, on the other hand, the authorities had been heavily handicapped through the absence of any photograph of the criminal. The detective called upon the young lady, when he had assured himself of the absence of her parents, and asked her quietly to show him her album. With great self-possession the girl brought the book, and looked steadily at her visitor's face; nor did she exhibit the slightest feeling when the detective, with a half smile, congratulated her on being a clever woman, although he thought she might have been even more so, if she had filled up the page from which she had taken the photograph which had faced her own. He left the house with the conviction that while the girl knew of the whereabouts of her lover, she was a match for the cleverest of criminal officers. Let me tell the story in the detectives own words.

"As I went about, considerably annoyed at the way we had been checkmated, I saw the girl come out of a shop. Strolling in, I purchased a small article, and learned from the garrulous shopkeeper that he had just sold a large trunk. Here was a new phase. The young lady, it was generally admitted, had a great regard for the young man, and would very probably do all in her power to save him. Did she intend to leave the city? That was the point to be determined. I also learned, through proceedings which I am not called upon to explain, that the young lady had a private account at a bank in the city—not the one where the forgery had been committed—and took steps to ascertain her money transactions; when, to my infinite surprise, I was told that on the previous day she had withdrawn a sum of fifteen hundred pounds, explaining that she wished to place it in an investment of a private nature. But imagine my astonishment when I learned that on a certain day, about the time the forgery was committed, she had lodged nine hundred pounds—a hundred less than the sum obtained by the forger. I now resolved to set my knowledge and authority against a woman's wits, not at all hopeful of the result.

"I met her in the street, where she affected not to recognize me. I followed; and when we came to a quieter thoroughfare, she turned, and at once addressed me by name. After some expressions of regret at the nature of my duties, I let her understand all I knew of the case, at the close giving a threat to the effect that I might be called upon to arrest her as an abettor in forgery. Even this did not affect her. Another thought struck me when I saw something white peeping from her hand-basket, and I bluntly asked her for the letter she had just received at the General Post-office. Without a pause, she handed me a letter bearing the post-mark of New York. We had suspected that the forger was in America; but inquiries at the post-office had satisfied me that no letters had been received addressed to the young lady, and I also knew that fear of her parents would prevent any communication between the parties. So when I received this letter, my labours seemed about ended; for this being the first epistle, and the contemplated flight being taken into account, there was every reason to believe that the letter now in my possession simply meant the speedy capture of the forger. The girl bowed and passed on; but there was something approaching a smile on her face as she parted from me. The letter was bulky, and the envelope had a somewhat frayed appearance, as if it had fallen amongst water. 'With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,' I tore the envelope open, only to find every sheet of paper perfectly blank! I looked them over and over again, went to the office, and tried sympathetic inks, obtained a microscope—in short, made every effort to satisfy myself that I had not been duped. At last, I confessed that the girl had been too much for me.

"Fortunately for my peace of mind, I had not acquainted any of my colleagues with the slightest idea of my partial success, so that they had no occasion to rejoice at my discomfiture—a discomfiture bitter enough; for when I made enquiries the next day, I found that my bird had flown. I instantly hurried to Greenock—this was before the days of the Atlantic cable—only to see the large steamer sailing away to the West. A few months afterwards I received a letter in a woman's hand, bearing the post-mark of a little township in the Rocky Mountains. This was all it contained: 'You're a smart fellow, but no match for a loving woman. An old envelope full of blank paper is quite good enough for such as you. Had you been more civil, I might have taught you the art of regumming old love-letters! Farewell. I am quite happy.'

ECHOES FROM PARIS.

M. SARDOT, it is said, has just completed a new drama, called *Arrive*. Evidently an idea conceived at the railway station.

A SHOPKEEPER in the Rue des Petits-Champs advertises: "Tantes pour bains de mer." Of course he means *tents*, but meanwhile as the French say, *et les mœurs! et la famille!*

It is said that Meissonnier very much prides himself upon the resemblance of his head to that of the famous statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo. With his full flowing curly white beard and "tempest-tossed" white hair, marked features, and penetrating eyes, he does, indeed, look not unlike the statue in question. What is comical about the matter is the fact that he has taken to twisting his hair into two little knobs just above the brow so as to simulate at least a commencement of the horns or symbolical rays wherewith Michael Angelo saw fit to crown the head of his statue of the Hebrew law-giver.

A WORKMAN named Perron had been condemned by the Correctional Tribunal to eight days' imprisonment for having forcibly kissed an English governess in the street. The man appealed, and the Advocate-General, in the name of the Government, said that the punishment was excessive, and that the case ought never to have been brought into court. The Court of Appeal took no account of these remarks, and confirmed purely and simply the sentence of the Correctional Tribunal, and severely moralized the prisoner into the bargain, telling him that it was not allowed to kiss a woman by force in the public street. "Even if the woman were an English governess." Even if English, and even if a governess, how condescending France has become!

FRENCH doctors delight in devising the most disgusting and repulsive remedies. You may see any day in the butchers' shops shreds of meat which are scraped from the steaks and spread spread upon *tartines* of bread and jam, which are thus eaten raw by invalids. The *cyro fasciullo* is not, however, deceived by *sovereign* licor, as the invalid makes sad grimaces at the loathsome food. Carnivorous folk, who have a weakness for rumpsteaks would be surprised to see how small is the share of nourishment in a rumpsteak, and how large is the residue of skin, veins, and muscle which remains after the nutritive portion of the meat has been scraped off. The doctors have now devised a still more horrible cure for pulmonary complaints. Crows of cadaverous creatures may be seen every morning making a "queue" at the *abattoirs*, or slaughter-houses, where each patient imbibes a quart of blood as it streams all hot from the slaughtered ox. The cure is not costly, as the red wine costs but ten sous the goblet. Patients drink at this ghastly fountain for a month, when they fancy themselves cured.