

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

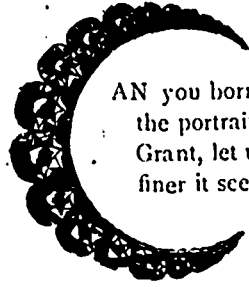


M^{ME}. la Marquise de Gallifet, Princesse de Marignies was, four and twenty years ago, one of the most lovely women in Paris. She is half English, for her father, Lafitte, the banker, married an English lady. . . Her nickname, "Cochonette," originated in a very malicious and untrue rumor that De Grammont-Caderousse spread, to the effect that this dainty lady did not pay so much

attention to soap

and water as she might have done. Her husband, the celebrated Marquis de Gallifet, having reason to suspect that his wife did not care over much for soap and water, played off on her the following practical joke. One night, or rather morning, after returning from a ball at the Tuileries, he strolled into his wife's dressing-room, and lighting a cigarette sat down to discuss the events of the evening before retiring to his own rooms. He found M^{ME}. la Marquise impatiently taking off her jewels and throwing them right and left on the carpet for the maids to pick up in the morning and put in order. After a few minutes, the Marquis kissed his wife's hand and retired for the night, but the following morning he came in and asked his wife to let him take a beautiful ruby bracelet he had once given her to Boucheron's to be reset, as it had already been arranged between them it should be. M^{ME}. la Marquise told one of her maids to bring the bracelet, but the jewel was not to be found. The house was thoroughly searched from top to bottom, but the missing bracelet was not discovered. "Never mind," said the Marquis, at last, "you must have been robbed, that is all. I will get you another like it." Ten days later he again came into his wife's dressing-room early in the morning, and after a few minutes' casual conversation, carelessly asked, "You have seen nothing of that ruby bracelet, I suppose, that you lost ten days ago?" "No," replied M^{ME}. de Gallifet, innocently, "of course not. How could I?" "Cochonette!" exclaimed the hero of Puebla, bursting out laughing; then, taking his wife by the hand, he gently led her up to the washing-stand, which, as is common in France, closed with a lid to keep the dust out. Lifting the cover he showed his bewildered better half the bracelet lying in the basin, where he had put it the night he had gone into his wife's bedroom after the court ball."—*"Piccadilly" in San Francisco Argonaut.*

GOVERNMENT ENGRAVERS.



AN you borrow a five-dollar bill? if so, just look at the portrait on its face. It is a vignette of Gen. Grant, let us say. The more you examine it the finer it seems. The note has been crumpled in

twenty pockets and greased by contact with hands clean and unclean, but the portrait is still a gem of the engraver's art. It ought to be, for scarcely twenty-five men in the country can do such work, and he who did the plate for which that portrait was engraved probably received a fabulous price for his pains. It is a tiny thing, scarcely one and a half by two and a half inches, yet it may have occupied the engraver eight, ten or twelve weeks. There was, perhaps, posing of models, study of portraits, searching of history, before the patient mechanical work of the engraver began. On other notes you find Lincoln, Jackson, Hancock, and a dozen other portraits.

The history of engraving in this country has its dark and romantic side. Engravers must be trusted in great matters, and sometimes they have betrayed their trust. One of the most skillful engravers in the country now works at his profession in Brooklyn under police surveillance. He counterfeited government securities while employed by the Treasury Department. He escaped imprisonment by turning State's evidence. His accomplices are still in jail, and although he is free, he can never escape the watchful eye of the police. Once suspected, an engraver is ever after a marked man.

Another case was that of an honest engraver, now also a resident of Brooklyn, who fell under unjust suspicion. He came one morning to his studio in Wall Street to find it in possession of the United States Marshal. The engraver had been watched for a year. The officers knew where he had passed his evenings for months back. He was not arrested, however, for the Marshal had got to the bottom of the affair, and found that Ulric, the counterfeiter, had obtained access to the innocent engraver's studio when the latter was absent and used his tools for counterfeiting. Ulric's accomplice was Jno. Briem, the man from whom the engraver rented his apartment. Ulric went to jail, but Briem turned State's evidence and afterward became a secret-service agent. Six months after detection Briem's hair turned white, and not many years later he died.

The story of engraver John McLees is stranger still. He was a skilled artist and an honest man, but drink was his great fault. Once, when under the influence of drink, he was seized by a gang of counterfeiters, carried to Brooklyn, and there detained in secret. Under threat of death he was made to counterfeit a government bond. To gain time, McLees spoiled the first plate, as if by accident, and before the second plate was finished government officers descended upon the place. McLees' good reputation and his frank story in court saved him from imprisonment. A friend found employment for him, and became responsible to the government for his conduct. McLees quit drink and lived the honest life he had always lived, but early one morning he was found dying, with a fractured skull, at the foot of his stairway in Dey Street. He did not revive sufficiently to tell the story of his death-wound.—*The Stationer.*