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Includes some text in French.

THE QUEBEC STAR

A Weekly English and French Comic Paper.

VOL. I.—No. 25.

QUEBEC, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1876.

PRICE, FIVE CENTS.

THE LAY OF THE HENPECKED.

BY LADY SUFFERIN.

I'm sitting in a style, Mary,
Which doesn't coincide; but
With what I've been accustom'd to.

Since you became my bride;
The men are singing comic songs,
The lark gets loud and high,
For, I've ask'd—since you're from home,
A party on the sly.

[Mary, —]
The place is rather chang'd, Mary,
Of smoke it slightly smells,
And the table and the floor are strewn
With heaps of oyster shells;
And the men have marked your damask
With many a muddy streak, [chairs
And they've drawn burnt cork moustaches
Your mother's portrait's cheek. [on

I'm very jolly now, Mary,
Midst old and valued friends,
(Though they've in the carpet burst some
With their Havannah's ends). [holes
For thou werst somewhat cross with me,
And ever apt to chide;
But there's nothing left to care for now—
You're gone to the sea-side.

And yet I fear when all you've learnt,
This evening's work I'll rue;
And I'll not forget it, darling, for
You won't allow me to.
In vain they sing, « The Pope he leads—»
Likewise, Begone, dull Care, »
For a thought of you, I vow I can't
Sit easy in my chair.

FACTS NOT KNOWN.

That the Humane Society has leased the Tower to prevent cockfighting in the locality of the easel Trap, business to be conducted according to Hyole.

BOTTOM-ROW.

That the St. Roch people are going to open a canal, to let M. Gingras' ships pass from Dorchester to Crown Street.

To Be disposed of a first rate old established concerms, situate in one of the largest thoroughfares in Quebec. Rent Low! Premises very large! The only reason of this business being disposed of is on account of the trade having left the house, no one having looked in for the last twelve months.

COURT HOUSE.

Man of blue, you cut me throw you Lobster of deceit! How oft with me you have taken Tea and I gave you the price of many a treat, and you went and married the corner House maid.

COOK.

That Pet Morris and Co. A going to build a railroad in connection with the street cars to St. Charles race course.

AT THE SAME

In our next number, the academy of music in church street, St. Roch.

By WHITE CLOUD.

The Corporation lending money on city property.

ENQUIRE AT THE HALL.

WANTED.

A milk Inspector for the city, a Judge of Chalk preferred.

Pensacola Fla, May 14th, 1876.

Mr. St. J. ***

Would oblige the undersigned by returning the Shall he abstracted from the Java

Coffee Saloon.

TIN CAN.

W. B.

HARD TIMES.

Corporation clerks and officials want their wadges to be higher and paid in gold, no coupins, only think to have to live on \$600 to \$2000 a year, no pa'dont do it. Wood sawer 40 cents a cord, saw split and carry up stairs.

DONT CHARGE THE TAXE,

The Lake in the Ring to be stocked with Trout oppen for fishing on the 15th Feb: 77\$ AND UP.

MARINE OFFICE.

Targatt the Sailor Home and House of Refuge.

CENTENNIAL.

The Cheif is gone to get one of those patent Fire Squashes to be keep in the pocket of is forse.

INDIAN RUBER HOSE.

Street Carr's try and take the new street, and give St. Peter street a chance.

THE MARKET FRAUD.

Patent medicine, Soap and Gambling to the injury of the honest trader.

The Pensacola letter and the Bar-Room shall.

J. ST.

The crops look well every ware but in Peter Street ware the Merchants as no tin or hair on the top of thier crannium.

THE LORD HOTEL'S.

Starr woulds like to know the oyster crabb that tryed to kick the carrier Boy.

STARRE.

The stink holes in the steps in Little Champlain Street, Corporation Job looks out for sickness. Foreman go to work.

GAGNON.

Happy to see his Hon. the recorder take his walk in St. Joseph street, St. Roch; he looks well and can see well.

LADY.

INFORMATION WANTED.

If Edward Conrad Lee, late of her Majesty Customs, will call at this office he will get what belongs to him.

HARPER'S DOLLAR STORE.

We would like to know how the Grocer sold the Polisman in the purchase of the stove.

STARR.

We would like to know how the Brewer Lawer liked the whipping he got for speaking to the Lady at the corner of the Dollar Store.

What's the price of Buns, said Mr. B. to the Baker.

ASK THE BOSS.

WOMAN FORGIVES.

If it be true that « To err is human, to forgive divine, » it is no wonder that woman is so often spoken of as divine; for there seems to be nothing which she will not forgive.

This is often exemplified in the private histories of families, and not unfrequently in the course of public judicial proceedings. A striking illustration recently occurred in one of the criminal courts of London. A brutal husband was arraigned for having torn his wife's clothing from her back and then beaten her most cruelly.

There was no defence on the facts of the case but the divine spirit of the wife shone forth through all the darkness of the scene. She implored the court to take into consideration the circumstance that her husband was « very delicate, » and that, in consequence, his sentence should be light!

The Judge took a different view, and sentenced the prisoner according to his deserts.

THE LOVE OF WOMAN.

The *Harrisburg Patriot*, announcing the suicide of a "drinking fellow, on bad terms with his father-in-law," says: "His wife, who loved her good-for-nothing husband, is quite frantic since the occurrence."

Such is the love of woman! It often survives all merit in the person to whom it has once been given—accepting him with the same devotion when found to have been taken for the worse, as if he had proved to have been taken for better. It is the glory of the sex.

SOUTH-WEST says: "I have two sweethearts. One is pretty and well accomplished, but poor; the other is not so pretty, nor so well accomplished, but she

is rich. I think I can marry either of them. Which would you prefer? Beauty and accomplishments on one side, and riches on the other; all other things being equal, such as temper, etc." Perhaps if you would read your question and statement to the young ladies themselves, they would help you to a solution of the difficulty. Your state of mind discloses a degree of egotism and selfishness which, if not modified, would render you a disagreeable husband.

MOTHERS-IN-LAW.

After all the abuse and fault-finding and fun that has been going on, from time immemorial, about mothers-in-law, it is time some one should say a good word for them. I'm speaking more of "his mother" than of hers, now; and I have often wondered whether girls who marry men with mothers, never have any appreciation of the mother's feelings—never understand how it might be that the dear old lady who has petted her boy so, who remembers him as her own little baby, who thought he would never leave her, but always love her better than any one else in the world, should feel hurt and grieved and astonished when he chooses to leave home to live with some girl whose bright eyes and pretty ways have charmed him.

Jealousy is a part of love of any sort. A mother cannot help being jealous. Often she must hate her rival in her son's affections, *for a little while*! She knows it is wrong, and if she is wise she will hide it; and after a while it will pass off, and she will find that she has a daughter as well as a son, and laugh at herself for feeling as she did.

But, *at first*—oh, daughters-in-law, you should be pitiful! Don't blame the old lady if she is very glad that her son does not like your ginger-bred as he does hers, or that you have forgotten a button. Human nature is but human nature. And when you are older, and a little boy sits upon your knee, you will begin to understand how much your husband's mother had to bear when he forsook her to cleave unto his wife.

STRANGE ACT OF A WIDOWER.

A Harrisburg man shot himself with an old musket. The cause assigned was melancholy, superinduced by the death of his wife.

This man was very much out of fashion. Most widowers solace their grief over the loss of a first wife by taking another.

MARRY AND HOPE FOR THE BEST.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Marry and hope for the best, my son,
Marry and hope for the best;
Then work with skill and an iron will,
And add to your household nest.
You have chosen a fair and goodly one,
Oh render her future blest, my son,
Her womanly future blest.

Marry and profit thereby, my son,
Marry and profit thereby:

Give God your heart as the better part,
And as for the rest aim high,
Let never a duty be left undone,
And never bid truth good-by, my son,
Never bid truth good-by.

Marry and hope for the best, my lass,
Marry and hope for the best;
Bring peace and love, like the turtle dove,
To brighten your pretty nest.
And let your home mid life's mad whirl,
Be the place of beautiful rest, my girl,
The place of beautiful rest.

Marry and set up your throne, my lass,
Marry and set up your throne;
By night a queen you may reign supreme
Through love in one heart alone.
Be true to that one as the long years pass,
And you near the great unknown, my lass,
You near the great unknown.

Marry and hope for the best, young pair,
Marry and hope for the best;
When storms arise in the troubled skies
Keep hope as a cheerful guest!
In all your sorrow and joy and care,
Never forsake your nest, young pair,
Never forsake your nest.

BEFORE MARRIAGE.

How do the gentlemen do before marriage?
Oh! then they come flattering,
Soft nonsense chattering,
Praising your pickling,
Playing at tickling,
Love verses writing,
Acrostics inditing,
If your finger aches, fretting,
Fondling and petting,
"My loving,"—"my doving,"
"Petseying,"—"wetseying,"
Now sighing, now dying,
Now dear diamonds buying,
Or yards of Chantilly, like a great big
silly,
Cashmere shawls—brandy balls,
Oranges, apples—gloves, *Gros de Naples*,
Sweet pretty *askuggies*—ugly pet puggies;

Now with an ear-ring themselves endearing,
Or squandering guineas upon *Sevignés*,
Now fingers squeezing or playfully teasing,
Bringing you bull's eyes, casting you
sheep's eyes.

AFTER MARRIAGE.

How do the gentleman do after marriage?
Oh, then nothing pleases'em,
But everything teases'em;
Then they're grumbling and snarling—
You're a « foot » not a « darling »;
Though they're rich as the *Inglés*,
They're the stingiest of stingies;
And what is so funny,
They've never got money;
Only ask them for any,
And they havn't a penny;
And what passes all bounds,
On themselves they'll spend pounds—
Give guineas for punch,
Each week a noise brings about, when they
pitch all the things about;
Now bowing in mockery, now smashing
the crockery;
Scolding and swearing their bald heads
tearing;
Storming and raging past all assuring.
Heaven preserve us! it makes one so nervous,
To hear the door slam to, to be called
simple ma'am, too;
(I wonder if Adam called Mrs. Eve ma-
dam!)

SONG.

AS SUNG BY JOHN ROACH, M.P.P.
Good evening to you one and all,
You're looking well I see;
I took a trip in a great big ship
Across the raging sea;
I've been out of work a month or more,
And you know it's very hard;
But now I've got a job to do
On the N. S. R. R.

So here I am an Irishman;
And to work I'm not afraid;
While my son does carry the Pick, my boys,
And I do handle the spade;
My Uncle Dan is an Alderman,
And he holds a grip in the ward;
'Tis him that gives the tickets out
To work on the N. S. R. R.

So now farewell, I'm going away,
I can no longer stay;
For if I sing any more for you
I'll loose a half-a-day;
I'm going down to the City Hall,
To try and get a card
To put my father's Uncle to work
On the North Shore Railroad.

RIDICULOUS PUNISHMENT—
THIRTY DAYS FOR RING-
ING A BELL.

Justice C. F. Newton, of Woodbridge, committed to the County Jail, on Monday, a man named Ambrose Rossa, on a charge of disorderly conduct. We understand that a watchman in a factory employed Rossa to watch for him on Sunday night, with instructions to ring the bell once every hour. The fellow not knowing how to tell the time, rang the bell every few minutes during the entire night, and in such a manner that the sleeping villagers were aroused and alarmed. The next morning the man was arrested as above stated, and committed to jail for thirty days.

A FEW HINTS ABOUT MARRY-
ING WIDOWS.

If men who marry maidens require a good deal of advice, men who think of marrying widows seem to stand in need of more. A man who tried the experiment of marrying a widow six years ago, has written out, pretty fully, his experience, and sent it to us, and we are inclined to think that it affords some useful lessons for all such as contemplate becoming second husbands.

Our correspondent married a widow with money. He spent her money, and now she chides him for it. He found spending the money pleasant enough, but the chiding he receives in consequence is decidedly disagreeable. Moral: do not marry a widow with money; but if you do marry a widow with money, don't spend it.

He married a woman who had a former husband, and that former husband was a very nice man; and he says: « She is constantly holding up to my admiring gaze the virtue of her first husband! » Now we cannot advise a man who is going to marrying a widow to marry one who has never had a first husband, for all widows must necessarily have had husbands; but would it not be a matter of prudence to select one whose first mate had not been altogether a model husband, so that if she was forced to make a comparison it should not be in his favor?

Our unhappy correspondent goes on to complain farther: « She flies into a passion; accuses me of everything mean, and to taunt me, declares that she did not marry me for love. » This is pretty serious. It is not so to marry a widow who can fly because she may, like this one, fly into a

passion. And then to accuse her husband of everything mean! How unnecessary, when the one mean thing of spending her money is sufficient to accuse him of!

This unfortunate man in his effort to state the case truly, cautions us as follows: « Do not think I am an angel in disposition; I am quick-tempered, but not unreasonable. » From this it does not seem to be enough to make it safe to marry a widow that a man is not unreasonable. He must also be an angel in disposition—perhaps he might better be an angel altogether!—and must not be quick-tempered.

The next ground of complaint is: « She is constantly thrusting her dear departed's portrait where all can see it. I have made her put it away several times, but she will persist in sticking it up again. » A point, then, in marrying a widow is to marry one who has no likeness of her first husband.

Altogether, from the information thus afforded us, we are enabled to prescribe a little formula to be adopted at the very beginning, in courting a widow. As such courtships are proverbially brief and business-like, there is no occasion for any hesitation in coming right to a statement of the essential points, and the reasons for them. It may be somewhat after the following fashion:

« Madam, a few things should be promptly settled between us, to determine whether there is any prospect that our married life will be happy;

First: Have you any money? If you have, I might spend it, and then you would chide me.

Second: Was your former husband a cross and crabbed man? Otherwise, you may make comparisons between him and myself, which will be very odious to me.

Third: Are you sure you cannot fly? You seem to me at present so like an angel that I am not quite sure you have not wings under your dress; and if you can fly, I fear, after we are married, you may fly into a passion.

Fourth: Will you destroy every likeness of your former husband? I should not want to see them about.

In this romantic manner a courtship might be begun. If it should end in a flare up instead of a marriage, two persons might possibly be benefited thereby.

LIKE A CHICKEN.

A Down-East editor says: « The ladies' hats are pretty, and worn on the upper edge of the left ear, which makes one look arch and piquant, like a chicken looking through a crack in a fence. »

SAYINGS AND DOINGS,

WITTY AND HUMOROUS.

SOME author tells us that « much is said about the tongue. » True, the thing is in everybody's mouth.

IN a report of a duel in Indiana it is stated, « Colonel Winks was wounded in the breast, but his opponent fired in the air. » Who, then, wounded the colonel?

A GENTLEMAN praising the generosity of his friend, observed, « He spends his money like water. »—« Then of course he liquidates his debts, » rejoined a wag.

A SCEPTIC thinks it very extraordinary that an ass once talked like a man. Isn't it still more extraordinary that thousands of men are continually talking like asses?

A YANKEE bragging of having killed a young panther whose tail was « three feet long, » Brown observed that the animal died seasonably, as the tail was long enough not « to be continued. »

WHEN Washington's secretary excused himself for the lateness of his attendance, and laid the blame upon his watch, his master quietly said: « Then you must get another watch, or I another secretary. »

THE latest Irish bull we read of is the case of an Irish gentleman who, in order to raise the wind whereby to relieve himself from pecuniary embarrassments, got his life insured for a large amount and then drowned himself.

NOT long since a premium was offered by an agricultural society for the best mode of irrigation, and the latter world, by mistake of the printer, having been changed to « irrigation, » a farmer sent his wife to gain the prize.

« My dear fellow, » said an old member of Congress to a new one, « you work too hard on your speeches. I often prepare one in half an hour, and think nothing of it. »—« And that's just what every-body else thinks of it, » was the reply.

A MAN and his wife who got into a quarrel, and beat one another with battlements, afterwards excused themselves, on the ground that there was nothing wrong, though it might be unusual in a married couple *a dore-ing* each other.

A GENTLEMAN, not satisfied with the grooming of his horse, thought to rebuke his groom by currying the animal himself, and received a violent kick. « It's no use trying to *curry* favour with that horse, » said the gentleman, as he laid down the comb.

A MAN who was in the habit of borrowing, and never returning, books, once complained in company that he was a very bad arithmetician. « Nevertheless, » said a witty lady, « you are a good *book-keeper*. »

MRS. PARTINGTON having heard her son say that there were a great many anecdotes in the new almanack, begged him to cut them all out; as she heard that when anybody was poisoned, nothing was necessary but to give him an anecdote, and it would cure him.

« MY dear, » said an affectionate husband, « I'm surprised that you will consent to the degradation of wearing another woman's hair on your head. »—« Is that any worse than your wearing *another sheep's wool* on your back? » retorted the equally affectionate wife.

« WHAT! » exclaimed a father, who had been eloquently reproving his obdurate son, « not a sign of penitence, not *one tear* of regret! »—« Coine, now, for you'll never strike water here, » said the unfilial young man.

A MAN who, having lost heavily in business, had become morose and ill-natured, one day said to his wife, « We must sell off some of our carriages, which shall it be? »—My dear, » responded the wife, « you may do as you please, so long as you only get rid of the *sulky* and retain the *sociable*. »

A WIT complained to Louis XIV. that the Duke of Guise threatened to kill him for some jokes that he had perpetrated at the Duke's expéñse. « If he does, » said Louis, « I'll hang him in ten minutes afterwards. »—« I'd prefer, » said the wit, « that your Majesty should hang him *one minute before*. »

DR. CURRIE (hot by name, and hot by nature), when asked by a particularly inquisitive woman to tell her the precise meaning of the word « idea, » about which she had been reading in some metaphysical work, but could not understand it, as last angrily exclaimed, « Idea, madam, is the feminine of idiot, and means a she-fool. »

THOSE who blow the coals of others' strife may chance to have the sparks fly in their faces.

LET the young man who blushes take courage, for it is the colour of virtue.

THE mind has a certain vegetative power, which cannot be wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a beautiful garden, it will of itself shoot quickly up in weeds or flowers of a wild growth.

A YOUNG LADY reprimanded her shoemaker for not following her directions respecting a pair of shoes she had ordered; and, among others insisted that they were not fellows. Crispin replied, that he purposely made them so, in order to oblige her, well knowing the modesty of her disposition, and that she was not fond of *fetid*.

« How much money have you? » said a rich old curmudgeon to a gay young fellow courting his pretty daughter. « Oh, I hav'n't much of anything now but I have a very rich prospect, indeed. » The wedding occurred, and the old chap learned from his fine son in-law that the rich prospect was the prospect of marrying his daughter.

A MAN'S character and disposition may often be told by his nasal organ. A round plump Roman nose is about sure to pilot a jolly fellow through the world; while a razor-shaped elongated proboscis is an index to a nature made of growls, clouds, daggers, &c. The man who is born with the right sort of nose may put a good face upon the affairs of life.

THE celebrated Dr. Abernethy, who was as brusque as he was skilful, being called one day to attend a lady who had run a nail into her foot, and being annoyed by her protestations that she knew she would die with the lockjaw, exclaimed, « Die of the lockjaw, madam? Don't be alarmed about that; nobody eyer yet knew a woman to die of lockjaw! »

IT'S better to brew beer than mischief—to be smitten with a young lady than rheumatism—to fall into a fortune than into the sea—to be pitted with a mother-in-law than the small-pox—to cut a tooth than a friend—to stand a dinner than an insult—to shoot partridges instead of a blister, and to nurse the baby at any time in preference to your anger.

A YOUNG LADY, in Nashville, remarked to a companion in a conversation, the other day, that she would never paint her cheeks again before attending a funeral. « Why not? » asked her friend. « Because, » replied the young lady, « I was painted up when I attended a funeral last summer, and never wanted to cry so bad in my life, and was getting my handkerchief ready, when glancing round at Mrs. Maggs, I saw that coarse, yellow skin of hers through the tear-tracks, and it looked horrible. I never had such hard work to hold my tears in since I was born. I'm done painting for funerals. »

THERE is music in all things if men had ears.

I come with news to night me boys
Just heed me for a while
My Song will give delight me boys
For it makes me grin and smile
You're heard about that Famous man
Who left us all on pain
Sure his back again all Safe and Sound
Jim Clark's home again

Chorus.—Then shout and cheer and Drink
yer Beer

No more in grief remain
For now the cry is every where
Clarke's home again.

I met him down in Peters Street
A week ago to day
And when I shook him by the hand
Sure I thought I'd faint away
He big and stout and walks about
In dress both nate and clane
Says I with glee o cane this be
Jim Clark home again

Chorus—Then shout.

I ad him why he stayed away
And left us all behind
But devil would be reply
To satisfy my mind
He has lived in foreign lands
In Jersey and Pensacola
But none will care from whence he came
When he's home with us again

Chorus—Then shout.

He talks no more of ship Polities
He says he got enough. To stand their
caperas and their tricks
One must be bold and tough, he thinks
he'll start a
Chandlers Store and paint a sign so plain,
to greet
When near the door Jim Clark home
again.

Chorus—Then shout.

ONE THING WANTING.

There is one thing that should be in all our dry-goods stores that I cannot find anywhere—seats for the sales-women. Let the men fight their own battles. I speak for the girls. I have no doubt their employers are all just men, who would not do a barbarous thing for the world, if they knew it; but not being women, they can't understand how fatiguing standing a long time is to most women. Healthy girls can become used to it; but there are many who suffer so, that if I could tell you all about it, I believe the tears would rise to your eyes—I'm speaking to employers who keep women standing twelve hours at a time—and you would set to

worg at once to devise convenient seats for all the women in your employ.

You give your customers seats. Customers would soon desert a store where they must stand to make purchases. The women on one side of the counter need seats as much as the women on the other.

You would lose nothing by doing what would save the strength of those who work for you. I think you would gain. For there is no attraction greater than a smiling face behind a counter. And who can smile with an aching back and blistered feet.

If we would arrive at real greatness of soul, we should consider that the greater the wrong is, the nobler it is to pardon it; and the more justifiable revenge would prove, so much the more honour there is in clemency.

THERE is a frightful interval between the seed and the tree.

THERE is not a string attuned to mirth but has its chord of melancholy.

THINKING AND DOING RIGHT.—It is much easier to think aright without doing right than to do right without thinking aright. Just thoughts may fail of producing just deeds, but just deeds always beget just thoughts. For, when the heart is pure and straight, there it hardly anything which can mislead the understanding in matters of immediate concernment; but the clearest understanding can do little in purifying an impure heart, or the strongest in straightening a crooked one.

MEETING QUEBEC TURF CLUB.

First annual meeting of the Quebec Turf Club is to be held on or about the 20th of September to elect new office bearers and discuss general business, also to form new rules as there is some ill feeling among the members concerning the rules and regulations of the club which will be rectified to suit all, we believe James D * * * intends bringing up some new motions which will be beneficial to the club!

Yours Truly,
J. C., President.
J. H., Sec.-Treas.

NOTICE.

Chequer club in the horse cloathing store John Street.

USEFUL RECIPES.

TO PREPARE A FOWL FOR ROASTING.—Take off all the feathers, and carefully take out all the stumps or plugs that are in the skin; for there is nothing more offensive than to see anything of this kind in poultry. Take the head and neck off; only just leave enough of the skin to cover over the part that is cut. Cut as small a place as you can for drawing the bird, and take great care not to break the gall-bladder. Keep the legs for a few minutes in boiling water, in order to get the skin from them; cut the claws off, and singe the bird with a piece of white paper, but so as not to blacken it. Wash and wipe it well afterwards, and let the liver and gizzard be cut to soak with the neck to make brown gravy with. Truss the bird, and flour it well; when put to fire, keep it well basted with butter. If a large fowl, it will take an hour; but a young chicken only half an hour. When it is done take the skewers out, put it into a dish garnished with water-cresses, and pour over some brown gravy that you have made with the gizzard, liver and neck, in the following way: first wash them well, then flour them, and put them into a little iron saucepan with two ounces of butter. When they are well browned, put in half a pint of boiling water, with pepper and salt according to taste; let it all simmer for an hour; then take out the neck, and pour the gravy, with the gizzard and liver, are much better so than roasted, because they do not get burnt.

BLACK STAIN FOR WOOD.—Boil half a pound of chip log-wood in two quarts of water, add one ounce of pearlash, and apply it hot to the work with a brush. Then take half a pound of logwood, boil it as before in two quarts of water, and add half an ounce of verdigris and half an ounce of copperas; strain it off, put in half a pound of rusty steel filings; and with this go over your work a second time.

RICE CAKES.—Beat the yolks of fifteen eggs for nearly a half an hour with a whisk, mix well with them three ounces of fine sifted loaf sugar, put in half a pound of ground rice, a little of orange-flower water or brandy and the rinds of two lemons, grated, then add the whites of seven eggs, well beaten, and stir the whole together for a quarter of an hour, put them into a hoop, and set them into a quick oven for half an hour, when they will be properly done.

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PARTIE FRANÇAISE.

L'Etoile de Québec.

SAMEDI, 16 SEPTEMBRE, 1876.

LE POING COUPÉ

HISTOIRE TURQUE

J'étais depuis une quinzaine de jours à Constantinople, et j'avoue qu'en dépit du Bosphore, de Sainte-Sophie, des mosquées et des palais, je commençais à sentir l'ennui m'envahir des pieds à la tête, quand un jour en remontant une petite rue étroite et sale, une maison construite en bois attira mon attention.

Ce n'est point qu'elle eût rien d'extraordinaire dans son architecture, si l'on peut appeler cela de l'architecture, mais au-dessus de la porte il y avait une plaque de marbre noir sur laquelle se détachait en relief un poing coupé qui avait dû être doré autrefois.

Cette main m'intriguait ; mon drogman qui, par hasard, était intelligent, devina ma curiosité.

« Cette plaque de marbre, me dit-il, rappelle une vieille histoire. Voulez-vous que je vous la raconte ? »

— J'allais vous le demander. »

Quelques minutes après nous étions assis dans un café où l'on nous prodiguait des tasses de moka trop petites, et des pipes trop grandes, et mon compagnon me raconta ce qui suit.

* * *

Il y a vingt ans, dit-il, la maison que vous venez de voir avait un aspect bien plus misérable encore qu'elle ne l'a maintenant, et les passants alors ont dû souvent se demander comment des croyants pouvaient vivre dans cette demeure, dont l'entrée à peine voulue des juifs ou des râas.

Enfin, on y vivait, on y souffrait même.

Dans une des chambres de cette habitation, un matin, râlait un homme étendu sur quelques méchants coussins d'où la paille s'échappait.

A ses côtés, pressant une do ses mains dans ses petites mains, se tenait un enfant de dix ans à peu près, à la figure intelligente et décidée...

« Courage, pauvre père, disait-il au malade... »

— Du courage, répondit d'une voix dolente le moribond, comment veux-tu que j'en aie encore ? Je souffre, je te vois souff-

rir, Méhémet, il n'y a pas un para ici, et qui sait quand il y en aura... »

— Dans quelques heures peut-être, fit l'enfant. »

Et déposant sur le front du vieillard un baiser, il alla décrocher une corbeille qui pendait au mur.

« Que vas-tu faire ? demanda le père.

— Je vais aller trouver le boulanger, notre voisin, auquel j'ai souvent fait de petites commissions : je lui demanderai de me donner à crédit des petits pains ; j'irai les vendre à la promenade de Kiahat-Khan et j'aurai bien du malheur si je ne réalise pas quelques bénéfices... »

— Va, mon pauvre enfant, dit Méhémet-Ali, et que Dieu te protège... »

Il y avait à peine deux heures que l'enfant était parti, quand il rentra en courant, les yeux rouges et la bouche souriante. On voyait qu'il avait pleuré, mais le bonheur se lisait sur toute sa physionomie.

« Ah ! père ! s'écria-t-il, encore tout essoufflé et en se laissant tomber sur un escabeau, ah ! père ! tous nos malheurs sont finis... »

— Qu'est-il donc arrivé ? demanda le vieillard en se redressant sur son coude.

— Figez-vous, père, dit l'enfant, qu'avant même d'être à Kiahat, j'avais vendu la moitié de mes petits pains. Vous pensez si j'étais heureux. Je m'installai sur la place contre un arbre, et je me mis à crier ma marchandise. Peu à peu ma corbeille se vidait, quand soudain près de moi passa un soldat de la garde du sultan, qui prit deux petits pains et s'éloigna sans me payer. Je courus après lui en réclamant les quelques paras qu'il me devait. Non-seulement il refusa de me payer, mais apercevant au fond de ma corbeille ma petite recette, il allait s'en emparer, et il avait déjà les doigts dessus, quand une main s'appuya sur son épaule.

Il se retourna et se retrouva en présence d'un homme de taille élevée, aux traits majestueux et imposants.

— Voleur ! dit cet homme au soldat, et appelant deux employés de la police : « Commencez ce misérable et qu'on le juge... Il entra ouvrit son caftan, et les serviteurs du sultan tombèrent le front dans la poussière. »

Alors, se retournant vers moi, mon sauveur m'a interrogé, il m'a demandé mon nom. Il avait l'air si bon que j'ai eu confiance et j'ai raconté toutes mes misères.

« Quand j'ai cessé de parler je l'ai entendu qui murmurait : « Pauvre petit ! » puis il a glissé dans ma corbeille ces trois pièces d'or, et ce qui vaut mieux peut-être, il a déchiré un morceau de sa ceinture et il me l'a donné en me disant de venir demain matin au palais du sultan et de le

présenter à l'officier de garde qui m'apprendrait ce que j'aurais à faire.... »

— Au palais du sultan, s'écria le père de Méhémet, c'est étrange !..... »

* * *

Le lendemain matin, à l'heure indiquée, l'enfant se présenta à la porte du palais. Dès qu'il fut montré le fragment de ceinture, on l'introduisit dans les appartements intérieurs, et quelques minutes après on le conduisit dans une espèce de kiosque splendide où il aperçut étendu sur des coussins de soie, son sauveur de la veille.

Par un de ces mouvements charmants qui n'appartiennent qu'à l'enfance, il courut vers lui et lui prit la main qu'il porta à ses lèvres.

Deux ombres noires avaient été sur le point de s'élanter en voyant le mouvement de Méhémet, mais d'un signe, le maître les avaient fait rentrer dans leur immobilité....

Le chef des croyants fit asseoir l'enfant à ses cotés, et avec lui pendant quelque temps, puis, charmé de la gentillesse et de l'intelligence du jeune Ali, il fit appeler le chef d'écoles, lui donna ses instructions, et renvoya son protégé de présents, en lui disant qu'il s'occuperaït de lui.

Chose extradaïre : le sultan tint parole et n'oublia pas l'enfant.

Quelques jours après, Méhémet entrait dans la première école de Constantinople dont grâce à son intelligence et à son énergie au travail, il devenait rapidement un des plus brillants élèves. De temps en temps le sultan faisait appeler son protégé et constatait les progrès et le développement de cette intelligence qu'il considérait comme son œuvre et dont il était fier au fond.

Mais ces prospérités n'avaient point fait oublier à Méhémet son père, grâce aux générosités de son illustre protecteur, le vieillard n'avait pas connu la misère, et il n'est pas d'attentions que ne lui prodiguât son fils pour lui prouver son affection.

Méhémet aimait son père d'un amour sans bornes, presque exagéré, comme savent aimer les musulmans qui en arrivent à ne pas discuter les actions, bonnes ou mauvaises, de ceux qu'ils aiment, et qui supportent leurs humeurs, leurs boutades, leurs caprices—en mettant le tout sur le compte de la fatalité.

Le vieil Ali aurait commis un crime que son fils ne l'en aurait pas moins adoré pour cela...

* * *

L'enfant était devenu homme, et sous la main toute-puissante du chef des croyants, il avait rapidement marché en avant. Comptant parmi les oulémas les plus instruits, il avait conquis une réputation mé-

rité de science; il venait d'être attaché à la personne du sultan en qualité de second secrétaire, et tout faisait présager que là ne s'arrêteraient pas ses succès, quand une nouvelle se répandit dans le palais. On venait de découvrir une conspiration contre le sultan. Il ne s'agissait seulement que d'étrangler le souverain actuel, et de mettre son oncle à sa place. Mais heureusement, tous les conspirateurs avaient été arrêtés.

Sans savoir pourquoi, en apprenant cette nouvelle, Méhémet eut comme le pressentiment d'un malheur.

Le lendemain, il avait fait l'explication de ce pressentiment. Grâce à sa position, la liste des conjurés devait passer sous ses yeux; quand il la parcourut, parmi les noms des hommes qui avaient médité la mort de son bienfaiteur, il trouva le nom de son père.

Au même instant, le sultan le fit mander.

« Je vois à ton visage, dit le chef des croyants, que tu as appris une mauvaise nouvelle. Ne t'inquiète pas pour moi, cela ne change rien, ni ne diminue mon affection pour toi; mais connus je connaît l'amour que tu portes à ton père, j'ai voulu t'éviter, nous éviter des scènes pénibles. Né me demande donc aucune grâce pour lui; j'ai juré que la justice aurait son cours, et je serai inflexible même avec toi. »

Le jeune ouléma comprit au ton de son maître qu'il n'y avait pas à le faire revenir sur sa résolution; et il s'éloigna le désevoir au cœur.

Méhémet-Ali s'était en effet laissé affilier à quelques conspirations appartenant au vieux parti musulman. Comment avait-il oublié ce qu'il devait au souverain actuel, au bienfaiteur de son fils? Etais-ce un ingrat, était-ce un esprit faible? C'était peut-être l'un et l'autre; toujours est-il qu'il avait conspiré, et que le tribunal—usant de clémence—ne le condamna qu'à avoir le poing gauche coupé. La sentence devait être exécutée le lendemain.

Le jour même où le jugement fut rendu, Méhémet demanda une audience au sultan.

« Seigneur, dit-il, je viens vous demander une grâce... »

Le souverain fronça le sourcil.

« Ce n'est pas, reprit vivement le jeune homme, la grâce de mon père... non... Veuillez, Seigneur, m'écouter quelques instants et vous ne me refuserez point la faveur que j'imploré. Je vous dois tout, reprit le secrétaire, après un instant de silence; vous m'avez fait ce que je suis; vous m'avez comblé sans cesse de vos bienfaits, je n'ai jamais pu vous prouver ma recon-

naissance et mon dévouement. Aujourd'hui, l'occasion se présente d'affirmer cette reconnaissance et ce dévouement. Des misérables ont osé conspirer contre vous, parmi eux se trouve mon père. La justice l'a condamné à avoir le poing coupé: ce n'est point assez pour moi d'avoir renié cet homme, il faut un exemple frappant, terrible, et je viens vous demander l'autorisation d'exécuter moi-même la sentence.

— Quoi! s'écria le sultan, tu veux remplacer le bourreau, couper toi-même la main à ton père?

— Oui...

— Mais ton affection pour lui?

— Son crime a tué mon affection...

Longtemps le sultan hésita; enfin, comme pris d'une résolution subite, après avoir fixé quelques instants le jeune homme:

— Soit, dit-il, va, je donnerai des ordres... mais j'exige que tu me rapportes toi-même le poignet de ton père... »

Et quand Méhémet se fut éloigné...

— Et voilà, murmura-t-il, ce que l'ambition peut faire d'un fils!

**

Le lendemain, le fils d'Ali se présenta devant le sultan. Il était pâle et semblait se soutenir à peine.

— Eh bien! demanda le souverain.

— L'exécution a eu lieu, Seigneur.

Et en silence il tendit à son maître une main encore sanglante....

— Misérable! s'écria le chef des croyants en furie... tu as cru te concilier ma bienveillance et me prouver ton dévouement, en commettant presque un parricide; tu as foulé aux pieds tous les sentiments du fils pour servir tes projets ambitieux... Eh bien, tes projets ambitieux sont avortés et tout ce que j'avais de bienveillance se change en mépris; et comme je ne veux point qu'un acte aussi abominable reste sans châtiment, je te condamne à la prison perpétuelle. Gardes, emparez-vous de cet homme, liez-lui les mains et conduisez-le au château des Sept-Tours!

Méhémet n'avait pas dit un mot, mais deux grosses larmes coulaient le long de ses joues.

Quand les soldats s'approchèrent de lui pour l'attacher, l'un d'eux lui saisit le bras gauche qu'il tenait caché sous son caftan, et poussa un cri d'étonnement.

A ce bras, enveloppé de linge ensanglanté, la main manquait.

A cette vue, le sultan comprit tout.

Si Méhémet avait tant sollicité l'autorisation d'exécuter lui-même la sentence des juges, c'était pour éviter le supplice à son père en se l'infligeant à lui-même. Et cette main qu'il venait de présenter au sultan, c'était la sienne.

« Retirez-vous, » dit aux gardes le chef des croyants.

Puis, s'approchant du jeune homme:

— Je t'avais mal jugé, Méhémet; je te dois une compensation. A partir d'aujourd'hui, tu es mon premier secrétaire; je t'accorde la grâce de ton père, et je veux qu'en souvenir de ton dévouement filial, on place sur la maison de ton père une plaque de marbre noir avec un poing doré.....

— Voilà, dit le drogman, l'histoire de la main coupée que vous avez vue tout à l'heure.....

Et il absorba sa quatorzième tasse de café.

M. DE BEJAF.

Nous donnons avis au public qu'il y aura un grand concert donné mardi, à la Salle Victoria, sous le patronage de P***, le chétif conseiller. A cette soirée, sera exécuté la brillante et nouvelle composition, de Magloir T ***, intitulé les « Soupirs d'un Troc. » Mr. Alex L *** exécutera ce morceau sur le haut-bois.

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Il sera vendu par encan, mercredi, à une heure, le plus beau spécimen de chêvre qui existe à Québec. L *** le suisse carotté, qui demeure chez L ** *, rue St. Jean, sera exhibé durant toute la matinée le jour de la vente.

HOSANNA, Encanteur.

J'aime ma dame, j'ai peur qu'ils me l'ôte.

JEAN-BAPTISTE P*****

Il est peureux Baptist.

George C*****, le pedant, va remonter au faubourg à présent qu'il a bravé et surtout à lui, avis aux intéressés il n'est pas prêt de revenir il s'ennuie à St. Sauveur Les filles en veulent point.

Johny M*** est commis au Palais, as t'heure avis aux demoiselles qui s'intéressent à lui, mo y couche à St. Sauveur et pi y cherche une place comme policeman.

THOMAS DODDRIDGE

Editeur Propriétaire

du

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