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A GARDEN OF PARIS

THE STILL WATERS OF THE LAKE

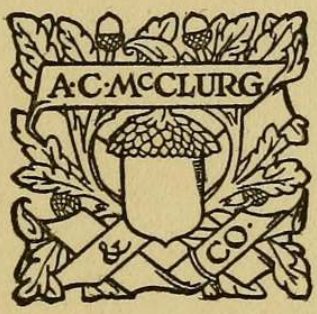
A GARDEN OF PARIS

BY

ELIZABETH WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY

FRED J. ARTING



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Dedicated to
La Petite Grand'mère
with
affectionate homage

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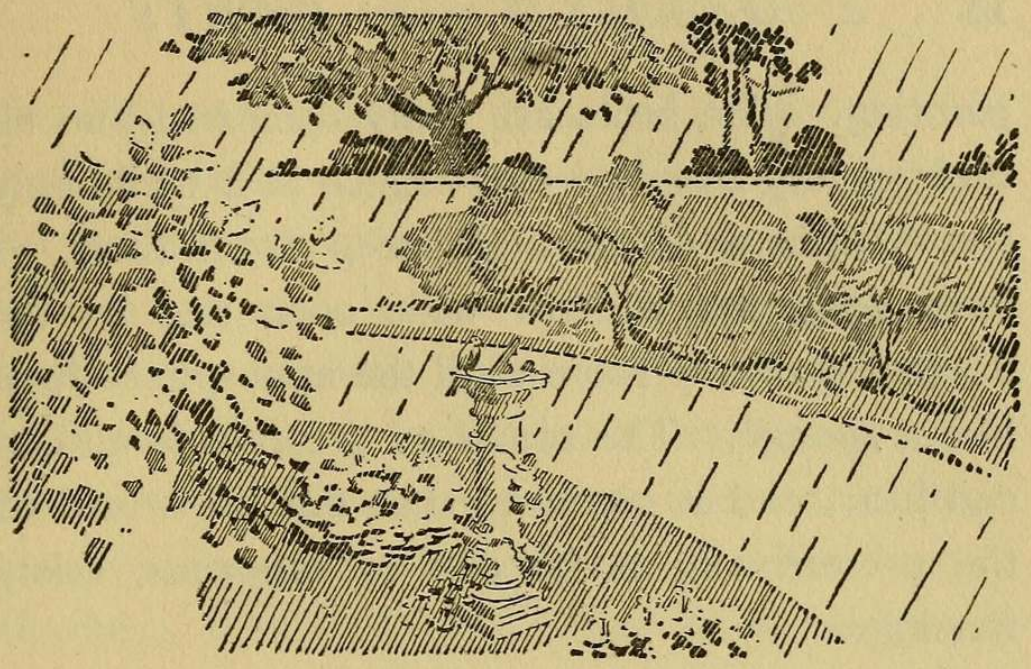


A GARDEN OF PARIS

I

The Gray House of the Garden

TO-DAY the garden has been deluged with rain. Sometimes the rain comes in quick pattering big drops, and then the garden looks like an impressionist landscape, with queer looking spots and dabs. Sometimes it comes in thin steady streams, and then my landscape changes into a pen and ink sketch with fine lines across its surface. But to-day the water comes down like a veil, and the masses of foliage take on the soft grayish green look of a Puvis de Chavannes

painting. The birds are sadly drenched and all their gayety has died out. Once in a while only can I hear a disconsolate peep from them. I have flung the window wide open and let the dampness fill my room until the atmosphere feels like a sponge. The sound of the rain is all one can hear, and it seems to shut out the world of the present and invite one to vaporous, misty musings.

To-day, when human voices are stilled for the moment, inanimate objects become lifelike and this old house begins to feel and to live. Its familiar lines become more human and it looks strangely like a friend. To the world, it shows a grave and serious front. The severe lines of its impassive facade have been turned for generations toward the busy street. It has seen men come and go; it has watched with quiet stoicism many a tragedy; it has heard year after year the shrill cries of street vendors — cries that remain the same, although the vendors become old and pass away. Its solemn walls seem impenetrable, but from time to time the huge green doors open with a slow dignified motion and you almost expect some marvellous revelation to come forth; but it is only the baker boy, whistling merrily,

with his empty basket balanced nicely on his head, or a white-capped *blanchisseuse* picking her way daintily out over the cobble stones. Sometimes, to be sure, the doors both open wider than usual and a carriage drives in; then they close again, and the gray façade looks more portentous than ever, more severely silent and inscrutable. It must have grown so purely out of self-defence; otherwise it would long since have crumbled away in nervous prostration because of the waves of excitement, bustling activity, and unceasing noise breaking against it from morning until morning again.

This is the side it shows to the world, but there is another side, turned to the calm and peace of tall trees whose tops only are moved by the wind. On this side are big generous windows that open wide their whole length and let in the sunshine and the air, the sweet dampness of a rainy day, or the perfect glory of a spring morning in France. It is so sudden, so unexpected, to find all this eloquence behind the dumb gray stone that fronts the street, that one feels the same delightful sense of discovery as when in the arid monotony of social life one meets suddenly with the freshness of a spontaneous and unspoiled

mind, or when behind a cold and baffling manner one catches a glimpse of warmth and charm.

It is this contrast, perhaps, that makes my garden seem to me a wonderful and precious place, more silent and cool because so fearfully near the tumult and the glare. Some day you may want to come here; therefore I shall tell you the way that leads to it. You must first find a long, narrow, busy street on the left bank of the Seine. The street looks much narrower than it really is, for the little shops and the big ones are so eager to display their goods that they run over with the enthusiasm of commerce, and spill bargains all over the sidewalk. From midnight to morning the street is wide and quiet, but about seven o'clock some invisible and mischievous genie seems to pass along. He stops at every shop and pulls a string which brings a tangle of heterogeneous articles out after it and disposes them all along the way.

Here is a *charcuterie* with neat little pigs hanging up in a row, each bearing a proper little bouquet on its uncurled and lifeless tail. Beneath them are dishes each containing an irreproachable and special cut, all the way from the vital organs of a chicken to the

nicely rounded *gigot* of a luckless sheep. There is an ambitious bazaar whose awnings are festooned with shoestrings, ribbons, neckties, and lace; where dresses and suits are dangling, and flaunting their commercial value in the face of the passing public. Next door is the shoe store of *La Vierge Marie,* where the poorest as well as the most fastidious may be shod. The proprietor of this place is an eager, red-headed man who darts out once in a while, takes in the personnel of those passing: then suddenly his face seems to become discomposed; he grows rigid and, opening his mouth, cries out in a voice so piercing that the innocent passer-by stops appalled until he grasps the meaning of the cry. This is simply an appeal to gentlemen and ladies of taste to observe the ridiculously low price at which he is selling shoes of an elegance not to be found anywhere else in Paris. Having delivered his message, he immediately resumes his former peaceful manner and retires to the darkness of his interior, there to meditate over new devices by which he may decoy the public. His is a daring mind which hesitates at no invention if thereby he may lure some shining francs from reluctant hands. One device to which he resorts with

alarming frequency is to place a large placard over the cheapest pile of slippers, on which is written: "On account of a recent death in the firm these slippers will be sold at the risibly low figure of two francs a pair." The proprietor puts this sign up with a cheerful smile and stands alertly at one side waiting for it to take. I stopped one day and asked him what fearful epidemic was carrying off the firm, for it was the third time in five weeks that the announcement of death had appeared. He looked at me for a moment gravely, then with a twinkle in his eye said, "Ah, it is a sad world, Madame, but one must live. What would you?"

Across the street Madame Geneviève, a trim-looking little woman, has installed her flower booth. It is in an angle of the wall and above there is the stone image of a tortured Christ in a niche built into the house by some pious proprietor of long ago. The longest stemmed flowers reach to the agonized limbs and caress them with a pitying touch. Madame Geneviève is always up betimes and comes back from the market pushing her little cart before her loaded with fresh country flowers, sweet white lilacs, buxom roses and forget-me-nots with their gentle insistent note of blue. Soon Madame Geneviève

has them arranged in stiff little bunches tied very firmly, with quantities of cord. Of course, if you do not find these to your taste, or if Madame prefers, another *gerbe* can be made up for her on the spot, a magnificent bouquet, which will last for a week, but of course Madame understands that it will be more expensive; but then it is easy to see that Madame will not object to that. And you leave her bearing a huge bunch for which you have recklessly paid sixty cents, and followed by her cheerful good wishes.

Close by her is the *Bureau de tabac,* where a black-eyed, clear-voiced, handsome woman dispenses anæmic-looking cigarettes, dark complexioned cigars and highly colored liqueurs to the clerks and cabmen of the neighborhood, and an occasional stamp to a hurried purchaser; and with each sale she bandies words and exchanges jokes or bits of gossip.

Just beyond is the ornate brown front of an irreproachable *Etablissement Duval,* where you are absolutely certain of eating exactly the same thing, served in exactly the same way, as in hundreds of kindred establishments all over Paris — a fact that should appeal to all well-organized minds.

Between the shoe shop *à la Vierge Marie* and

another equally enterprising emporium of trade is the great high door which leads into, and out from, the paved court in front of the gray house with the garden. When we enter and the heavy doors swing close on their hinges, we find ourselves walking limpingly over rounded cobble stones and looking at the uninviting stable at one side where my lord's carriage used to be kept. A rosy-cheeked *concièrge* comes to our rescue and cries out to us from her low window, where little pots of flowers and a huge black cat are basking in the warmth,

"The door at the back of the court, second floor, opposite."

As soon as the real meaning of this enigmatic phrase dawns on us we say, "Thank you," and pick our way over the tortuous balls of stone. The door at the back of the court opens into a vestibule guarded by two solemn palms which nod gently to us as we pass. The winding stairway is shining with wax, and softly carpeted; the railing is very slender and the walls are very old. When we reach the door at the back of the second floor opposite, fair-haired Alphonsine answers the ring with a sunny smile and in a liquid voice begs us to enter.

We pass through a large antechamber and enter a salon with three generous windows whose doors are flung wide open, and through the windows comes a wonderful melody of sound, and from them we can see a wonderful harmony of color. The world from which we have just come suddenly slips away from us. Not a cry from the street is heard, no noise of wheels or cracking whips, no hint of trade, no jargon of voices; only the concert of birds, hundreds of them, who are joyously piping in the tall trees, a glad audacious wanton flinging of their whole being into this welcome to spring.

The garden is big and full of splendid tall trees and carpeted with velvety grass, and surrounded by solemn convent walls which can only be guessed at through the curtain of green. Once in a while the big black cat of our rosy concierge prowls about with stealthy step, sinister audience at the concert of birds, or a soft-robed sister walks gently up and down the paths with bowed head counting her beads, not seeing the glory about her. This was the way the garden looked to me the first time I saw it, and I turned from the salon with a sigh of regret when Alphonsine said,

"Would Mademoiselle like to go to her room before Madame returns?"

I feared to leave these windows lest I be consigned to a room on the court, where cobble stones would be the only bit of nature I should have to contemplate.

So I followed Alphonsine reluctantly, but she went across the salon to where a silk embroidered drapery hung richly from the ceiling to the floor. Slipping her hand behind it she touched something that made the door open, and passing through a thick wall and another door we found ourselves in my room. Oh joy! its one big window opened into the same garden: and so gladly did I hurry to see if I had really the same view that I failed to notice the wonderful old mahogany, the quaint prints, and the door opening into the tiny little bedroom beyond.

And each day when I come in from the life of outside I experience the same feeling of surprise, the same delicious sense of intimacy. I know now the heart of the old house. I shall never be repelled or frightened by its grim street aspect, for I know what is hidden from the casual passer-by. And when I see the anxious eager crowds in the cumbered street, when I hear their bar-

gaining and bickering, I hurry past them, secretly exulting, for there is something awaiting me of which they know nothing. Perhaps some of them may have little hidden gardens, too, and I scan the faces of those I meet to see if I can notice any traces of a joyous secret like mine. But I hurry on, for I am eager to have the great green doors close upon me and shut out the others.

II

Visions

THEY do penetrate from time to time — the others — but chiefly as thought phantoms, and they take on a gentler aspect and a finer grace when they troop silently into the rooms with the windows that look out upon the quiet garden. And to-day these figures become elusive and melt into the soft mist of the rain, for they are the shadows of those who are gone.

The Master's tall form is here breathing out the same joyous benignity that used to put the shyest at his ease. For two years he has been lying peacefully on the sloping hillside in the Normandy he loved so well, but his presence is still here, and I can see quite plainly his handsome head with its silver hair, his beautiful brown eyes, his straight sensitive nose, the smiling mouth forming words of welcome. And I can see him again as he enters his lecture room in the sudden hush of respectful attention. Scholars and students from many lands gathered year after year to hear the Master, and to take down

with anxious precision notes of the fruits of his marvellous scholarship.

I trust they have not all forgotten, as have I, the different branches of *Le Couronnement de Louis* and why the *Charroi de Nîmes* is considered a sort of bridge between two other epics which have nothing to do with each other. But I feel sure that if they have forgotten all the variants and the manuscripts A, B, C, and D, they still remember vividly the life with which he animated those old poems, and how the heroes of a by-gone age moved again under the magic touch of his patriotic eloquence. Charlemagne and Guillaume and Roland were no longer dead. We were thrilled as by an actual drama when the Master read us of the mighty Guillaume returning to Orange clad in Saracen armor, how the old porter, taking him for an enemy, stubbornly refused him entrance, and then how Ghibour in all her womanly loveliness appeared, and how the warrior swore a great oath that never should he rest on couch or soothe his limbs with water until he had pressed a kiss on Ghibour's lips.

When he told the beautiful legend of Charlemagne beginning, "*Quand il était mort, le grand*

roi aux cheveaux blancs," the Master's vibrant voice gave a new meaning to the strong old French words. We saw the dead king carried, not lying prone upon a bier, but sitting proudly upright on a golden throne, the four Evangelists at his feet. And thus he was borne to his own cathedral at Aix, where he sits unvanquished, waiting again to take up arms against the unbeliever and the foes of his dear France.

Ah Master! you too are still enthroned within the hearts of all those who learned from you a little of the noble passion of high scholarship, and your clear strong spirit, from this throne of golden memories, is still battling for the truth, and for the France you loved so well.

Then comes the Critic's face, keen, sharp-cut features, eyes that peer through glasses, a neutral complexion, a nervous quick manner. When he spoke, his sentences came in measured elegant fashion, in strong contrast to his manner. With what pitiless clearness he attacked a subject, how cleanly he disposed of it all, neatly done up in its proper parcel and labelled ready to be pigeonholed. And then his form passes on into the mist.

The Lecturer follows him, and I see a bulky

outline, a large fair head and bearded face. He is always inseparable from his audience; and so I see him, as he steps out from the little door near the platform, silk hat in one hand, leather *serviette* under his arm. He acknowledges the applause from the crowded amphitheatre with a slight bow, sits down behind his desk, draws off his yellow kid gloves, smooths them out carefully, stirs the lump of sugar in his glass, opens his *serviette,* arranges his notes, stirs his sugar and water again, and finally begins, "*Mesdames et Messieurs . . .*" His elegant sentences flow unceasingly, he builds up a perfect structure, in which the heavy erudition is lightened here and there by a sparkling bit of wit, a satiric remark, a phrase with double meaning, given with the merest lift of an eyebrow and received with mental smacking of the lips by the attentive audience.

But he, too, passes into the mist, and others come one after the other until they fill the garden with their shadows and the mist grows deeper and I should soon become helplessly melancholy did not Lucien, the irreproachable butler, come in to say that dinner would be served in half an hour.

III

Realities

SO full was my mind of visions that I fear the first dinner among old friends would have been a failure had not Philippe appeared, and Philippe always brings with him an atmosphere of joyousness. He is very tall. He tells me he is nearly two meters high, but that means nothing to me. I know that he is over six feet and that he carries his tall frame with a graceful unconsciousness that is altogether charming. His curling brown hair is very abundant, his cheeks look always as though he had come in out of a crisp wind, and his brown eyes have a joyous twinkle.

When dinner is announced he gallantly offers his arm to *la petite grand'mère,* but she chides him and tells him his duty is to me. So we walk out with much gayety and sit down at the candle-lit table. The sweet Hostess is ever the presiding genius, but it is *grand'mère* who is very brilliant to-night and her well-turned phrases, pointed with a bit of irony once in a while, serve as a *sauce piquante* for every course. Her sister,

tante Placide sits beside her, sweetly benign and gentle. She eats her soft-boiled egg and her curdled cream with resignation, while delectable viands are consumed by the rest of us.

Just as we were at the second course the Patriot came in. Being a Pole, he cannot help being a patriot and revolutionary, and so he never comes just at the appointed or expected time. But this is a matter of such entire indifference to him whose mind is so full of great things, that we are ashamed to feel annoyed at all absence of apology from him. Quite simply he takes the place hastily prepared for him and in a perfectly matter of course way dominates the conversation. He talks about himself. One is usually eloquent but not always pleasing when on this subject, but the Patriot has a detached way of considering himself as an instrument, a powerful one to be sure, that divests his conversation of all complacency. But alas; the entire absence of any visible linen about his person, his soft shapeless clothes, his coarse shoes, the incessant stream of his conversation, begin to have an effect on *la petite grand'mère*. His insurrection against convention irrirates her, his frank speech shocks her, she who speaks as they did in the grand salons

of the last century, for whom conversation is an artistic combination of words and graceful phrases which allow one to divine the sense beneath, if one can disentangle oneself from the bewildering beauty of the lace-like expression. No matter how commonplace the subject, *grand'-mère* always dresses it up, giving a dainty touch there, a bit of color here; sometimes maliciously knocking the hat on one side or leaving a mirth-provoking gap, but always making a work of art of the poorest, thinnest sentiment.

And so, the Patriot's directness ruffles her and she is sometimes guilty of cutting him off quite shortly by suddenly becoming deeply absorbed in the *menu* and addressing a remark to the attentive butler, which completely unhinges the conversation for the moment. But the Patriot waits and then without the least shade of annoyance, — I doubt indeed if he has noticed the little feminine device, — goes on imperturbably.

Once, in the course of his monologue, he remarked — no, not remarked, for he says nothing without a certain air of sincerity and gravity which raises everything into the realm of assertions — he asserted then, that he was very fond of his daughters. To which unusual sentiment

grand'mère made one of her charmingly involved replies, implying that it was a feeling one was not utterly surprised to discover in a father's breast. The Patriot looked at her a while with serious eyes and said in his grave sweet voice:

"But I disagree with you, Madame; I think it is most surprising. I have indeed a large heart when I can love my country as I do, and humanity also, and yet find a place there to love my three daughters." For the time being *grand'-mère* was vanquished and retired from the field scandalized, but in good order.

And through it all *tante* Placide smiles gently and says very little save a mild *mais, ma soeur!* once in a while to her vivacious elder sister. But though she says nothing now, nor much more through the evening, which is punctuated by fragrant black coffee, bridge, and the ten o'clock tea, her gentle presence is more impressive than the vivacity of the rest. Her delicate skin flushes to the softest pink, her fine-cut high bred features look like an old miniature and her lovely white hair wooes one to love winter.

Philippe comes beside me and talks to me in low eager tones of his ambitions. He is now reading law, but he is not at all sure that he

wishes to make this his career. His music is dear to him, but there are so many people with talent! He would like, most of all, some employment, light, and not too exacting, which would assure him respectability and a living, and which would permit him to devote most of his time to writing, for he thinks, bless his dear enthusiastic soul, that he has a message to deliver to the world, a message on Pascal and other worthies of Port Royal! He thinks he has discovered something that has not yet been said, and his eyes shine with the same fire as light up those of his transatlantic brother when he talks of hunting big game, or of a fortunate deal in stocks. And I look at Philippe's splendid athletic frame and his handsome face and wonder if it is education and environment alone which make him so different.

When the good nights have been said and the guests are gone we sit for a while in the soft lamplight and talk of those who will never meet with us again. There are, alas, so many! But as we talk our hearts begin to glow with a warmth that comes from that land where our loved ones are, and as we leave each other the yearning and the heartache are soothed.

In the starlit beauty of the quiet night my gar-

den is unique, sufficient. As I sit and dream at my window the shadow people come once more and I hear again the faint echo of a bird's song.

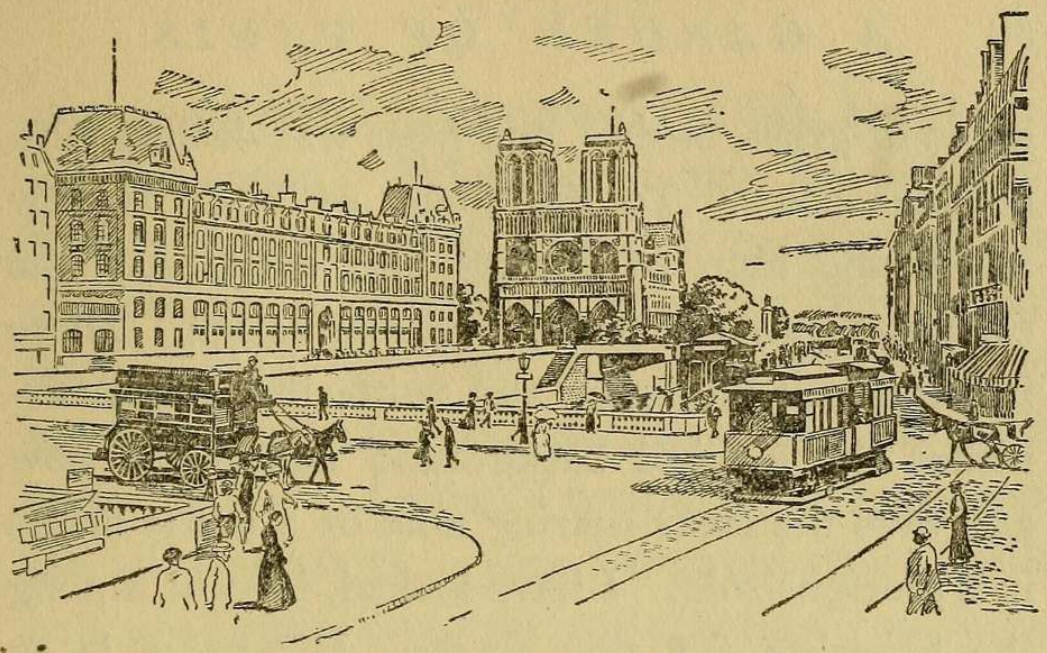
I sat within the quiet garden of my soul,
With body weak and heart that beat afraid,
Still trembling from the dread defeat that shut me from the world,
And groping for a pallid hope that fled dismayed.

A fear fell on me and an awful dread.
I lifted longing arms for those without.
I yearned to gaze into clear shallows of a human love.
I prayed to feel again the passion and the doubt.

Then from the coolness and the silence of the place,
A wondrous calm and sweetness o'er me stole,
A truth triumphant thrilled my fainting heart with sudden life;
"Within thyself thou hast wherewith to reach the goal."

I rose upright within the garden of my soul.
Its heavy doors shut out the careless throng.
Its winding paths were peopled with soft shadows of my thoughts.
Its leafy arches echoed my unspoken song.

And the garden is unique, sufficient.



IV

Action

WARMER days have come and my garden is more of a joy than ever. Yesterday morning, very early, a gardener appeared. He was here before the stars had quite faded from the sky and as the slow dawn came, it seemed, at first, in the cool dimness, that they had slipped from their places and fallen softly down into my garden, for here and there were faint gleams and spots. When the light grew stronger I saw that I was mistaken and that what had seemed fallen stars were white tulips. When the gardener was quite through I saw that he had also planted quantities of blue forget-me-nots, pink geraniums and other bright-colored flowers, so that the

green of grass, bushes, and trees was dashed with brilliant color. To the songs of birds is now added the hum of insects and every day the orchestra gains in power and expression. There is a constant humming and twittering which furnishes the musical background and every now and then the clear soaring note of a merle arises in a glorious solo. I have looked, in vain, among the branches for this singer. His voice is so piercingly sweet and it rises and falls with such artistic cadences, now mingling in the general chorus, now exulting high above it, that I am sure he is a wonderful virtuoso. But no matter how wild the melody, there is one ever-recurrent air, a minor strain that haunts one long afterwards. Other notes ring out from other throats like flashes of color. So the garden with its mass of green and with its glints of bright flowers forms with the music a perfect symphony of color and sound.

There is something in the morning, in the freshness of the spring air that impels one to work and to activity. Even into the calm of the garden have come the flutterings of new life. Is it because the convent walls are not thick enough to shut out the restless energy of the streets, or is it the heart of my garden itself that feels the

stirring of youth, the renewing of life, the yearning for action? Whatever it may be, some influence detaches itself from the garden and the city outside calls with an insistence that cannot be unheeded. It is the call to work, to joy, to anything: provided one may have the glad sense of movement. And so, I turn away and go down the winding stairs, across the paved court, smile half apologetically to the rosy-cheeked *concièrge,* open the great green doors and as they swing back, and shut me out on the street, palpitating with life, I hesitate a moment then, exultingly, become one of the multitude.

Shall it be work or glad abandonment to pleasure? The quaint narrow Rue des Saints Pères beckons me toward the river, a street so narrow that it seems impossible for two cabs to pass each other, much less two monstrous autobus (or is the plural autobi?) that loom up gigantic in their two-storied height. If I go that way I shall soon reach the Seine and then I shall cross over on the Pont Royal, stopping for a moment to look up the river at the twin towers of Notre Dame and the tall splendid spire of La Sainte Chapelle. They are beautiful in rain or fog, in sunshine or in the gray twilight of evening. Then I shall go on my inevitable way to the old palace of that

great Cardinal who moulded kings and made them do his pleasure. He was a ruler of kings, but his unsatisfied ambition was always to be a maker of books. It is fitting, then, that Richelieu's great palace now holds more books than it is possible to count, and that, day after day, would-be makers of books sit beneath the great ornate dome of the National Library, where his marble statue looks down upon them with a pleased smile, tinged with a bit of envy.

But the day is too full of sparkle for one wilfully to shut oneself away from the brightness, and if the sunshine is so glorious here, what must it be out beyond the city fortifications? Obeying a sudden impulse, I hail a cabman with the sibilant impelling call of *psst!* which goes much further and reaches much duller ears than could our hearty open "hey there!" He stops, adjusts his taximeter and off we go to the Gare de Lyon, for a vision of Fontainebleau suddenly projected upon my wavering mind has brought me to a quick decision.

The introduction of taximeters on the cabs has robbed me of all joy in driving. I can no longer see anything but that inexorable warming pan staring me in the face. I wait with an anxiety which becomes anguish for the warming pan to

click and with an evil wink slip another figure into place. The first figure indicating 75 centimes lasts a satisfactory length of time, but it is simply awful to witness the vulgar haste with which 95 follows fast on the heels of 85. The deepest agony, however, is at the last. You feel that you will safely arrive with the indicator pointing to one franc fifteen centimes. You get out your purse, select the proper coin, decide upon an adequate *pour boire* and then, just as you stop, the wretched warming pan gives one more wicked click and you find yourself financially responsible for two cents more. The taximeter may be a great convenience, but I consider it utterly demoralizing and its baleful psychological influence will doubtless be realized when we see the parsimony of the next generation.

The fat old cabman whips his thin horse mechanically and at perfectly regular intervals, all of which seems to accelerate his speed not at all, but nevertheless we arrive fifteen minutes before train time. It is well, for a large delegation of prosperous-looking Britons are going by the same train. The compartments all seem to be full, at least each door is guarded by a rather belligerent looking person whom I dare not brave. As I walk along the aisle I reach one compart-

ment where a benevolent old gentleman is standing. To my inquiry he replies in very bad French, but with a kindly accent, "*Oui, oui, deux places ici.*" I step in, although why he should think I need two places is a question I prefer to leave unanswered. As I move in, a very stout lady, apparently the only occupant of the six seats, and evidently the benevolent party's wife, leans forward anxiously, and in a voice that makes her fringe vibrate says, "*Occupé, occupé.*" Not wishing to make further trouble in what seems to be an already divided family, at least as far as I am concerned, I retire and pass on. I find shelter in another compartment where the occupants seem to be less conservative. There are four persons, each installed in a corner, leaving the uncomfortable middle seats for late comers. They talk freely and easily across to each other, so this arrangement has its advantages, for their fellow travellers, who can thus cull precious bits of conversation. These four are evidently husbands and wives, the men broad-shouldered and good-looking, the women excessively plain and dressed in curious costumes that seem to be composed of after thoughts. One of them wears a thin, flimsy China silk bodice, very much trimmed with quantities of cheap lace, the

wide spacing of whose buttons and buttonholes testifies as to its ready-made origin; a very heavy skirt of coarse blue serge which shows a stubborn reluctance to join its existence with that of the frivolous-looking waist, leaving, as a consequence, a yawning gap between them, which the shining belt very stiffly refuses to span. Add to this, tan shoes at one extremity, and at the other a large mushroom hat of dark red straw trimmed with cherries and an immense bow of red ribbon of a tint skilfully selected so as just not to harmonize with the rest of the structure. The other lady is a discord in blue, whose distinguishing article of apparel is a checked flannel bodice liberally trimmed with diaphanous netting.

However, let us not trust to appearances. They are doubtless cultured people, although I hear snatches of conversation which do not lead unavoidably to this conclusion; but even conversation should not condemn a man. One husband who is deep in a local English newspaper suddenly exclaims: "I say, Hawarden is dead." His wife looks up and with admirably controlled emotion says: "Oh really! what a pity. He used to jump over the table without touching a dish."

Eloquent epitaph this. I do not know whether this was an ordinary prandial feat, whether Hawarden did this at home, at every meal, or whether he reserved it for his guests. But the brief words spoke volumes and presented poor Hawarden to me as no funeral oration could have done. I saw him, genial, kindly, agile, ready to sacrifice himself for his family, for his friends, performing faithfully this little duty, never weary, never breaking down. And each time he tried it Mrs. Hawarden, in true wifely wise, would protest, implore, even scold. "Mortimer"; his name must have been Mortimer; "Mortimer, dear, I *must* beg of you for the sake of the children, if not for your own sake, to desist from this." And the children would howl with delight and Hawarden, poor dead Hawarden, would fix his hands firmly on the table between the gravy boat and the boiled potatoes and, rising lightly, would leap over the boiled mutton and come down surely and firmly on the other side. Sometimes perhaps . . . — but no, I shall not malign the dead hero by any base suppositions. Let us leave him with this simple inscription uttered by a friend, in a foreign land, and falling upon sympathetic ears.

V

The Heart of the City

THUS pleasantly dreaming of unknown heroes, the time passes rapidly, and Fontainebleau is reached. I soon find two good friends and together we drive all morning over the *grandes routes* and the green aisles of the old forest. Sometimes we wander down by-paths into harmless gorges with fearful names, where the rocks are green with moss and the trees shut out the yellow light, letting in a soft cool green glimmer. And shall we ever forget the little village of Marlotte, full of blessed artist memories, but disfigured as are so many French villages now, by the hideous villas springing up impertinently and flaunting their gaudy colors and graceless architecture in the face of monuments which have become classic?

We drive through winding narrow streets to the principal hotel of the village. Immediately we feel that we are in the domain of an original genius. The proprietor of the hostelry is evidently a pushing man possessed of commercial

instincts which clothe, rather fantastically, an artistic soul. The place runs to blue; all the balconies and windows are painted a vivid blue, and the personality of the owner breaks out at unexpected intervals in great blue letters *Paul Mallot, Ptr.*

As we descend from the carriage, a fat waiter with a dirty white apron fitting smoothly over his rotund form advances and demands if Monsieur and Mesdames will not enter the garden. We assent and are conducted through the paved court, on beyond into an azure landscape where there are so many and so varied features that we are dazed, and fail to receive any general impression except that of color. The atmosphere seems to have suddenly become blue; the façade had been but the merest hint of the cerulean depths into which we now are plunged. The little iron tables and chairs are a vivid blue. There are gas fixtures painted blue, attached to pillars painted blue. The trees seem to have been struck with blue lightning, for there is a sinuous blue line winding around the trunk of each, terminating in an electric button. The china is blue. Near one of the blue tables is a sad looking monkey, tugging at his chain, and he seems

FONTAINEBLEAU

blue, too. In the centre of the garden is a huge blue canvas umbrella which concentrates the color into a blueness of indigo. As a relief from this we note that there are, encircling the garden, a number of little *kiosks* evidently designed for the customers of exclusive taste, and whose thatched roofs pleasantly suggest the unconventionality of Hottentot society. We also notice that our host is something of an epicure who doubtless inherits his taste for luxury from some old Roman sybarite ancestor, for, opening out into the garden in a most conspicious spot is a modern bath room still shining in all the whiteness of new porcelain. The door is left open with an air of easy careless ostentation befitting the proprietor of the only like luxury in the village. It is doubtless a great attraction, only, the question will obtrude itself on a practical mind, who uses it, and when? Perhaps it is too sacred to be used, perhaps it is a monument erected in bitter jest to some famous artist *habitué* of the place. We shall probably never know.

We order lemonade to be made with lemons and our fat waiter, proud of the resources of the house, brings us some shrivelled fruit and prepares the drink before our eyes, conversing amia-

bly the while of his little world: how business fell off lamentably at Pentecost because of the cold; how, despite continued rains the *patron* had nevertheless prospered sufficiently to buy a pretty bit of ground adjoining, which made a *belle promenade;* and would we not take a glimpse of it before we left?

We drove slowly back through the forest, our horses moving with measured dignity, so that we could see every passing glade, every green aisle, and every majestic tree. We felt unutterable scorn for the automobiles that dashed past, from time to time, like maddened buzzing insects trying to pass through a window pane. What could their occupants see of all this beauty?

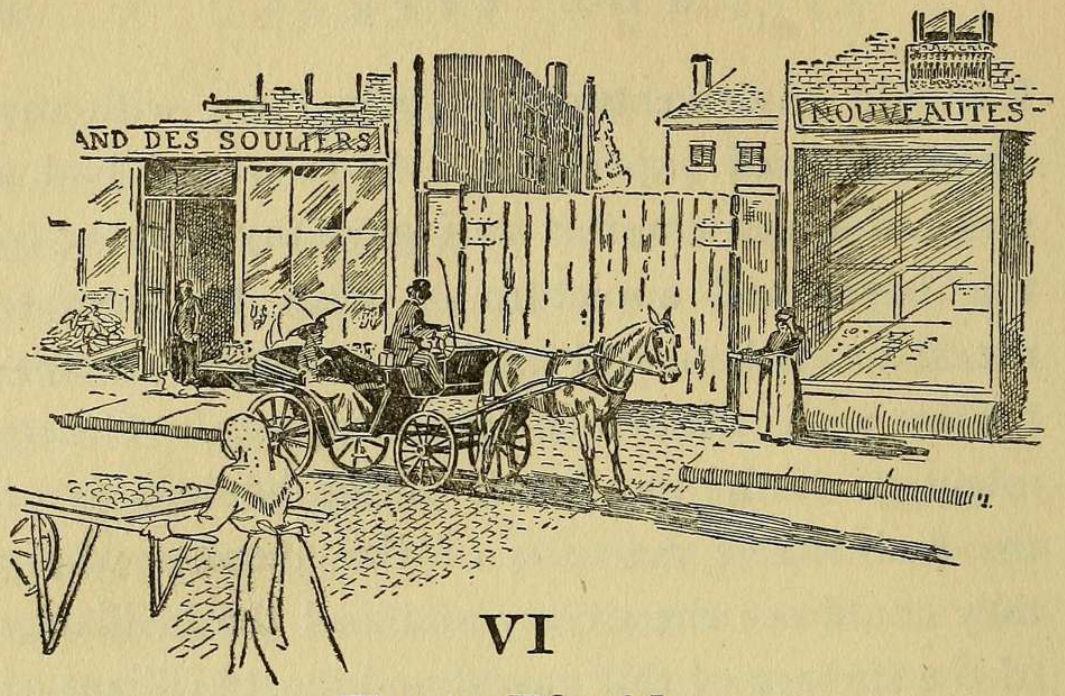
My train hurried me back to the city through the forests and the well-kept fields, past trim little villages, which in France, never seem to have any back yards, and where you can never come early enough to surprise them in curl papers or in *deshabille*. As we neared the city we swept by market gardens set with such geometrical precision that they looked like huge colored kindergarten mats, where men and women were using the last precious hours of daylight in bending over the plants with anxious care.

Often when we have been away for a few hours from a temporary home we feel upon our return to it a warm glow of affection, a reflection of that deeper emotion we have when we go back to our real home. Something of this I felt when our screaming little locomotive steamed noisily into the station. Before the train stopped, compartment doors opened and eager home-goers were standing ready to step out as soon as the wheels would stop turning. Then came the rush for the exits, the cries of porters, the happy laughter of meeting friends, and then the quick dispersion in a hundred different directions of those whom the accident of travel had housed together for a few brief hours.

I hailed a cab and while waiting for it to drive up across the cobble-stoned *place* to the curb, my attention was attracted to a group of travellers who had evidently just arrived by one of the *grandes lignes*. They were discussing, in the unamiable way characteristic of tired tourists, the best place to go for the night and there seemed to be as many minds as persons. Their faces wore an expression of fretful uncertainty and, had not a man from Cook's appeared to them at the same time that my cabby drew up before me,

I should have ventured to help them with my small stock of experience. As it was, I had a sense of warm comfort as I gave my number to the driver and a picture of what the number meant to me banished unpleasant images of hostelries with their restless occupants. Others might go to the gay hotels of the boulevards or the fashionable pensions of the avenues where they could see the gayety and feel the brilliancy of the surface of this gayest and most brilliant of cities, but I was going to the very heart of Paris, to the House of the Garden, where in the quiet, behind protecting walls, was hidden the real life of the great city.

As we rattled along over the paved streets I found myself guessing how many of the houses we passed hid behind their monotonous fronts some bit of greenness, some cool place where trees grew tall and where the grass was not whitened by the dust of the streets. And I thought that unless one knew just such a place, one had not entered into an understanding of the real mind of the most polished and yet most simple of people.



VI

Tante Placide

MY reflections came to an end with a jolt, for we had arrived at the green doors that shut out the deepening darkness. While going up the stairs I heard voices coming down to me, sounds of laughter and gayety. The doors had been thrown open to let in the warm spring air and the family were all assembled at the table. When I entered the dining room with apologies for my lateness on my lips, I was met with a chorus of greetings. The Patriot was there and he rose gallantly to help me to my place. *La petite grand'mère* insisted that I should tell my adventures; Germaine wanted to know if I had gone into the caves, and the gentle Hostess wondered if I were not very tired. They all said they

were glad I had come back in time to get some *vol-au-vent,* for they did not often indulge in this bourgeois delicacy. When I told about the English people on the train the Patriot listened with serious courtesy and when I finished, made some profound observations on the subject of British characteristics, implying that my ideas of Mortimer's lightness were in opposition to all well-known English traits. He cited at length some of his own experiences which proved conclusively that no Englishman would be capable of performing any such feats as my fertile and now discredited imagination ascribed to the late Mr. Hawarden.

The Patriot is very serious. I suppose he has to be when he has an enslaved country constantly on his mind. It must be a very heavy responsibility, especially as the work of liberation and regeneration is apparently to be largely brought about by his efforts.

When dinner was over he begged to be excused as he was to deliver a lecture on Polish freedom before a Catholic school. The rest of us went into a salon which to-night was to be the scene of busy activity for we were all to knit woollen petticoats for the villagers near the *château.* The gentle Hostess and *la petite grand'-*

mère take great pride in making up the wool from their own flocks into warm winter clothes for the very old and the very young. So, through the winter evenings, they weave into their work memories of the golden summer time, of the *château* with its flower-filled moat, of the sturdy village folk, and of the green hills and valleys of Normandy.

Germaine begged that *la petite grand'mère* would read aloud while our busy needles clicked and we elected "Pickwick Papers," in French of course. *La petite grand'mère* reads with wonderful dramatic expression as she sits upright in her straight-backed arm chair. To me there is peculiar humor in the thought of the irrepressible Samuel expressing himself in the elegant gallic tongue while Mr. Pickwick's solid phrases assume a sudden distinction which would have delighted the soul of a gentleman of his keen sensibilities. Germaine thinks that Samuel's wonderful similes are the cream of wit and laughs so hard that she has to stop her knitting. *Tante* Placide smiles benignly but her expression denotes a lack of sympathetic comprehension of these very eccentric persons, who are forever getting into painful situations.

After a while Alphonsine comes to announce

that it is time for Mademoiselle Germaine to retire and after reluctant goodnights have been said *la petite grand'mère* and *tante* Placide fall to discussing feminine nature, apropos of a care-burdened relative. I have become so absorbed in the intricacies of a new stitch which the gentle Hostess is teaching me that I hear nothing until a clear-cut phrase from *la petite grand'mère* arrests my attention. She is saying,

"But my dear sister, all women are Eves and all of us, however much we may protest, would have eaten the apple, and for various reasons. Some, because we are greedy; some, because we are ambitious; some, because we are merely curious; some, because we are reckless; some, because we are thoughtless; and some because we want to have something to worry about afterwards."

Pretty *tante* Placide listened with silent admiration to her clever sister, but shook her head gently and protestingly to signify that she had her own opinion about Eve and the apple. *Tante* Placide has no mind for discussions. She is the kind of woman whom men adore and other women love. The other day, when we celebrated her *fête* she had letters and visits from hosts of friends. She receives homage with a sweet air of youthful

surprise and pleasure as though she were experiencing the sensation for the first time. She is possessed of a certain spring-like charm that never developed into the warm sensuous summer, nor can autumn's frost or winter's cold ever wither it. One of her ardent admirers, an elderly Englishman who crosses the Channel so often that he is sometimes uncertain on which side he is, sent her a poem on her *fête* which pleased her infinitely. I notice that she keeps it in her work basket and to-night I ask her if I might not reread it to her. It is written in English and I craftily suggest that she ought to hear me read it aloud for the sake of cultivating her pronunciation. It is addressed thus:

LINES TO THE COUNTESS PLACIDE ON HER BEST BIRTHDAY

(*With apologies to Austin Dobson*)

Her fine benignant face
Old Time has touched with tender grace,
Just leaving there a lingering trace
    Of joy and sorrow.
The secret of that winsome smile,
Which from some god she did beguile,
    We fain would borrow.

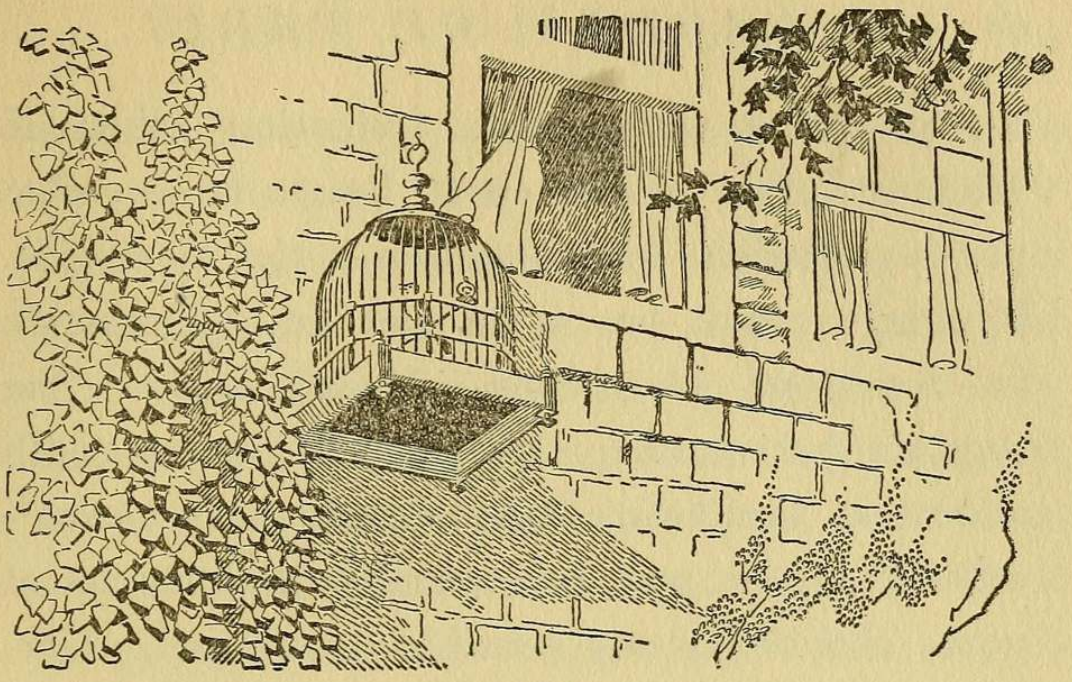
The winters of the years,
Have never chilled her heart with fears;
And of their passage naught appears,
Save snow white tresses:
For summer lingers in her heart,
And hides her years with such an art
That no one guesses.

She has a charm that grows,
And from her lovely presence flows,
The holy peace and calm repose
Of gentle leisure.
Oh teach us then the sinless crime
Of how we, too, may cheat old Time
Of his one pleasure!

As I read, carefully enunciating my words, a far away look came into *tante* Placide's eyes and I wonder if the secret is buried in her heart, together with the memory of the brave young Count whose life was sacrificed with so many others in the fearful blunder of Sedan. Perhaps she is keeping young for him.

After the good-nights have been said and I have gone to my room, I fling wide open the windows which Alphonsine has carefully closed lest a deadly *courant d'air* might harm me. The per-

fume of sleepy flowers, wet with the night dews, rises in the air, a bird stirs uneasily, and, as I look up into the starry sky, I wonder idly if the Count was tall and strong and handsome, like Philippe, for instance.



VII

The Vanity of Learning

THE morning was very still and the notes of the merle sounded more clearly than usual. He woke me at a very early hour and I resented it until I looked from my window and saw what he saw. No wonder he wanted to arouse all sluggards, for the sun had not yet risen high enough to peep over the convent walls on the other side, and while the sky was a brilliant hot blue the garden still lay like a cool, dark green pool, encircled by gray hills. Everything proclaimed a hot day and I hastened to dress and go down into the garden, so that I might have a taste of its freshness and coolness before the heat of noon came on.

Alphonsine with quick divination asked if Mademoiselle would not have her coffee in the garden with Mademoiselle Germaine. Nothing could be more perfect. Germaine is fourteen, black-eyed, black-haired. She regards her mother, my gentle hostess, with adoration, and between her and *la petite grand'-mère* there exists a comradeship that laughs at years and defies any possible dissolution. Germaine is intensely patriotic and a hero-worshipper. She takes an affectionate interest in Americans because they have made a hero of a Frenchman, and since Lafayette is a loved name across the seas, she has admitted the name of Washington into her exclusive Hall of Fame. She is just now studying American History and she asks me many questions which I ought to be able to answer; but my memory is imperfect. Besides, the beauty of the morning is very distracting. I suggest that we look for the merle who sings at times so triumphantly, and at times with such sadness. So we set about our quest and peer up into the tall trees, but fail to catch a glimpse of him. By following his song, however, we become convinced that he is in the tallest tree, that grows up close to the convent

wall. There are some windows there, little narrow windows, from which, Germaine and I conclude, but a very small and misleading portion of the garden can be seen. And we are glad that we are free and that we can feel the melody that the merle is expressing for us. Just at this moment we see a white hand thrust out of one of the high windows, holding a cage which it hangs on a hook outside the edge. In the cage is a bird, our bird, whose songs have been such a joy to us. And now we know why some of his notes are sad.

As I went away from the garden the world seemed a little out of joint; a cloud had come over the sunshine, a taste of bitterness flavored the perfect enjoyment of the day. When this happens to be the case, one notes events with a bit of unconscious cynicism, and this must have been my mood when I went toward the Sorbonne. I had promised myself the experience of hearing a candidate for the doctor's degree of philosophy defend his thesis and I had been told that this was to be a battle royal.

The *Salle du Doctorat* in the Sorbonne is very beautiful, very dignified and very ornate. There is a richness and affluence of decoration about

most of the public rooms which would make them seem vulgar anywhere else but in a nation where taste and a sense of proportion are inborn instincts. It is a rectangular room, very high and with full-length portraits about the walls of Richelieu, Corneille, Molière, Pascal, and other dead and gone worthies who do not seem to feel in the least scandalized at each other's presence. Under the portrait of the great cardinal, at the end opposite the entrance, stands the desk of the judges.

When I entered, the room was full of spectators, some attracted by interest in the candidate, others by interest in the judges, and others coming out of pure curiosity. There was an unusual proportion of distinguished-looking gentlemen, a number of students, and some nondescript sort of people who seemed to have no other occupation than that of helping to vitiate the air in the lecture halls of the University. In front of me were two young women in the unconventional dress which marked them as belonging to the artist class. One of them had pretty Jewish features and wore an immense black hat set at a hazardous angle upon a mass of tumbled hair. The other had strong handsome features and

wore a small sailor hat perched upon smooth yellow coils. They were busy sketching types and soon, having exhausted models from one point of vantage, they fell into an animated discussion, the result of which was that they rose and changed their places with a charming disregard of the disturbance they caused. They crossed the aisle and made several people rise in order to pass in to some vacant seats well in the centre. Later I heard a shuffling of feet and saw them change their point of view again. However, no one seemed to be annoyed. It was a delightful illustration of the national device *liberté, égalité, fraternité.*

As I looked over the crowded room I wondered to myself with an inward chuckle how many distinguished citizens of New York or Chicago would be tempted to attend the examinations for Doctor of Philosophy in their respectively neighboring universities.

The candidate was already on the grill and his misery was not lessened by the presence of all his relatives. In the rows nearest him, painfully reminiscent of chief mourners, were his wife, his son, his mother and father, her mother and father, and so on to cousins four times removed.

The deceased, — I should say, the candidate, — was seated with his back to the audience and looking up to, and facing, his judges, three doughty champions of letters in the Faculty of the Sorbonne. Judge number one began by asking the candidate to give a short outline of his thesis. The thesis lay like a huge bone of contention on the table between those who were to attack it and him who was to defend it. It was a bulky volume of a formidable air but its creator and compiler disposed of it in about fifteen minutes in a clear, definite, and very comprehensive analysis. He was a thin consumptive-looking man with an exaggeratedly nervous manner. He kept violently stirring his sugar and water, clicking the spoon against the glass, sipping from it feverishly, and every now and then turning around to cast a resentful, baleful glance upon the phalanx of relatives.

When he had finished his exposition, the first judge complimented him delicately and at length on his outline and then on the book in general. In this way he was able to show the audience that he was as thoroughly familiar with the thesis as was the author himself. This was the first skirmish, perfectly harmless, perfectly polite and

agreeable. But, having administered the sugar, he began to administer the medicine. He had noticed here and there, nothing very grave to be sure, but he wondered if, in the title to chapter so and so, the candidate had not been a trifle careless in using a certain term which, — perhaps after all he was entirely mistaken, — but would the candidate have the excessive amiability to explain and define a little more clearly what he meant by such and such an expression? The candidate, feverish and eager, was already gesticulating before the judge's delicate rapier stroke had reached him, and the two voices rose in a duo that thoroughly confused and delighted the audience, but seemed to disturb neither of the principals in the combat. And this went on for over an hour. The judge, thrusting, now mockingly, now laughingly, but always with infinite grace, while the candidate parried the strokes and lunged back, nearly always effectively, but feverishly, noisily, with many gesticulations. Only once or twice did he acknowledge the justice of a criticism, as when the judge said with bland politeness:

"May I ask, not with impertinence, not from idle curiosity, but from an intense de-

sire to know, why you use four times, first on page fifty-six, again on page one hundred and five, then on page three hundred and sixty-four, and still again on page five hundred and three, such and such a term?"

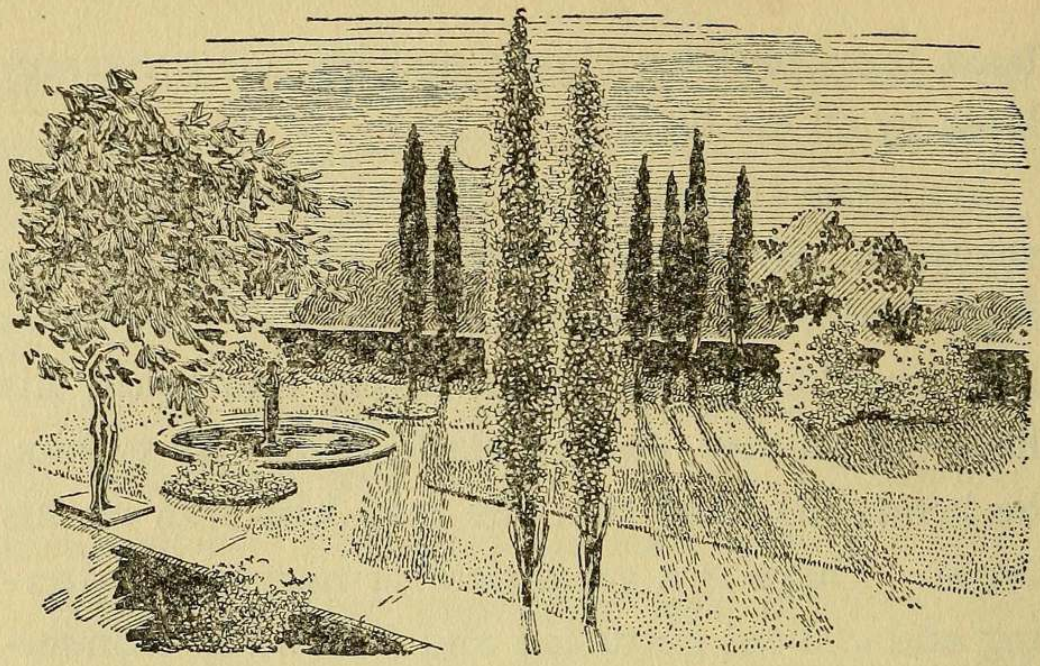
And the candidate let his features relax for the first time and laughed as he ingenuously answered — "I have n't the least idea."

When the first inquisitor was through, the second one took up the subject. His attack was a little heavier; there were not so many compliments bestowed; there was less of the rapier and more of the broadsword. He criticised the form of the thesis and cited illogical conclusions and contradictory statements which the candidate was asked to reconstruct and then not given time to do.

The third inquisitor was a handsome, self-satisfied looking person, who took solid comfort in referring to his own works and citing passages therefrom. Being much more absorbed in showing his own armor, he made little effort to thrust at the battered breastplate of the victim. After hours of this intellectual tilting the ordeal was over, the candidate was declared successful, his

book pronounced a classic and he was congratulated by all his judges.

He turns from the judicial bench and faces his relatives, who crowd around him, his wife a little flushed and trembling. His tall son kisses him impulsively on either cheek, and when his little old mother, clad in black, comes up to him, he bends his head that she may kiss him on his brow. There is a great deal of nervous chattering and excited gesturing and I go away wondering what his feelings are. For nine years he has been bending all his energies to reach this goal, to obtain what every Frenchman with orthodox views on the educational system desires most earnestly. Now he has attained his ambition. I am told he will be appointed to a professorship in a provincial city. Banished from Paris! No Frenchman who has once lived here can think of this with calm. For Paris is, in an extraordinary degree, the mecca of all literary and professional men, and they keep coming here while protesting to foreigners that the only way really to know and understand France is to go to the smallest towns and study the people who have been unspoiled by the life of the city.



VIII

The Shadows in the Garden

IN the House of the Garden we nearly always have guests at dinner. The great green doors which close so quickly upon you when you go out into the street open hospitably to those who are bidden. At dinner, the evening after the examination at the Sorbonne, there were three guests. Monsieur and Madame Degas I knew well. He is a Normand, tall, well-built, with close-cropped white hair, rosy complexion and gray military moustache. He is one of these kindly, clever, good-hearted men whose nature belongs to no particular nation nor generation and whom every one likes quickly and sponta-

neously. He is a professor in one of the *lycées* for boys and is perfectly content to remain a pedagogue the rest of his life. Indeed, he told me, with a merry twinkle in his eye, that he had learned now to take his gait like an old cab horse, and that nothing could ever induce him to do more than jog comfortably along.

"What about the beatings," quoth I, "do you get used to them?"

"Ah, — I will tell you a secret," he replied. "They do not hurt once your hide is accustomed to them, and the hardening process is not so bad as you might think."

Madame Degas is young, dark, and picturesque, somewhat emancipated in manner, full of all sorts of plans and schemes, from the saving of chicken feathers for her winter hats, to the bringing up of children without the laying on of hands. Her husband listens to her with a kindly paternal air, tolerantly allows his three small boys to tyrannize over him, and patiently endures the frequently recurring uncomfortable periods when the house is servantless.

The third guest is a stranger to me. When he is presented he makes such a profound bow that all I see is a bent head suffering from an indigence

of natural covering. He is spare of figure and I get an impression of ill-fitting evening clothes. It is only when we are at dinner and I find him opposite me that I see his face. It is narrow, thin, and the very high forehead seems disproportionately large. His eyes are deep set and very brilliant, while his close-cropped whiskers half hide a nervous large mouth. He does not mingle much in the general conversation but when a question is addressed to him he answers it with a grave consideration and conscientiousness that is almost a reproach to the questioner. The conversation never lags for a moment after it is once in full swing.

There is usually close attention to business during the soup course, but as soon as it is disposed of and a sip of wine has been taken, tongues are loosened and ideas flow. It has been interesting to me to note the subtle differences between social life in France and America, in circles who are interested in more or less the same things. In America women take the initiative not only in the organization of social functions but in conversation and entertaining. Mrs. Jones decides to give a dinner, she asks her husband if he will be free on such and such an

evening, she sends out her invitations, as often as not without consulting her husband. She plans to have an "entertainer" come in after dinner to relieve her guests from the responsibility of any great mental effort. At table the American man, tired with a long day of business or professional activities, expects to be diverted by the talk of the lady next to him and he allows her to take the initiative. As a consequence, the conversation is seldom general and is very apt to turn to personal and trivial matters. In France the husband has more leisure and taste for social affairs. Very often he arranges the dinner, plans for the guests and, when the company is assembled, he leads in the conversation and all participate in it. At table the men talk quite as much, if not more, than the women. They talk for the sake of being heard; they love to have an audience; hence their conversation is more finished, and more stilted perhaps than ours. They have more elegance, we have more spontaneity; they are more improving, and we are more stimulating.

But I am forgetting our particular dinner and we have now reached the dessert. The subjects of talk have been many and varied. We began

with a discussion of Paul Bourget's novel, "L'Emigré," which led to animated debate as to whether the English system of primogeniture was not the only one to preserve the best in a nation. We then proceeded to differentiate the literary characteristics of the Danes from those of the Swedes and Norwegians, and decided almost unanimously that the former were more individual, explosive and unbalanced. This having been satisfactorily agreed upon, a controversy arose as to who was the first, Pascal or Diderot, to think of making physical experiments at different altitudes. This grew so heated that the matter was left unsettled, and a tactful turn was given to the conversation by some one asking our serious guest what his opinion was as to the much mooted question whether Michelet did or did not refuse to visit his dying son. The ensuing discussion brought us on to a more personal territory and we actually fell to the level of discussing the sad degeneracy in literary matters of Albert Delmare. When, to the joy of criticising an author is added the joy of criticising a friend, a zestful pleasure is experienced, and as we all knew this unfortunate critic the talk grew quite brilliant until the gentle

Hostess gave the signal for us to pass into the salon.

In France the men do not always remain to smoke, away from the women, and so we had our coffee comfortably together. Philippe and I sat down in one of the balconied windows overlooking the garden. I forgot to mention that Philippe was one of the guests. He is with us so often and *la petite grand'mère* is always so glad to have him come, that he is quite like one of the family. I have fallen into the habit of asking him about people and things I do not quite understand. This evening I was curious about the serious guest, for he seemed to me a man from whom the soul had gone out, and who worked, moved by intellectual springs. Philippe told me that he had been a professor in a provincial university, that he had done a remarkable piece of scholarly work and had thus attracted the attention of the Minister of Instruction. He was called to Paris and although his roots had struck deep into the soil of his native town he came without a moment of hesitation. He brought with him his wife, a pretty young thing, who was scarcely more than a girl and whose mind was filled with ideas as charming, tenuous, and fleeting as clouds in a

summer sky. He plunged into his new work and was soon utterly absorbed in it and oblivious of how new conditions might affect his family. She, left to herself without acquaintances, obliged to live with strict economy and missing pitifully the intimate associations of the town where she had always lived, endured it as long as she could. Then one tragic day her husband was awakened from his absorption to find that she had disappeared, and that his own trusted friend had gone with her.

When he recovered from the blow he was a different man. As soon as the proper formalities had been gone through with, he married a middle-aged woman who would make a good mother for the three little waifs, left to his absent-minded care. He never referred to his past, he never accompanied his wife anywhere, he went out but seldom, and he became more deeply absorbed than ever in his work. But something was lost, the brilliancy, the originality, the creative power was gone, and he never became what his talent had promised he would be. I looked across to where he was sitting bent over in a chair, talking dispiritedly to *la petite grand'-mère* and I thought involuntarily of M. Degas'

cab horse. Do they all become hardened, I wondered.

That night as I looked out on my garden it failed to bring peace to me for as my eyes searched its quiet shadows I seemed to see blind human creatures groping about to find the true path and failing piteously. Mistaken ones toiling and striving and finding only disappointment and death. Surely there must be some one to show us the way. Surely we are not all without sight.

Upon this little island of our earth
Encircled by the stream of death,
Within a forest dark with phantom shade
We wander, helpless and afraid.

Each, groping, seeks some human hand to touch
Yet dreads to feel Death's icy clutch.
And one shrieks out lest he be left behind
For all of us oh God! are blind.

It helps us not, in struggling for the way,
That some once saw the light of day.
Pale memories, washed dim with tears,
Of morning suns seen through a mist of years.

It matters not in seeking the lost path,
That the full measure of the wrath
Has not been meted out to those
Who see faint shapes, as at the evening's close.

For when the awful truth at last is known
That we are left blind and alone,
Our outstretched arms in maddened fear we fling
And huddled close, await the horror of the Thing.

But one, through sightless eyes, discerns the goal.
With face serene and faith-steeped soul
She lifts a child, whose gaze, undimmed by fears
Sees clear the promise of the years.

The moon shone from behind a cloud which had been veiling it, the stars gleamed more brightly, and, whether it was because my eyes had become accustomed to the dimness, or because a veil had been lifted, I now saw clearly that the confused shadows were bushes standing in their proper places beside the clean gravelled paths.

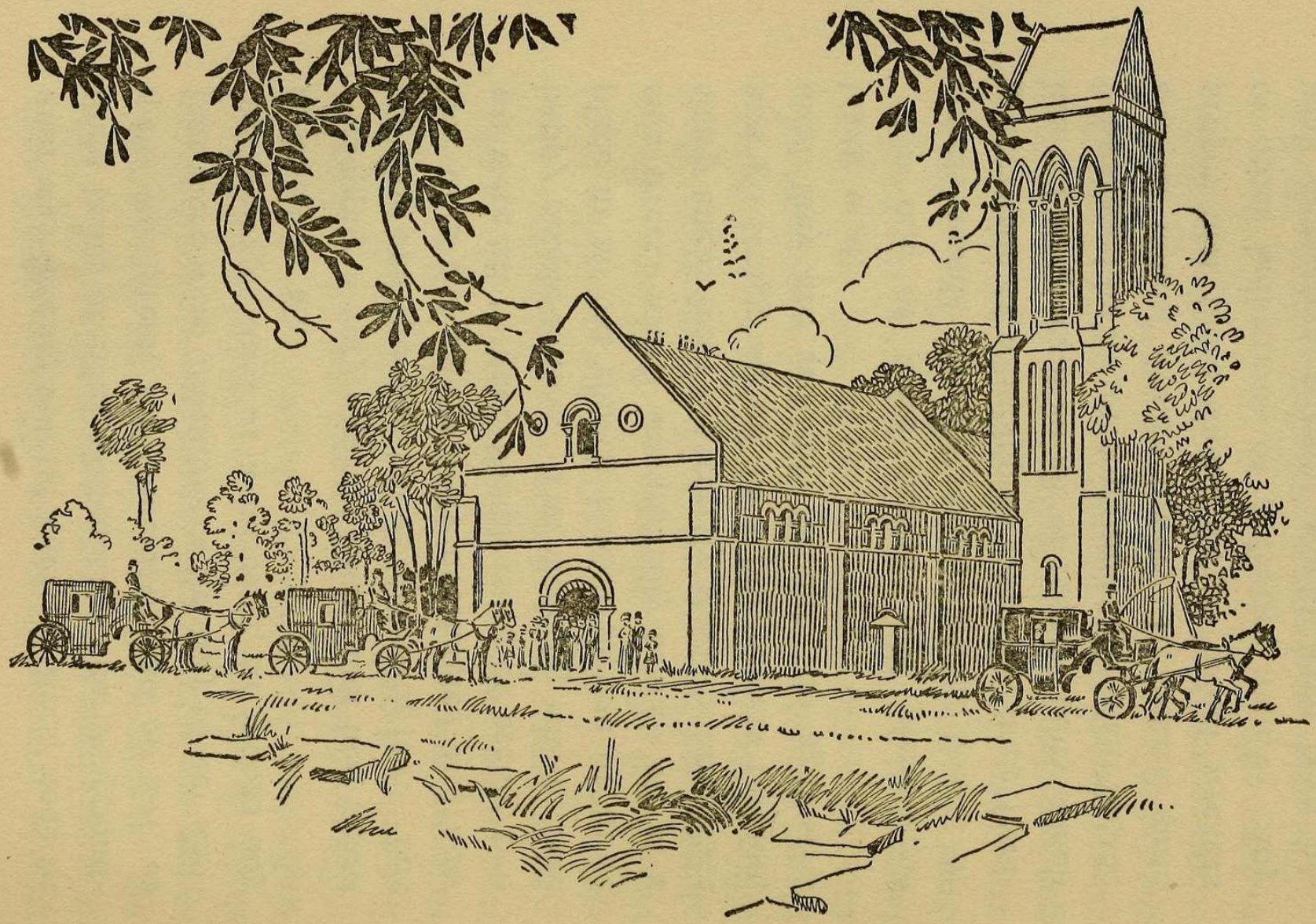
IX

Wedding Bells

JUST before waking the next morning I had a new dream. I was in a strange country; it was early morning and the haze was on everything. There was a valley with blue hills on either side, hills that melted into other hills, into far vistas that could be seen with marvellous distinctness. I was on a high slope on one side of the valley. All about me was a wondrous green grass of velvet, trees glittering in the dew, and, as I walked and ran, I felt no sense of weight nor weariness. Across the valley the hills were dotted with fruit trees laden with blossoms, flowers of snow white, and rosy tinted fragrant marvels. And as I floated, as one does in dreams, a sense of beauty in color and in perfume welled up in my soul and so filled my whole being with ecstasy that it was almost pain. The waves of feeling filled my eyes with tears and I awoke with my cheeks wet and my heart throbbing with an exquisite sensation which I had never felt in such completeness in my waking hours.

The first sound I heard was the joyous trill of the merle. Now that I know he is caged, respect is added to my admiration. Perhaps he sings more divinely because of his limitations. If he were free he would have so many distractions and he would have more ways of expressing himself. Now, all his little being must be poured out in song and hopping from perch to perch. The night had cooled the air and my dream, the song, the freshness, had banished away all gray thoughts of the evening before. Besides it was a time in which to be happy, for it was the wedding day of pretty Geneviève D'Albert.

All of us at the House of the Garden were interested in Geneviève's wedding, for it was to be a *mariage d'amour* and we spoke of it as though that were quite an unusual thing. Besides, Geneviève had had her little tragedy and it was quite time that her happy days should come. When she was very young, still under twenty, she had been engaged to a young man who seemed to be eminently satisfactory. The arrangements for the wedding had all been made, a modest but bewildering trousseau had been prepared, when it was discovered that the young



THE OLD CHURCH

man was leading several kinds of lives, none of them being of lilial whiteness. The disappointment was great, for Geneviève had no *dot,* so that there were difficulties in the way of her finding the right kind of a husband, or indeed any husband at all.

Happily a very unusual Count met her, heard her sing and speedily fell in love with her. The lack of a *dot* was politely overlooked and now we were all to have the pleasure of seeing two happy people united. The wedding was to take place in an old church hidden in one of those side streets which unexpectedly branch off at a sharp angle from a perfectly staid thoroughfare and go straggling off in a purposeless fashion, until they are suddenly brought up against a blank wall.

On one of these vagrant and picturesque streets stands the old church which boasts of generations of worshippers from the same families. This gives it an air of respectability which is increased by its uncompromisingly plain façade and its honest square tower. It seemed quite proper that there should be no bridal wreaths or other indications of a festive nature. Any such decorative attempt would have been re-

garded frowningly by the old gray church and it would have looked more grim than ever. The big carriages lumbered heavily up the narrow street, while the guests, who came on foot, had to dodge in and out as best they could; for the sidewalks had shrunk into the houses long ago.

The sun shone brightly and the sober church had relaxed enough from its conventional attitude to throw open wide its doors and let a few daring rays shine in to the dim interior. We hastily sought seats from which we might view the spectacle. Leading the procession came the two beadles in all the bravery of gold lace, white plumes, and heavy chains. They tell me that the office of beadle is often hereditary and that explains the majesty of gesture and movement of this particular class. It could not have been learned in one generation. Following the beadle came the bride, leaning prettily on her father's arm, then the groom with his mother who was gorgeous in violet, nodding plumes and lace; then the mother of the bride on the rather frail arm of the bride's brother, and then came numberless relatives two by two down to the tiny little cousin in blue silk.

The bride and groom took their places side by

side in front of two chairs placed directly before the altar, two pompous chairs of gilded carved wood and red damask. The *cortège* took its place in smaller chairs at either side of the altar and facing it. We thus had an excellent opportunity for studying the backs of the two families which were about to be allied. As far as breadth was concerned the bride's family had the advantage, although there was an old dowager on the young husband's side who measured a noble expanse of purple satin. This was perhaps to compensate for the extreme slenderness of the groom, whose shoulders were not much wider than the distance between his ears, and whose collar was grotesquely high, but of whom all said with satisfaction — "*Il est bien mince mais très distingué.*"

The ceremony was long. The discourse delivered to the young couple by the stout priest was unintelligible to the audience, and the constant necessity of rising and falling, kneeling and standing, according to the tinkling of a bell rung by an irresponsible-looking young person in a lace slip, made us welcome the excitement furnished by the ceremony of the *quète*. Three young girls led by three young men, and each

couple preceded by a beadle, went about among the audience. The young girls each held out mutely, but smilingly, charming little bags of silk to match their costumes, and destined to receive the offerings for the poor. Philippe happened to be one of the escorts and I noticed how careful he was of the rather frightened-looking little *demoiselle d' honneur* whom he guided in and out, once in a while saying something to reassure her. He looked very handsome, too, and I noticed that when he came near *la petite grand'-mère* he bent his tall head and whispered something that made her smile responsively.

The *quète* was finally finished after each member of the audience, or perhaps I should say the congregation, had been given three separate and distinct opportunities of contributing. A few last words were pronounced by the priest and then all the bridal party including the nearest relatives passed into the sacristy. There, in the stuffy dimness of the stone chamber, they ranged themselves around the wall and every one went in to congratulate the bride and groom, and incidentally to salute those of the relatives whom one might happen to know. The final act was to return to our places in the church and there

await the bridal procession which now passed in from the sacristy and walked down the aisle and out again into the sunshine. After it was all over, I felt a certainty about the durability of the knot, a feeling induced no doubt by the thoroughness and deliberation of the ceremony. There seemed an effect of finality about it that cannot be produced by our glittering matrimonial pageants that dazzle the eyes for a few minutes, before a theatrical background.

We all went to the bride's home and if any more ratification of the alliance was needed, it was amply done there in pleasant libations and delicious viands which only French chefs know how to concoct. Philippe was, as usual, here, there and everywhere, now giving an ice to one of the aunts, now talking with a shy cousin from the provinces; but when I was leaving, I found him beside me, and he asked me with a little air of audacity befitting the suggestion — "Suppose you permit me to walk home with you" — then anxiously as he noticed my hesitation, "It will be all right, you know, for you are not French."

We wandered home through the big gardens partly because they were beautiful and especially

because it was not the shortest way home. It was Philippe, however, who first thought of that, at least he spoke of it first. We were just in the mood lazily to enjoy everything and we watched the children sailing their boats in the big basin, and others gracefully playing at *diabolo*. As we sauntered on we caught a glimpse of the red and blue uniforms of the band off in the distance and we drifted towards the enclosure, paid our four *sous* and went in. Overhead was a leafy canopy of that delicate exquisite green of spring interlaced by graceful black branches and supported by strong upspringing trunks, that rose with almost a visible movement of life. This natural shelter caused a soft, gentle light to be diffused, a cool verdant glow like green amber, or sea depths seen through clear waters, giving one a sense of refreshment that was grateful and soothing and life giving. Once in a while a bird darted across or a dove winged its slower flight and perched on a branch to listen a while.

About us were people of all sorts and conditions. Next us was an elderly American with his second wife on their wedding journey. I cannot tell by what subtle signs we knew that she was not the first consort, but Philippe and I were of

one mind on the subject. The groom had new gloves which he tried not to take off, although he was thus doing violence to his instincts, and her hat had a garnish of bright cherries. On the other side was a gloomy-looking young man who listened intently to the music, drawing an occasional deep sigh. Across the aisle were twins dressed exactly alike in gray, green, and pink. They were not little girls; if they had been they might have been picturesque. As it was, they were incontestably mothers of families, and the result was grotesque. In front of us was a large, shapeless woman with a curious home-made hat who had in the seat next to her a big awkward dog which she caressed tenderly from time to time. When she turned to smile on him her face was illumined.

X

Futility

EITHER the wedding or the walk home with Philippe or both together had been too great a dissipation. At all events the next morning I awoke with a profound feeling of dissatisfaction with myself. I realized that the days had been slipping by and that I had been playing; I had been an onlooker and not a worker. The task I came to do was scarcely begun, my precious time was passing and I had accomplished nothing. So I scarcely waited to look into my garden but swallowed my chocolate hastily, almost resentfully, and then went out into the street. So great was my haste to begin work that I recklessly took a cab and told the driver to go quickly to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. Feverishly I sent in my list of books, knowing full well that the hottest fever would have time to cool before the deliberate, softly shod attendants would bring me what I wanted. Fortunately there were some books in reserve and I could begin to work.

The silence of the place, broken only by the scratching of pens or the low whispers of some anxious inquirer, gradually stilled my nerves and I fell to working busily. But after the glow of morning had passed and the afternoon wore on, a sense of uselessness came over me. I leaned back in my chair and looked about me. At the table where I was working was an old man. I had seen him here before. He was short, round, and red-cheeked, with bleary blue eyes and a white fringe of hair all about his face. His clothes were shiny and frayed and he had a greasy scarf around his neck. Every morning when he came in he wore an air of jaunty cheer and flimsy energy, which was pathetically and obviously an assumption. He always gathered a large number of volumes about him, and he had an incalculable number of soiled slips of paper covered with notes written in a microscopical hand, which he arranged ceremoniously on the the table before him. From time to time he would exchange low jocular remarks with his neighbor and then with pursed lips and an air of great importance he would begin his work. This seemed to consist in copying from the books about him. He would begin with apparent vigor,

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then, in an incredibly short time, his pen would drop from his hand, his head would fall forward on his chest and he would dream away and nod until a more violent nod than usual would arouse him. Then he would look furtively around, pick up his pen in a casual way; but before he had well commenced again to copy, the pen had fallen from his poor old nerveless fingers and his mind was far away in another land.

They told me he had been a brilliant journalist and that a great part of his life had been spent in the library. He could no longer control his mind but the library habit was so strong that he could be happy nowhere else. When the attendant's voice rang out at closing time with the sonorous cry *"On ferme!"* the ex-journalist would arouse himself and with a visible effort become again the busy bustling old worker of the morning. He would gather his notes together in a critical, judicial fashion, as though summing up the work of the day, shake his head like a strong man dissatisfied with strenuous but insufficient effort, then throwing off his annoyance would turn to his neighbor, exchange greetings and farewells and then trot out with the short shuffling step of the aged.

The shadow of this futile old man followed me home and as I sat at my window in the twilight and looked into my garden its beauty and quiet did not bring their usual refreshment to my soul, for I was oppressed by a sense of uselessness. Just then a tall, vigorous young figure entered the garden and almost simultaneously Alphonsine knocked at my door and said breathlessly (I know she ran all the way upstairs), " Monsieur Philippe is in the garden and desires to speak to Mademoiselle."

He has some new idea about his Pascal and he wants to talk to me about it, said I, and the thought brought a sudden unexpected wave of happiness. It mattered not a fig to me whether it was Pascal or any other old worthy. The real thing was that Philippe had come to me, that he needed me. And I went down into the garden.

XI

The Loneliness of Bleu-bleu

THE black cat of the concierge is a commonplace creature. One can tell it by the sly way in which he prowls about the garden paths watching stealthily some happy songster and waiting for an unguarded moment when he can spring upon him and stop his song forever. He always comes up to me purring with offensive friendliness after such an exploit, hoping to deceive me with his shallow artifices. He is obsequious, sinuous, altogether a thorough hypocrite of low bourgeois origin.

Not so Bleu-bleu. Bleu-bleu seldom goes out into the garden. He prefers the soft, velvety rugs in the big sunny room of *la petite grand'-mère*. Bleu-bleu ignores with fine disdain the very existence of the black cat. Bleu-bleu is gigantic in size and his fur is magnificent, of a steel blue-gray. His eyes are a fathomless yellow with an inscrutable look in the narrow sinister slit of the pupil, and his tail, long and luxuriant, scarcely ever lies prone, but

rises belligerently or waves with suave benignity as the mood ordains. Bleu-bleu is never playful, heaven forbid! He spends much of his time in deep meditation on his soft cushion close beside his little mistress. She is the only one from whom any liberties are permitted. She alone may caress him, to her alone does he pour out his soul in inarticulate purrings. He sometimes deigns to enter the salon of an evening when we are gathered there after dinner and his advent always causes a sensation. He enters with slow, silent dignity, his tail waving softly, his eyes gleaming with a golden light. None of us ever thinks of calling him affectionately, but we look at him admiringly and some one exclaims, "*Qu' il est beau!*" If *la petite grand'mère* happens not to be present he walks solemnly up to her chair, leaps into it with a slow, dignified motion, very different from the quick, nervous plunge of the black cat, and settles down with an air of mournful possession. I think we are all afraid of Bleu-bleu, except *grand'mère*. But with all his grandeur there is something very pathetic about Bleu-bleu, for his very greatness has isolated him, and he is a lonely soul. I know he yearns with intense longing to mingle with his kind, to be

able to go down into the garden and have an orgy with the black cat or any other feline, to chase birds, to climb trees, to indulge in the joys and weaknesses of his species, but he cannot. Fate has decreed that he should be set apart, that he should be great and solitary. Deep down in his cat soul he is puzzled and cannot understand, he follows blindly the instinct that raises him above his fellows and makes him magnificently lonely. Only *la petite grand'mère* can understand, and, being human, understands but imperfectly.

I inveigled Bleu-bleu down into the garden this morning. It was glorious in the sunlight and still fresh from the sleep of the night. But the gravel of the paths hurt Bleu-bleu's aristocratic paws and the dew on the grass made him sneeze. He turned suddenly from me and went back to his dry velvet rugs, waving his tail in reproachful sorrow over my vulgar tastes. I could not wait to lure him back again or even apologize to him, for we, my Hostess, Germaine, and I, were to go to take the midday meal with the Poet.

The Poet had withdrawn from Paris when he found himself doomed no longer to walk its beloved streets or mingle in its cherished activities. When he knew that the struggle with the last great Foe was to be a long one, he chose to go

to one of those peaceful little suburbs where quaint old villas open their gates on steep winding streets and where a kindly forest surrounds the community with cool protecting arms. And it was here we found him after a noisy, jerky ride on the top of a tram. We pulled the bell at the iron gate in the wall and soon after we heard the patter of clumsy feet down the gravel walk, and the gate was opened by a round faced little maid from whose eyes had not yet vanished the expression of provincial wonder. To our query she replied with a curious little curtsy and with a Southern rolling of her *r's,* that her master had not yet returned from his morning promenade. Would we go out to meet him in the forest or would we come in and wait? We elected the former and after many anxious directions the little maid started us on our way.

We walked along the hot glaring street for a while, then branched off by a narrow lane, between high walls, and suddenly we were in the forest where we were enveloped in a delicious coolness. As we walked down the quiet paths my Hostess talked of the Poet. She told me how bravely he had struggled in his youth, not only with poverty, but against his poetic inspiration. He had become

a mathematician and tried to limit his soul to formulæ, and fence in his imagination by geometric figures, but in vain. At last, realizing his destiny, he cast aside all prejudice and felt himself free and then his unimprisoned soul found expression in a noble philosophy clothed in poetic form, all the more exquisite and perfect because of the mental dicipline of his youth. And, as his thought became more free, it rose to greater heights where the sky is more pure and where the stars seem very far apart the one from the other. There were fewer ears to hear his song and alas! fewer hearts to understand. His old peasant mother, though loving him blindly, trembled fearfully lest his soul be lost. The world respected and admired him, but those who knew him had grown into a very small circle until now he . . . At this moment we heard the cheerful tinkle of a bell and the sound of tiny hoofs, and then appeared at a turn of the lane a humorously small donkey with a grotesquely large head, drawing a sort of wheeled chair in which sat a very large man. The first effect produced by the strange outfit was that of a caricature. Everything seemed to be whimsically out of drawing and so I failed for a moment to see what later made me forget every-

thing else, and that was the fine head and wonderful face of the man who sat in the wheeled chair and who was admonishing his ludicrous little steed in words of mock appealing.

When he saw us, his eyes lighted with a cordial welcome, and he begged us to forgive his discourtesy in not having been at the house to receive us there. He said that that abominable Friquette was to blame entirely; that she had loitered along the way and had insisted upon nibbling the grass and otherwise showing what an insensate gourmand she was. Friquette listened to this abuse with a meek and gentle air, ears drooping low, and remorse in the curve of her back, but her eyes had an unrepentant look which crushed any hope of permanent reform.

We walked back beside the queer vehicle chatting of the bright morning, of the beauties of the forest and of friends from whom we bore messages to the Poet. Friquette drew the chair past the iron gate, up the gravel walk, and through the door of the villa, down the passage and into the large sunny room which served as salon and dining room. Here the Poet's sister came bustling in and, after greeting us, hastily unharnessed Friquette from the chair and sent her out into the garden. While she was doing this I had

time to note the startling likeness and unlikeness between brother and sister. They both had large frames and strong features. But his features had been softened, spiritualized and transfigured by the great thoughts which they constantly reflected, and his expression was illumined by the inner light of his generous soul, while the very helplessness of his big body emphasized the empire of his intelligence. Her frame, on the contrary, had housed a little mind which could grasp only the edge of things, could see nothing but the surface, and her face had grown sharp and fretted and the light had gone out from it, because of her inability to see any meaning in life. At least, so it seemed to me when I first saw them together. He, immobile, huge, but dominating and winning us all by the look in his face and the sound of his voice. She, gaunt, thin, active, jumping up to fleck off a bit of dust here or to straighten a chair there, her strident voice administering a sharp reproof to the anxious little servant, or reproaching her brother for some sublime absence of mind. Yet she was all he had left in the world to care for him in his weakness, and they were bound together by the ties of blood, and he seldom saw any one else.

XII

Philosophy and Poetry

THE Poet did not eat with us, for already his illness had freed him from the necessities still common to the rest of us. And in this very isolation there was something symbolic of his spiritual mind. He came to us at dessert for he might yet partake of honey and fruit, the food of gods. As though refreshed by the half hour of fasting, his face shone with a gentle gayety and he was pleased to indulge himself at my expense. So I was an American and I was like all of my race full of energy. Was I perchance a struggle-for-lifer? He pronounced the strange words with a whimsical attempt to imitate the English and with the result that I would never have known what he meant, had I not heard the term before. And I had crossed the ocean how many times? Six? Ah, that was incredible. Why should one take so much trouble to see other lands if one were perfectly comfortable at home? And his eyes twinkled.

After dinner we went out into the little garden

where it was easy to roll the wheeled chair, and the little servant brought us our coffee nervously, but without serious accident. While his sister knitted hideous gray wool petticoats for a winter which seemed infinitely unpotential on this warm sunny day, the Poet, grown more serious, talked of the art he loved so well. He touched but lightly on his own work but dwelt lovingly on the young poets of the present, their ambitions, their aspirations and their achievements. He saw much to commend and his only criticism was for those who treated the muse lightly, for those who used their talent in order to seduce the public with pretty music, but who gave no thoughts. Then he went on to speak of ideas which, because they were so high and lofty, can best find their expression in a form which demands a clear mind, an instinctive sense of proportion, and an ear that is attuned to the finest shades of meaning. As he spoke, he seemed to go far away from us into a region where we could not yet follow, and when he ceased, a silence fell upon us and in his face there came gradually a look of unutterable sadness and of great lonliness.

As we went home my Hostess told me of the deep friendship existing between the Poet and the

Master and how, since the Master had gone, he had become more and more detached from the things of this world — "much as I have myself," added my Hostess softly and as though forgetting me. "If it were not for Germaine how gladly would I go to him." And her eyes took on the same look of loneliness and of sadness that I had seen in the Poet's a little while before.

In the late afternoon when we stopped to take tea with Philippe my mind was still full of the Poet and his words, and I waited for an opportunity to tell him all about our visit. Philippe lives in a charming little *garçonière* on the top story of a house overlooking the broad Avenue de l' Observatoire. We had to toil up the five flights of stairs but Philippe's greeting quite rewarded us. He had heard our coming and was at the open door to receive us and usher us in. His sister had already arrived. She is tall and handsome too, and has a boyish way about her that delightfully suggests a life-long and sympathetic companionship with her brother. Philippe's tiny sitting room is full of books and pictures and a piano. He has improvised a shaky tea table whose feeble legs threaten to collapse at any moment, especially when Philippe lays

his strong hand on a cup or a dish of cake reposing upon it. Philippe is a perfect host and he serves raspberry shrub and *petits fours* with reckless hospitality to his hungry guests. When we have been refreshed he takes me out on a little balcony from which we look down over the tops of the magnificent row of trees in the avenue, on down to the Jardin du Luxembourg which, from here, looks like a dense forest.

As we stood there, I told Philippe of the Poet and what he said, and how his loneliness of soul had impressed me. But Philippe told me not to pity him but rather envy him, for there is no happiness so great in life as that of being able to embody a sentiment or an idea into some material form, and that no one could be really lonely who could create, for at any time he could call to him these children of his brain. Philippe grew quite eloquent.

"When a man simply feels," said he, "and spends his life in feeling without giving expression to his sentiments in a definite form, then his sentiment makes him flabby and weak and he grows less and less capable of strong feeling. If, on the other hand, he can define it, face it, analyze it and cast it into a beautiful mould from which

he can take it and contemplate it as a finished object, then his mind is strengthened and he has grown so that he is now qualified for more lofty experiences. The Poet may seem sad and lonely to us, but it is because we cannot follow him into the far country of his thoughts. If we could see into his soul, we would perhaps catch a glimpse of the joy that comes from knowing that one must be lonely in order to be oneself, that there is a world into which none other can penetrate with us, into which we go unaccompanied, with firmness and with awe, knowing that to desecrate it by another's presence is to sell our birthright, to lose the only thing that makes us individuals."

I'm afraid I was looking more at Philippe's handsome face than listening to his words for I could not quite follow him in all he said. I only hoped that he would never get that sad look into his happy eyes that I had seen in the face of the Poet that morning. Then Philippe told me that he had decided about his work on Pascal and I found that more within my comprehension, and we even grew merry over the doings of the old time mystics. But the view from the balcony could not serve

as a pretext for an eternal *tête-à-tête* and Philippe remembered that he was host, so we had to join the piano and the books and the pictures in the tiny room. Philippe and his sister gave us some music, he sitting at the piano, and playing a pretty accompaniment to some of Verlaine's exquisite words, which the sister tall and straight, sang in a clear bird-like soprano. Philippe had composed the air and perhaps that is the reason she sang the song with such exquisite sympathy. At all events it went straight to my heart where it sang itself all the rest of the evening.

That evening we were alone at dinner. Not even the Patriot came in, and it was well, for if he had I am sure he would have received short shrift from *la petite grand'mère.* After dinner when we were gathered about the lamp and the soft evening air came in from the garden, the hostess read us from the Poet's volume, dedicated to the Master, where one great soul spoke to another with perfect sureness of comprehension. And as she read, I thought of the many poets who have been inspired by the wondrous charm of nature and by the outer aspect of things, and of the fewer great ones who, contemplating the great problems of science, have

striven to solve the enigma of life and have endeavored to show to others who would rhyme, that there is an illimitable world beyond the beaten paths already trod.

The Hostess' voice is very sweet and musical and it almost silenced that other refrain that I had heard in the afternoon, but not altogether. And I'm afraid my last thoughts as I looked out upon the silent garden were not of the great Poet we had seen but of Philippe and his music and I sang softly to my garden, "*Toute la vie est là, douce et tranquille.*"

XIII

Dreamers

THIS morning as I was sipping my chocolate in the garden (Alphonsine gives me chocolate once in a while as a *petite surprise* and when she brings it to me I always express successively stupefaction, dawning comprehension, and a gourmand's satisfaction, which makes her laugh delightedly and say that I am very French. A compliment which she knows instinctively will please an American young woman.) Well, as I was sipping the luscious beverage and buttering the crisp bread with the sweetest of Normandy butter the Patriot came in. He looked a little reproachfully, I thought, at my luxurious meal, and said gently:

"I slept but four hours last night and have breakfasted on a dozen almonds and some dates."

"What did you do when you were not sleeping?" queried I sympathetically.

"Ah! there 's where I have the advantage over those who sleep and eat as you do," he said point-

ing not disdainfully, but sadly, at my steaming chocolate pot. "Since I have felt my country's need I have thought it my duty to give her of my best. There is so much, so infinitely much to be done and the time is very short. I have learned that by determination one may gradually accustom himself to less and less sleep and to little food. This absence of physical indulgence helps one to concentrate the mind more and more on higher things. I can now write for ten hours at a time without taking food or rest. Last night I wrote this sketch of our great Mickiewicz." And he showed me a bulky manuscript he had in his hand.

"But will a sketch of the great Mickiewicz help you to liberate Poland?" I asked with blind feminine lack of logic.

He answered patiently, "I do not intend to liberate my country by the usual and brutal means of revolution but in a slower and surer way. I am going to show the world what a marvellous race we are, what minds have lived in Poland, what a literature we have created, what geniuses we have produced. I shall appeal to the generous heart of the world and I shall say: 'Would you stand by and let such a people be oppressed?' I

shall make my plea so eloquent that it cannot be resisted and in time the nations of the earth will rise and free us from our chains."

Into the face of the Patriot came the rapt look of the Dreamer. My chocolate had grown cold, but I was ashamed to have even noticed it and I thought with compunction of my eight hours of dreamless sleep.

In a moment he came back to earth and said, "If you would like to read what I have just finished I should be glad to leave this with you," and he put the closely written sheets into my hands.

As I read about the inspired poet of an enslaved land the notes of the caged merle rang out gloriously in the morning air and when I at last laid down the glowing eulogy I almost believed the enthusiastic prophecy of the Patriot: that the time would soon be here when we should all be struggling with the intricacies of the Polish language, in order to taste at first hand the beauties of the poet's work.

From where I sat I could see the graceful apse of the church over at the side of the convent garden, beyond the low ivy-covered wall that separated us. It, too, was the work of some

Dreamer and it symbolized the faith in a Great Dreamer who gave us his life for an idea. How many have followed in His train, some for greater, some for lesser things, but all with a fine abandonment of self and a strong faith in some dream of betterment or of heroism.

The day was warm and the garden lent itself more than usual to musings but I could not stay. Already the morning was almost spent and I had promised to take luncheon with my artist friend in her atelier which was in the very heart of the artist quarter, on the left bank. It is a place dear to all who have once lived there. Gregariousness, dirt, noise, children, friendliness, all abound and, on this morning, sunshine also.

When after many inquiries I reached the right stairway and had mounted the proper number of flights, I was met at the door and guided by a maid with a dubiously colored apron through mysterious passages where damp washings were hung on wavering strings, to a door, which, when opened, revealed a place of light and joy. I looked down several steps and into a large square high room filled with all sorts of queer old things, but flooded with sunshine and rippling with laughter. Two young Americans were there, one

a joyous-looking, Titian-haired creature with dimples and an omniverous attitude towards the French language, blandly unconscious of the contrast between her raw, ignorant yet charming, enthusiastic optimism and the Old World which she had come to conquer. The other, a more angular type, was dressed in startlingly mannish style, even to stiff shirt and high boots, but so girlishly pleased with the result that you had to forgive her and try to get her point of view. In contrast to these New World types was a sweet English matron whose soft voice caressed the vibrant French so gently that the vowels forgot to make any sound at all! Others came in to join us until we were a gay party of ten. The lunch was brought in by a diminutive *garçon* who struggled and beamed under his heavy basket. I never saw a French servant yet who did n't mellow and grow happy and radiant over the prospect of a *fête* of any dimensions whatever, even though his own labors were vastly increased thereby. And it is n't because of the possible honorarium; it is because of their dear sociable souls.

We had to wait a while until the one tablecloth was ironed, and then we all helped to draw the

treasures from the basket. It was a brave luncheon; chicken with *cresson, pommes de terre,* and *choux-fleurs,* not to speak of delicate tomato salad, and ending with a grand apotheosis of strawberries, meringues, and black coffee. What mattered it that owing to the lack of table-ware the cauliflower was suggestive of chicken, and left in turn, a lingering taste amidst the strawberries; or that one knife and fork had to do valiant duty for every course, for each dish was flavored with wit, and deft fingers took the place of table utensils.

I looked around the laughing faces and it seemed to me I could understand a little better why France held such a fascination for artists. They, more than others, have natures that are quick to feel; they are susceptible to color, music, beauty, to all sensations; they can turn quickly from grave to gay. Here in many-phased France, where at times there is the calm of deep feeling, more often perhaps the movement and excitement of seething ideas, the artist feels at home, here he comes in to his own, here he can be himself. Paris has the nature of an artist, deep feeling underneath seeming frivolity, power of hard work suddenly passing into the volatility of

a happy child. It is full of dramatic changes, throbbing with quick sympathy, and never stupid, never tiresome.

No casual onlooker would guess at the tragedies of suffering hidden for the moment behind the smiling masks here in this laughter echoing studio. The woman with the clear-cut features who carries her head high has suffered all the indignities of living *au pair* in Paris. Those who have not tried it know nothing of the misery that can be inflicted on a foreigner who barters her precious time for food and lodging. When a fixed sum of money enters into an arrangement, then time defines itself and one stands upon an independent footing, but when the compensation takes the vague form of bed and board, there is a change of attitude. The employee has no footing, for now the measure of her work is the measure of her capacity, and that, to the watchful eyes of her employer may become limitless. But that has all passed — a week ago she received word that she was to be "hung" in the salon and we all tell her with friendly fatuity that her fortune is made. The joy of thinking so for a while will help her over the hard places which are yet to come.

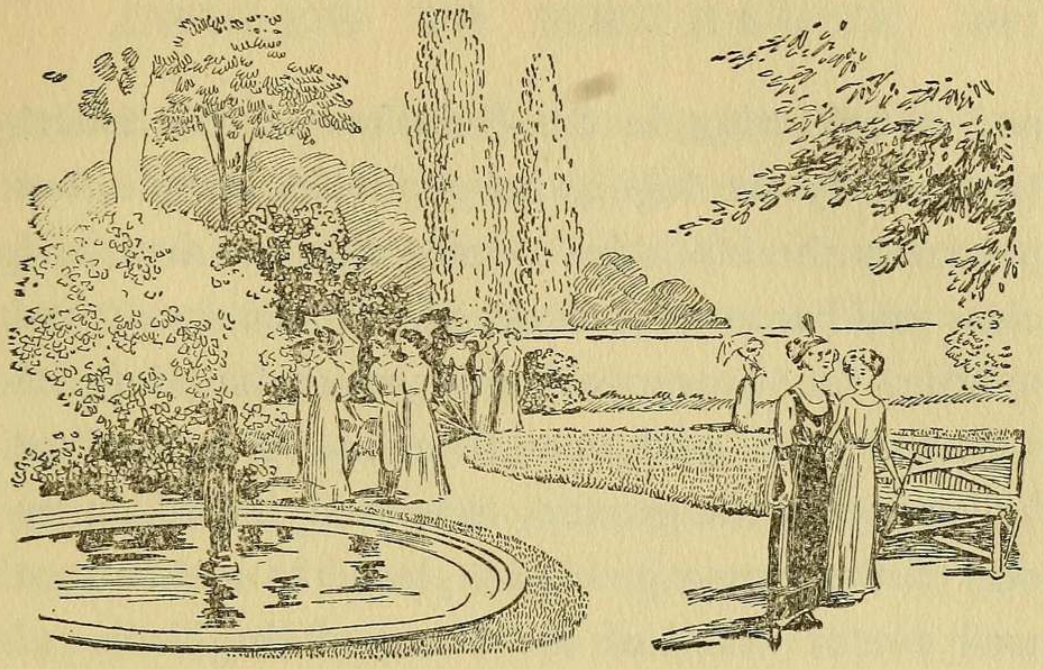
The man with a white face framed in a mass of black waving hair whom I have just caught in the act of stealing his neighbor's meringue came over years ago exulting in the thought of a life work. He had been commissioned to create, as he would, the most beautiful figures that his eager fingers could mold. Impetuously he had left all behind and trusting to an incorruptible legislature he gave himself with intensest ardor to his work. Noble forms that gave pure outlines of his lofty thoughts filled his studio and he lived for months in the happy world of those who create. Then came an awakening and he was dragged down to a world of base commercialism and baser fraud. Funds had been misused, his commission was revoked, the money he had advanced in happy confidence was a total loss and he was left to look with dull disappointment at the lovely forms which were doomed to perish, now that hope of immortality in stone was snatched from them. After the first bitterness had passed, he took up his burden and with characteristic energy turned his mind to ways and means. Entirely bankrupt as to funds and almost so as to faith, he nevertheless rallied and just now he is carrying on a thriving trade in antiques with the dawning hope

of being able some day to witness the resurrection of his sleeping ideas.

The angular, bony-looking Englishman who has n't the hint of an idealist in his loose-jointed frame and rough tweed suit has lost a fortune in Texas trying to establish a sanitarium for the poor victims of tuberculosis.

The large, hearty-looking Frenchman with the kind brown eyes and Van Dyke beard is a Breton poet whose songs are the echoes of the sea, hypocritically moaning at the very threshold of the home which it has robbed of all the singer holds most dear.

And when I know all this, I hear a deeper note echoing in the laughter. They are all Dreamers, too, seeking to embody this one thing in which they have faith, into some form that may live for a little while after them.



XIV

An Invasion of the Garden

WHEN I came home late in the afternoon I found that a new element had entered into my garden. It had been invaded by a happy chattering flock of young women, with here and there those of a certain age. (Is it indicative of the relative politeness of the two countries that in America we say a lady of uncertain age, while in France they say a lady of a certain age?) The Hostess tells me that a club of young working girls patronized by some of the aristocracy of the Faubourg St. Germain have the use of my garden for the afternoon. At first I resent it a little and so do the birds, for they set up a scolding

and a twittering in the branches of the tallest tree. They are highly indignant for awhile, but presently the blackbird's notes ring out true and clear and harmony is restored. At the same time a little, fat, overgrown bird which had left its nest too early and now found itself sprawling helplessly on the ground, is tenderly lifted up by one of the young girls and placed in a safe spot well out of reach of the claws of the black cat of the *concièrge*. Entire confidence is restored by this kindly act and the *entente cordiale* is fully established. In the meantime more ladies come and then I hear some masculine tones. I, like the birds, am excluded from active participation in the scene and I resolve, with them, to view it from above; so, they from the trees, and I from my window, look down upon the movement and life.

Two or three stout, decorated gentlemen have been added. Every one is gesticulating with glove-encased arms and hands. Once in a while a patroness saunters down the gravelled walk with a young girl. I know it is a patroness because of her majestic port, her long black lace gown and her nodding plumes. I know, too, because of the pretty, eager air of the young

girl who is striving her best to say pleasing things to the great lady. I notice that the decorated gentlemen remain ponderously at one side and that the ladies hover about them, or heave-to alongside, according to their weight. A little dog is now added to the company, a nice, little, well trimmed dog, but very active, who is doing his best to trip up the dowagers and the decorated gentlemen. Now everybody sits down, not without a great deal of preliminary moving about of chairs. They gather around the door of the large salon opening into the garden and I hear a voice. It is the voice of the oldest of the decorated gentlemen, the one with the white beard. He is making a speech, in which he tells the young girls how fortunate they are to have such patronesses, and to offset this, he congratulates the patronesses upon their happy choice of *protégées*. When he is through with his discourse there is a clapping of hands, and plumed head nods to plumed head in approval. Then after this flutter there is quiet again and a voice rings out in lovely song. The merle is silent. Is it from envy?

This seems to be the formal part of the afternoon, for as soon as the applause is over, the

party breaks up into groups, some to talk with the decorated gentlemen, others to walk slowly up and down the paths, while a group of young girls gather about the *tonneau* and try to throw the metal discs into the big frog's gaping mouth. I cannot but contrast their way of playing a game with that of American girls. The French girl takes up the disc daintily, laughs deprecatingly, says witty things, and throws prettily, but oh! so wide of the mark. She does not really care about the mark, if only she may be graceful. And I think of the American girl, muscular, brown-armed and vigorous, who plays to win, and does not hesitate to pit herself against her brother.

Suddenly there is a flutter about the *tonneau*. A tall lady in a trailing black gown, with a white aigrette in her hat, is going to play. It is Madame la Duchesse, and the girls crowd around. She throws the discs graciously, as becomes one of her rank, but with entire disregard of their ultimate destiny, which also may be characteristic of one of her rank. The girls vie with each other to pick them up. Madame la Duchesse bestows laughter and smiles and moves away.

There is a knock at my door and Alphonsine announces callers in the salon, so I leave my window for a while. The Professor has come, and Madame Darbray, who is just now finishing the fourth volume of her famous father's correspondence. Pretty, bird-like Madame Rollin is also there, who has buried two celebrated husbands in due and proper succession, and has piously and charmingly written their biographies. The conversation naturally turns upon the defunct, and the Professor adds his contribution by bewailing the fact that he has not yet been able to find a *milliardaire* who will help him to publish his work on Saint Teresa; but millionaires interested in publishing the lives of dead saints are very rare. He asks me if American millionaires are as sordid as French, and I laugh, but tell him we have some who are idealists to the extent of founding universities and creating a hero class. Perhaps they might be induced to look into the matter of saints.

When I go back to my window I find that the evening is falling upon my garden, the birds are finding their branches and are twittering twilight confidences; the lilacs fill the air with a heavier

perfume. It is very still and the flowers are going to sleep. Once in a while because of the stillness here I can hear a shrill cry from the street or the sharp crack of a cabman's whip, and then the quiet seems deeper than before. Over in the convent garden a black-robed sister is walking up and down in the shadow of the gray apse. From my window I never can see the façade of the old church, only the apse, so that it seems wholly cut off from the street. And I like to imagine there is no way for the world to intrude and disturb the cloistered quiet.

The convent bell rings half past seven. Lucien's well-trained voice announces that dinner is served. Good-bye, dear garden. When night has wholly fallen I shall see you again, but dimly. I shall have to guess at the forms of the trees, but I shall feel your fragrance and your freshness even more than when I can see you.

XV

Dramatic Reflections

ONE morning at our midday *déjeuner la petite grand'mère* said, somewhat with the air of announcing a calamity: "Mademoiselle Anna arrives to-day." Anna is the Patriot's eldest daughter, and some days before he had told us that he thought she might spend a week in Paris on her way to London. In reply to the discreet but deft questioning of *la petite grand'mère* the Patriot had told us that his daughter was thoroughly emancipated. We therefore expected to see a rather turbulent young person but we were pleasantly disappointed and instead, when we all met in the salon before dinner, we found a charming, very intelligent, rather tired young woman, who spoke French with a vertiginous rapidity and with a wonderful rolling of the *r's*. She has four other languages at her command and I know she speaks them all with equal swiftness. With all her erudition she is afraid of the sea, and is timid about travelling alone; so she possesses some feminine traits which make us feel that after all she is one of us.

The Hostess received her with the gracious cordiality that she always shows. *La petite grand'mère* asked her about the trip from Cracow and by the time we went to the dinner-table we were on the friendliest terms. It was decided by the Hostess' sweet insistence that Anna should remain at the House of the Garden during her week's stay and the Patriot forgot his obligations to his country long enough to express heartfelt gratitude. Among other things she wished to see, Anna expressed a desire to go to the theatre as often as possible; so we planned a regular orgy of dramatic dissipation. We talked it over at dinner the evening she arrived and we were still speaking of it when we were sipping our coffee in the salon. Philippe joined us then and said he would constitute himself our escort to the Comédie where they were giving a revival of "Marion Delome" and we would go the next evening.

Philippe came for us the next night in great glee. Monsieur le Directeur had given him tickets for his *loge* and we were to go in state. One scarcely needs a period of faithful attendance at American theatres in order to appreciate the finished work of the French actor; never-

THE COMÉDIE

theless such an interim of feeding on husks does add a zest to the joy of going again to the French theatre. At the Comédie you may be sure that little will change. You see the same elegant gentlemen sitting at the *bureau,* impressive in their high silk hats and their broad expanse of shirt bosom. The same toy-like soldiers stand on guard; the same gaunt usher in shiny dress suit and dyed mustache, offers you programmes at six sous; the same bustling *ouvreuse* takes you officiously to the door of the *loge* and says in the same wheedling voice, "*Un petit bénéfice, s'il vous plaît, monsieur!*"

The Director's *loge* is a vast one with room for nine arm chairs and there is a comfortable little withdrawing room besides, where one can retire if one is bored by the play. There is also a door leading to the stage in case of need.

It is delightful to see a play in the old, melodramatic, romantic style full of violent contrasts, impossible situations, impassioned love scenes, noble sentiments, base treachery, light ethereal, darkness plutonian, all served up on a stage set with the most artistic and seductive scenery, interpreted by the first actors of the world, and before an audience weary of modern psychologi-

cal and pathological analyses, and in whose souls are chords which can still respond to the thrilling music of Victor Hugo's incomparable lines. The cast is a remarkable one. Madame Bartet, wonderful in a graceful dress which makes her years seem a fantastic fable, is charming as the beautiful Marion. Albert Lambert *fils*, in sombre black, plays the tempestuous and sentimental hero. The settled gloom never leaves his handsome features; his graceful figure always assumes a pose of profound melancholy, and he is a perfect example of all those dear dismal heroes who die young after untold sufferings which wring gallons of tears from sympathetic eyes.

And then Laffemas! Leloir's tall gaunt form when clothed in black becomes the incarnation of all that is sinister and his face bears all the marks of a deep-dyed villain. Every time he comes on the stage with his furtive yet assertive stride we feel the proper thrill of repulsion and disgust. And how he makes himself hated by all! No Complicated psychology there, to cause any struggle either in his mind or in the mind of the spectator. He is wholly, gloatingly, triumphantly bad. Le Bargy makes us love again the happy, care-free Saverny, who is, or ought to be, the

ideal of every romantic young person, and Georges Berr with his voice of haunting sweetness makes a most lovable fool.

As one act after another sweeps on to the inevitable catastrophe we find ourselves listening with breathless interest and forgetting ourselves in the play. Even the extravagancies of Didier in the prison courtyard do not evoke a smile, and when the great scarlet litter of his *Eminence Rouge* passes along, we feel a shudder as its curtains part, and the white hand waves inexorably, and the cavernous voice says, *"Pas de grâce!"*

Anna was enthusiastic and on her way home in the cab her *r's* rolled more eloquently than ever as she expatiated on the thrilling interest of the play. But now that the glamour of the acting is over and the music of the lines is growing fainter Philippe and I, experienced theatre-goers that we are, talk sagely of the modern drama and how superior its realism is to the rantings of Victor Hugo. But all the time I have a secret fondness for the romantic, and I wonder if Philippe or any other modern young man could love with the abandon and lyric intensity of a Didier or a Hernani.

The next afternoon being Thursday Anna and I decided to go to the *matinée* and as she had never seen a *Revue* and I had not seen one for a long time, we decided to go to the Variétées. When we took our seats we found in front of us three monstrous hats surmounting artificial hair, arranged in curious puffs and curls as no living human hair ever could be. I mentally exclaimed, "How very French!" And I was about to tell Anna that in an American theatre such a thing would not be tolerated, when one of the big hats leaned towards the other two, and a voice from underneath the beflowered brims said with an unmistakable nasal accent, "These are very nice seats, ain't they?" I thought best to leave my little discourse on national dissimilarities until a more propitious moment.

The performance had n't been going on very long when I felt sorry I had come, but I comforted myself by moralizing a little in order to counteract the effect of what was going on on the stage. Really nice French people seem to draw such definite lines between what can be simply seen and heard, and that which when seen and heard is felt. They see with the artist's eye

and they hear with the mind of a wit, things which seem in no way to reach the moral sensibilities. Witty vulgarities seem to leave no special bad taste in the mouth, while we Anglo-Saxons cannot get them out of the mind for a long time afterwards. If asked, they acknowledge that such and such a thing from a moral point of view is *dégoutant,* but to them it is evidently a novel and rather curious idea to look at it in that light. There is one standard for things of art and of wit; there is another for the ethical and moral. The French mental photographic apparatus is furnished for each of these standards with films of different sensitiveness, and when one impression is taken the apparatus is clicked, the fresh film falls into place, and there is no confusion of images. With me, I find that I manage my camera blunderingly and I often find that I have taken two pictures on the same film with disastrous and grotesque results. Some of all this I tried to communicate to Anna on the way home but she could not understand. She had seen nothing but what was laughable in the performance. Sometimes I almost wish that I did n't come from a long line of Puritan ancestors.

XVI

La Petite Grand'mère

THAT evening there was as dinner guest at the House of the Garden, a dramatic critic. All Frenchmen are critics and they delight in the fine art, but this guest was a professional critic and as such was listened to with much respectful attention. *La petite grand'mère* never goes to the theatre but always reads the *chronique théâtrale* in the Monday edition of *Le Temps* and when her conscience and her embroidery permit she reads the latest plays. So vivid is her imagination, and so keen is her dramatic instinct that she often has a better conception of the play than if she had seen it performed. The conversation was more than usually brilliant. For once the Patriot was reduced to comparative silence. He had no interest in the puerile dramas on a mimic stage, for he felt himself an actor in a great world drama, where the heroine for whom men gave their lives was a lost country. So, when the discussion waxed warm over an author

à la mode the Patriot became abstracted and his eyes seemed to gaze on mighty scenes which we poor materialists were too blind to see. As the Patriot's abstraction grew, the vivacity of *la petite grand'mère* increased. Philippe, who had come in just before dinner was served, with the cheerful announcement that he had come to spend the evening, drew her out and encouraged her to give her opinion of such and such a play.

The discussion became so animated that it was continued over the coffee and even bridge was not able to assert its usual supremacy. Owing to Philippe's tactics the conversation soon became a dialogue carried on between the Dramatic Critic and *la petite grand mère.* I remember a great deal that was said, although Philippe, who had seated himself beside me, said a good many things to me, *sotto voce,* that had nothing to do with the state of the modern drama. He has a charming way of paying compliments and it is very satisfying to have some one notice your clothes and tell you that you are looking unusually well, when you yourself are conscious of having made a distinct effort to look nice and neat. Of course these remarks of Philippe distracted me somewhat and I ought to have felt annoyed, for I had

come back to Paris to improve my mind and to learn as much as I could. And it *was* very annoying, when I stopped to think of it, for had I not come determined to put aside all frivolity, to bend every energy towards carrying out the ambition which had been gradually growing for the last two years, to become a literary woman, and not to allow any distractions of the heart to interfere with this lofty purpose of the mind? And now I was beginning to be conscious of the fact that I was growing more interested in Philippe's plans than I was in my own, and that I would rather hear him talk about his work than to listen to a philosophical discussion on the trend of modern literary ideas. I felt that I must make an effort to shake off this weakness and not allow any opportunity to pass of understanding better the mind of the French people. So I told Philippe that we were very rude to talk when a Dramatic Critic was discoursing and that we must listen to what was being said about the new school of young writers. To which Philippe answered by a remark that was so very personal I could not repeat it, but which established a certain comparison between what a Dramatic Critic was saying and what *I* might say that showed me beyond

any doubt that Philippe was losing his powers of discrimination. Yet what he said was *very* nice.

Then I tried hard to listen. *La petite grand'-mère* was saying that the audacity of these young men who were writing plays nowadays was astonishing. Would they stop at nothing, these Bernstein, these Bataille, these Coolus? To be sure they were clever, marvellously clever, and you were held by the interest of the play, in fact you read it breathlessly from beginning to end, but what did it all mean? Were all the lofty ideas dead? Did men no longer feel tremendous passions? What had become of the noble language in which noble sentiments used to be expressed? To-day all Paris had gone mad with admiration over a play which told how a woman had stolen money from her hostess because she wanted to dress well and please her husband. A mere vulgar detective story where there were no ideals, no poetic sentiment, no psychological analyses, nothing but action. And *la petite grand'mère* flashed indignation from her bright eyes, as she sat up very straight and remembered the great poets on whose works she had been nourished. As she stopped for breath the Dramatic Critic rushed in:

"Ah, yes, but Madame must remember that, after all, that was what the public wanted, action. And had not Bernstein in "Le Voleur" given a play so well knit, so deftly constructed, where the action passed from scene to scene, from act to act so rapidly, so inevitably, that it was a masterpiece of art? And had not the public, by their enthusiasm, showed that after all that is what they demanded? No moral treatises, no poetical fancies, but the excitement of curiosity and the satisfaction of having something happening every instant of the time? And, Mademoiselle will bear me out," he said, turning to me; "Is not that the kind of plays that are most popular in your country? Do you not demand a tense interest, and as you say in your picturesque, strong way, 'something doing' all the time?"

I had to assent meekly as I thought of our most popular plays. I wanted to protest and make a plea for the few who still loved poetry on the stage, but I suddenly remembered that one of our rising poets had given as his only offering a thrilling melodrama and I was silent.

"Yes," he went on, for *la petite grand'mère* had not yet found her breath, "the public

is primitive and unreflecting. It demands first of all to be interested and the easiest way to interest is to appeal to the eye, not to the mind. Bernstein, Bataille and the rest have no higher ambition than to attract and dazzle the public. They have no ideals, no sense of responsibility. If they teach anything, it is that every one has a right to happiness, and that he may get it at any sacrifice. I am convinced," and the Dramatic Critic assumed his editorial air, "that these young men are now suffering from an attack of Nietszcheism. The doctrines of Nietszche are just now becoming fashionable among a certain set and those young fellows have read him superficially and have distorted his theories to suit themselves. They are expressing a certain phase and the public, easily led, are dazzled by their brilliance. Their work cannot endure."

"But what of the young people," said *la petite grand'mère,* "who have their tastes formed by such amoral productions?"

"Never fear," answered the Dramatic Critic, "You would have no doubt about our youth if you could have been at the Comédie the other night when the anniversary of Corneille was

celebrated. The seats were filled with young people. The play that was given was "Polyeucte," perhaps the one play of Corneille's greater ones least calculated to interest the young, for how can they appreciate the struggle between the grace of God and human love? But I assure you, Madame, that the interest was deep and profound, more than that, there was enthusiasm. I wish you might have seen those young faces turned toward the stage, watched the way in which they listened to some noble passage, and that you could have heard the spontaneous bursts of applause at the close of a tirade and the air of conviction with which the young voices said, '*Ah! que c'est beau!*' As long as our young people can appreciate the great writers of our Age of Gold they will never feel but a passing fancy for what is unworthy and merely sensational in literature."

La petite grand'mère's eyes sparkled and she said, "You are right and we must see to it that we teach our little ones to love the best. They will never be quite disloyal to what they have learned at their mother's knee."

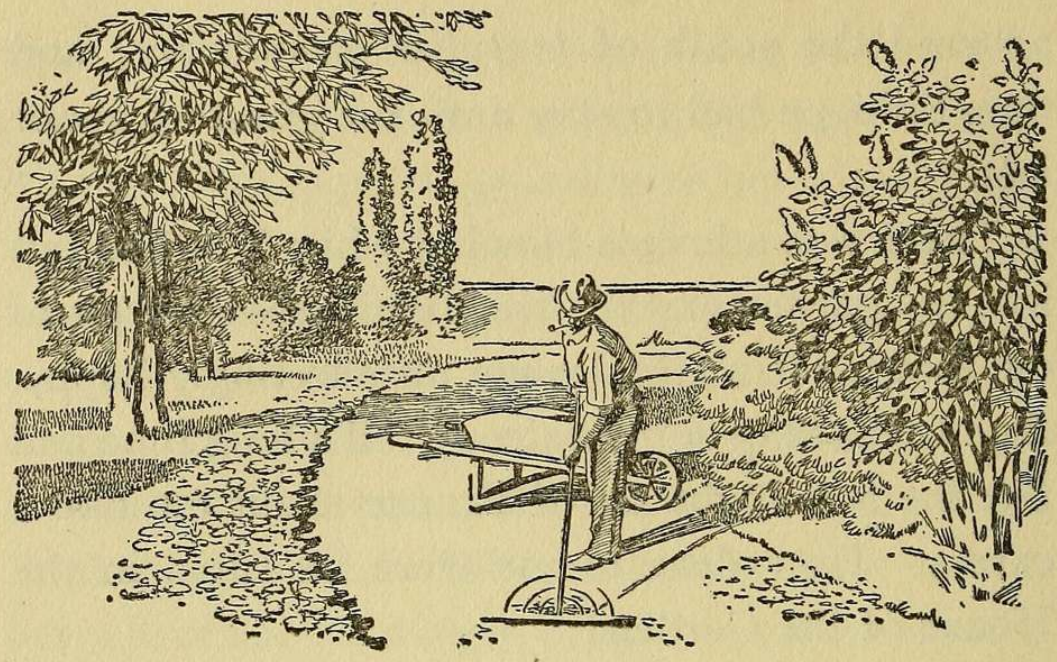
I thought of an incident which had happened

to the seven-year-old great-grandson of *la petite grand'mère* and I almost expected to hear her tell it here. But *la petite grand'mère* never makes an exhibition of the cleverness of members of her family and she resisted the temptation, if temptation it was, to tell it. I respected her feeling sufficiently not to ask her for it, but I told Philippe how the father and mother had taken the small Paul to see Buffalo Bill and how when a certain fierce warrior seemingly drags his victim around the ring Paul was seen with great tears rolling down his cheeks. His mother, alarmed, asked him what the matter was, and he replied that it made him think of Hector dragged around the walls of Troy. I wonder how many seven-year-old Americans have a distinct idea of Hector — much less could weep over his misfortune?

We were later than usual in breaking up this evening for the modern drama had proved very absorbing. The Patriot had taken his leave very early and poor little Anna had lost her vivacity and was plainly sleepy. The Hostess had been knitting, adding a word only from time to time, while my mind had wandered more than once from the discussion. I was grateful to the Dramatic Critic for his eloquence. It had quite

aroused the youth of *la petite grand'mère;* and then Philippe had to stay until the guest of honor left.

There was a breeze blowing when I looked out into my garden and the trees whispered secrets to me that made me feel quite unreflectingly happy. And I leaned over my balcony rail a long time and felt the soft night air of France about me like a caress. How dear to me were all these in the House of the Garden!



XVII

The Garden after a Storm

TIRED we sometimes come upon a cool and
quiet place,
With friendly forest trees enclosed about,
Where soft dead leaves lie thickly strewn
Close pressed to earth, who, silent, wept their
fall,
Then took them back to her great mother
heart.
Like them we gently lay us down
And seek to feel a quickening throb of life.

We see around us in the twilight gloom
Vague outlines of colossal forms.
Faint shadows of ethereal thoughts.
We hear close to us in the purple air
Faint echoes of mysterious music,
And the far off voice of sobbing passion.

The heart's loud throbbing well nigh chokes
The cry that rises to our lips.
A hot mist blurs the vision, for at last
The formless longings and unuttered songs
Imprisoned long within our soul
Shall be made manifest!

With pulsing joy and eager haste we strive
To seize the forms, that vanish at our touch.
We strain the ear to hear again the harmonies
That die away in thread like notes.
And Nothingness sits there in black and mocking silence.
And laughs to think how many forms he may take on.

This is just about the way I felt one morning as I sat at my window and looked out on the garden. There had been a storm the night before and the heavy rain had cruelly beaten the

lilac bushes until their blossoms lay strewn on the ground. The leaves in the flower buds were bespattered with mud and the petals of the geraniums were torn. The sky was clean washed and very blue, and the sun was shining in an unusually brilliant way as though to divert one's mind from the ravages committed during the night. But my flowers were gone and I mourned for them in the bright sunlight. They had scarcely reached their full beauty when the storm that was their undoing came.

All through the spring days and for many weeks and months before, I had been seeking restlessly to solve the bothersome problem that is given in one form or another to each one of us to puzzle over. It seems very strange that so many of us have to seek so blindly and sometimes so feverishly for a purpose in life. Why should n't we be given a purpose quite definitely and clearly along with eyes and ears and other indispensable accessories to human movement? I had never been able to get very much help on the subject, but I was always firm in my resolve to be independent, to live my own life and leave my own individual impress on whatever I did, however modest that work might be. The year

of society after college had been very engrossing, very exciting. It was beautiful to have flowers and parties and love made to one, but when it was over I found that really nothing had been done. I was n't even engaged, which seemed to disappoint the family. Settlement work and charity entertainments the next year seemed to be a little more worth while, but I soon found that they were being tried as a panacea for various ailments by so many others that I lost interest.

Then came the year abroad. I had intended following the usual beaten track, but I had met the Enthusiast on the steamer and he had told me of the joys of student life in Paris, of the vast learning of the Master, of the inspiration of his teaching, and I had persuaded my gentle, ease-loving elderly cousin twice removed, to settle down with me in the Latin Quarter. The Enthusiast had become my Mentor, and he had pointed out to me so many pleasant paths of learning that I shall ever feel for him a glow of gratitude. At that time it seemed very easy to decide to write and at the end of my happy year I had gone home full of ideas, but alas! my family and my friends laid hands

upon me and I found the mornings slipping by with alarming quickness. The mornings that I had fondly imagined would be spent in intellectual labor, were frivolled away on riding, on tennis, on dressmakers. I found that no one would take me seriously, and I began to feel the possible ludicrousness of taking myself seriously. But it was very baffling, and the purpose in life which for a brief space had almost materialized, turned again into impalpable mist. Then I had a luminous moment when I saw quite clearly that if I was to accomplish anything I must get away from all the entanglements of family and friends and put myself where I would have every opportunity of accomplishing something, if there was anything in me at all. I would give myself a chance to say something, if I had anything to say. I would put myself again in the old inspiring environment and listen to the voices.

Alas! now that this was accomplished, now that I was here, I felt eager, enthusiastic, receptive. I almost heard the heavenly music but when I tried in turn to form something of what I felt and heard, I found my hand powerless and my brain a blank. I perhaps ought not to say a blank, but the images that came there were un-

bidden, and for my purpose it might better far have been a blank.

So this morning as I went back over the short years and looked into the garden I saw in the deflowered lilacs the sad confirmation of my own discouragement. And yet, so many women had accomplished great things. There was Madame Vancourt, whose virile grasp of subjects and clear and charming style had opened a discussion more or less serious as to the wisdom of admitting women among the Immortals. She stood among the foremost writers of France to-day. Then there was charming Madame Roger, who wrote with equal grace in two languages, and whose dainty pen did not hesitate to attack such a subject as Literary Ideas in the Nineteenth Century. There was dear, friendly Madame Bertrand, who spent all her mornings with her pen, and whose translations are a work of art; and my gentle Hostess herself, who delves deep in philosophy and has made more than one abstruse English work clear to French readers. What had given them their power? Was it a larger meed of talent, or the gift of concentration, or a source of inspiration that was hidden from me?

Some days before, Madame Vancourt had sent me word that I might come to see her and I had gone with outward delight and inward trepidation, for she is a very great person and great in the way that I should like to be, hence I felt very small and insignificant and was grateful for the presence of my gentle Hostess, who went with me. Madame Vancourt lives very modestly in a third-floor apartment. A quiet little maid received us silently and conducted us through a narrow dark hall to a door which, when opened, revealed the salon. Madame Vancourt was seated in a high-backed arm chair near her writing desk, which had been scrupulously cleared off for her receiving day, and it looked as innocent of hard work as any American lady's desk. Madame Vancourt was dressed in black satin with a bit of lace at her throat. She sat very erect in her chair, not rising when we entered, but speaking words of welcome in a far-away, rather colorless voice. Her face is very white, her features rather masculine, and she smiles rarely, but when she does, all coldness vanishes and you understand her charm. I sat listening to her conversation with the gentle Hostess, feeling very young and ignorant and

inexperienced, as I heard them speak familiarly of this and that great man, or discuss with inside knowledge some great event.

As we sat there the door behind me opened and some one came, with a timid step, into the room. Madame Vancourt looked up, and her face was transfigured with a rare smile. She said simply, "Come in, *mon ami,*" but her voice had another tone. For a moment the far away quality disappeared and it sounded rich and clear as a young girl's.

In response to her words there came to greet us a little old gentleman, white-haired, somewhat bent, with the kindliest, gentlest face I ever saw. He greeted us, then went over to the fireplace and spread his hands out to the blaze. It was Monsieur Vancourt, the husband of the writer. He looked so small, so self-effaced, so alone, that with a word of excuse I rose impulsively and went over to take a seat by his side. Madame Vancourt flashed a look of comprehension at me that compensated me for losing the delights of her conversation. I must confess that I scarcely knew how to address myself to the little husband now that I was beside him, but some inspiration led me to broach

the subject of Greek Art. Perhaps it was because he seemed so un-modern, so prior to our own century. Whatever was the origin of my inspiration its effect was most happy, for in a little while his effaced manner had taken on a certain individuality and he was talking with an eloquence which transformed him.

When we left, my gentle Hostess said to me, "Who told you that M. Vancourt was a Greek scholar?"

"No one," I answered, "he just looked as though he ought to know something remote and fine."

"Well, you entirely won Madame Vancourt's heart, for her one passion in the world is her husband. It was he who taught her all she knows, and who has been her inspiration in all that she does. He was a famous dilettante when she married him, and rich enough to indulge all his scholarly whims, but misfortune came and ill-health. Then Madame Vancourt rose to the occasion and asking him to teach her, she gave herself up wholly to literary work. We never dreamed in those days that Marguerite would become the brilliant writer she is now, and but few know or guess of the days and

nights of ceaseless toil that she has spent in perfecting herself. She never could have accomplished anything had it not been for him. It is his well stored, highly trained mind, joined to her vigorous will and her woman's power of adaptability, that have made her what she is."

"But why does no one hear of M. Vancourt?" I asked, my sense of justice touched.

"All who know her hear of him. The world, of course, cannot know. But he has never been strong, and perhaps he lacks that final touch of vigor and self-confidence which enables one to express oneself. She never could have accomplished anything without him, and he never would have thought it worth while to express himself. It was their being together, and the sharp incentive of necessity, which developed this fruit of their talent."

XVIII

Dinners and Doubts

IT may have been my respectful silence when in Madame Vancourt's presence, or my unconscious encouragement of M. Vancourt's eloquence that won me an invitation to dinner not long after. I accepted eagerly and went with fear and trembling for, being an American, I could not get over the little thrill of awe that the thought of meeting the intellectually great always gave me. My hostess received me graciously. She looked whiter than ever and very tall, but she had more warmth in her manner than usual and her rare illuminating smile came oftener. Her husband was gently self-effaced. When we were seated at table I looked about to get an impression of the guests.

Next to the hostess sat the genial old bachelor, Monsieur Maillard, whom all Paris knows, beaming on every one, smiling, effervescent, his rosy cheeks and bright eyes protesting against the evidence of his whitening beard and hair. Opposite him sat the authority on Latin litera-

ture, Monsieur Gaspard, whimsically humorous, inveighing against elevators and automobiles, and suggesting that Edward VII be asked to come and reign in France so as to put an end to labor troubles. Then there was Madame Delpit, tall and handsome in her velvet dress, with snowy shoulders and head rising above the soft blackness of her gown. She was as animated as she was handsome, and had the elegant poise that comes from years of reigning by the right of wit and beauty. When she spoke, the rest listened. Even the Latin authority stopped his bantering to hear what she had to say. In sharp contrast to these were the young American representative of a Boston publishing firm, and his pretty sister. He, tall, smooth-faced, a little ill at ease because of his unconquered French, but quite well bred. But it was curious to notice how his lack of movement made him seem stiff and unexpressive among these gesticulating Frenchmen. His sister, exceedingly pretty, with that wayward, irregular prettiness one sees so often in Americans, blonde curly hair, brown eyes, tip-tilted nose, decided chin, lovable mouth, and dimples coming and going.

There were numberless courses and much gay-

ety, so the time at table did not seem long. The *soupe veloutée aux champignons* was followed graciously by *sole frite* upon whose tail came quickly a delicious *poulet,* and scarcely had its bones been picked when the *rôti* came hardily on, to be hurried away by the crisp rustling of the Russian salad and an aristocratic *foie gras* in jelly. Then came cooling ices and strawberries, fruits and cakes with *petits fours, à discretion.* All these delectable viands were made even more piquant by the conversational sauce which accompanied each course. Sometimes all were talking at once and then the *bon mots* fell so thick that every one who had ears to hear had a chance to laugh. At other times one would dominate and when he realized that he was being listened to by the rest he would unconsciously assume certain elegancies of expression, his wit would become more elaborate and he would be utterly in his element. Later when we went into the salon where the men accompanied us and did not abandon us immediately afterwards we were still not left in peace, but were followed by reminders that the feast was not yet over. Here we were cajoled by black coffee and opalescent liqueurs. We had scarcely overcome the immediate effects

of these when tea and other mild decoctions were brought in and the consumption of these was the signal for departure.

All through the evening I had studied my hostess, for her white, strong face exerted a singular fascination over me. I noticed that she turned her glance very often towards her husband, and that there passed between them a look of perfect comprehension. When she was appealed to for an opinion on some abstruse question she would answer in the calm, decisive tones of her white voice, always cleverly and always to the point; then her eyes would seek those of Monsieur Vancourt, and she would say with her illuminating smile, "Is it not so, *mon ami?*" and he would answer, "Perfectly, perfectly," but seldom add more. He seemed to be the inspiring power, and she the means of expressing the ideas which did not always originate in her.

"The best thought and the best work is that which has a dual origin," said Philippe when I was discussing Madame Vancourt and her husband with him afterwards. (That is a feature I don't like. Every one says Madame Vancourt and her husband, as though he were an after-

thought. I believe in full credit being given to the woman, but I don't think it is necessary to advertise it in an offensive way.) "They are a wonderful example," continued Philippe, "of how two people may work together in perfect harmony and produce much finer results than if they were alone. Madame Vancourt has undoubtedly great ability, but who knows how much of the grace, of the subtlety, and of the color, is due to him, while I am convinced that the charm of her work is born of their mutual love and understanding."

By the way, I kept wishing all the time I was at Madame Vancourt's that Philippe had been there, for then I would have had the opportunity I wanted, to compare him face to face with an American. It is n't quite fair to judge him without actual objects of comparison. When I compare him with all other Frenchmen he is very much their superior and he is much nicer than many Americans I have known. I wonder how he would compare with my Boston cousins? Bob has just finished his graduate course at Harvard and is still insufferable. When I see him I am always reminded of that line describing Saint Juste.

Il porte sa tête comme le saint sacrément.

And I know Bob considers his head the sacred depository of all learning and it must n't be joggled for fear some of it will spill over. As for Ralph, he is so cram-full of athletics that you can't get an intelligible word out of him, and all he can discuss is the superiority of the East over the West in foot-ball, and everything else. Once I tried to talk to him about foreign culture, but he said such disagreeable things about Frenchmen that I would n't listen to him. I think many of our American young men are very narrow-minded. They are nice, jolly, brotherly playmates, but they care much more about success in athletics and business than about poetry. Now Philippe is what I would like a brother of mine to be, if I had one, — big, strong, a good rider, a fine shot, fond of tennis, despising golf, and yet able to talk with you about ideals, and not only never bored with poetry, but able to write it himself.

Lately I seem to have been thrown more than usual among people who have done things in the world and my impatience of self increases. It's a very unpleasant feeling which sometimes becomes physical in its intensity. I'm beginning

to have a horrid doubt that something besides determination and toil is necessary. The other day the gentle Hostess and I went to a sort of literary tea, at least that 's what we would have called it in Boston. It was at the home of the bird-like Madame Rollin, and there were to be two very remarkable authors there. One, a famous Englishwoman who received fabulous sums for her magazine serials, and the other, a novelist whom two countries want to claim, and who has wisely adjusted matters by adopting the accent of one country, and occasionally allowing the other to hear him use it. There were some other people present just as remarkable, but they were French and could be met any day. However, their presence had a quieting influence on the English lions, and they did not seem to stand out from their background in the conspicuous way they would have done in Boston, and their voices scarcely rose above a purr.

Madame Rollin banished all possible heaviness and kept her foreign guests quite animated by her vivacity. I overheard the Authoress say to the Novelist, " Marie is astonishing. She is as young at fifty as she was at twenty. It is almost immoral, and a widow, too! "

"Have you read her last book?" replied the Novelist, "the one she wrote before her husband's death? I doubt if she will ever write again anything so delightful, for although her husband was a scientist, he was a great inspiration to her in her literary work."

It seemed to me I heard the same story everywhere. Could no great work be done in the world unless the heart were moved? Were love, and sympathy, and understanding, the basis of intellectual activity? I did n't believe it, and I resolved to ask the gentle Hostess her opinion after dinner. But while sitting in the library waiting for Lucien's automatic summons to the dining room, I picked up one of the Master's volumes and read its dedication: "To my beloved wife, without whose help and inspiration my voice would have been silent." That was what the gentle Hostess had been! My question had been answered.

XIX

The Pilgrimage

THERE was much excitement in the House of the Garden one spring morning, for we were going, all of us, to spend a week at the *château.* The merle woke me earlier than usual with his song, which seemed to say, " The sun is shining for you, free and happy creature. You can go out to the green country while I must stay here in my cage; but I have the dear garden to comfort me, the still and quiet garden, where none come but those who are beloved of the House." And when I rose and looked out of my window the sun was shining more beautifully than ever and the garden sent up sweet perfumes of morning as if to reproach me for seeking anything more fair in the world outside. The garden and I have a perfect understanding, however, and it knows that if I go away for a while I shall always come back with the joy of coming home.

We knew that the gentle Hostess had planned this trip as a sort of pilgrimage. For it was at

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this time of the year that the Master had always loved to go into his Normandy and breathe the fresh air of his native province. The pilgrimage was not to be a sad one, for only those who had known the Master well were to go, and who could ever be quite sad who had once known him? Besides, we never could feel that we had wholly lost him, for his strong spirit pervaded the circle of his home still. So strong was the impress of his personality that when talking of him I often lifted my eyes at some slight sound expecting to see him among us. And so, in starting on this spring morning, we felt a certain joyous expectancy, as if we were to join a loved one, for surely at the *château* which was so closely connected with him, we should feel his presence even more keenly. Besides, it was there he had been laid to rest and we would visit the hillside and the little chapel.

We had to be at the Gare St. Lazare at eight o'clock, so Lucien and Alphonsine and the cook were here, there, everywhere, preparing for the early coffee, packing bags, giving instructions to the *concièrge,* and getting the cabs into the court; so that mesdames should not, by any failure of duty on their part, miss the train. Lucien and

Alphonsine were to go with us, for we could not imagine how a meal would taste unless served by him, and Alphonsine was always indispensable. Soon we were rattling over the stony streets, *La petite grand'mère* and the gentle Hostess in one cab, Germaine and I in the other, with Lucien sitting up very straight beside the driver, and in the third cab our little trunks, our big bags, and all our parcels. We were out so early that the streets lay asleep with all their shop windows closed. Here and there we met a grocer's wagon coming from the *Halles,* laden with fresh vegetables, or a cart filled with flowers and pushed by a bent old woman. The street sweepers were the only other active ones astir, swishing the clean water from the gutters up over the pavement with their long ungainly brooms.

When we reached the station we found the group of friends who were to go with us, already out on the *quai* by the little toy cars that were to take us on our six-hour trip. There was the Professor who had been the Master's most faithful disciple, and whose love for Saint Teresa and the rest of the calendar was secondary to his cult of the one who had helped him in his career. After the Master went away his grief

was the helpless, pathetic sorrow of a child, and he had not yet recovered from the wondering pain of the blow. Then of course the Patriot was there, and for once *la petite grand'mère* lowered her arms and declared a truce, ignoring all puzzling problems of his attire or theories. Philippe and his sister were there, too, for they had always been as son and daughter in the family. The Academician was to come on the next day, and that would complete our party.

We made ourselves comfortable in two compartments and soon the porters came along shutting the doors with much slamming. The little engine uttered half a dozen thin, convulsive shrieks, and the toy cars rattled out of the station over the tracks, high-walled on either side, and, finally escaping from them, made a dash into the green country, where our road was bordered by stiff little villas neatly kept, or by tall poplars, standing like very thin grenadiers, with big green shakes on their heads. Once in a while we screamed past a station where we could catch a glimpse of a blue-bloused *facteur* standing beside the *Restaurant de la Gare*. Sometimes our engineer condescended to stop at a city, where the houses stood close-

grouped, pressing around and climbing crowdingly the hill, on which rose a majestic cathedral, whose spires reached up into the blue sky, as though from out the huddling mass of stone and mortar some fine aspirations had detached themselves to spring upward toward heaven. When hunger made itself felt, Lucien and Alphonsine appeared at one of the short stops with baskets containing fat sandwiches, tender chicken, and bottles of red wine, which they consigned to our care with smiling wishes for the good appetite of messieurs and mesdames. Their wishes were fulfilled and the baskets were soon emptied.

The afternoon had worn half away when, with an unusually emphatic bump, the train stopped, too suddenly for comfort, beside the little station which marked the end of our journey. The carriages from the *château* were there to meet us, and the greetings of chatelaine and servants argued well for domestic harmony in that household. As we drove over the winding road that took us to the *château,* my mind was full of the memory of my first visit when the Master was still there. I could feel again the thrill of anticipation with which I looked about me at the little station, the eager curiosity

with which I gazed on the fair Normandy fields, and the quaint old village near the *château.* Then how like a story it seemed, to turn in at the lodge gate where the porter stood to salute us gravely: to drive under arching trees until suddenly we came out into a broad open space, where the driveway swept up to the *château;* and there, the fine old building stood out clear and bold against its background of trees.

It was all there, and I breathed a sigh of perfect satisfaction. Battlements and drawbridges, portcullis and moat, all that a well-regulated, ancestral castle should possess. To be sure the drawbridge was now always hospitably down and it was bordered with fresh confiding flowers, while the portcullis had a beautiful brown coat of rust on its protruding points that never more would come clanging down in sudden alarm. And the moat had not for generations been flooded, except by the rains of heaven, and was a wild luxurious tangle of vines and roses, that strove ambitiously to climb up and peep over the edge of their sunken bed. To complete the perfect picture, there at his castle gate stood the lord of the demesne, with his lady at his right, and his retainers drawn up on either side. It was

exactly like a story book, and so were all the happy days that had followed when we wandered over the Normandy hills, to visit the graceful ruins of some old *abbaye,* or when we played tennis on the terrace, while Fifi, the dog, dashed down into the moat to bring the balls back: or when we gathered in the great lamp-lit salon of an evening and listened to wise and brilliant words from the lips of poets and writers. For the Master always drew about him those who found in his wide knowledge and deep sympathy, new sources of inspiration.

This time the picture was the same. The station, the village, the lodge, and the old gray castle, but the central figure was missing. We all strove to be very gay and not to let the gentle Hostess know how much we felt the lack, and everything aided in the kindly conspiracy. The notes of the birds were sweeter, the old gray walls were softer, the perfumed air more caressing, and the atmosphere of Spring spoke to our hearts of resurrection and of life.

The first evening was the hardest, but when we came up from the big dining room down stairs, we women folk attacked our embroidery with ardor, and the men stood about and talked.

Then we fell to playing cards and before we knew it Lucien appeared with tea and other calming drinks and the dreaded first evening was over.

I suppose in our blundering human way we did not accept the absence of the Master in the way we should, and hence his spiritual presence could not be felt. Afterwards we remembered this and as the hours passed we knew he was with us more and more, and the sense of restraint passed away and we no longer strove after a gayety we did not feel, but allowed the atmosphere of content and peace to enter into our souls.

XX

The Château

THE first morning when I awoke and went to my tower window I looked on a scene that almost compensated for the absence of my garden. The ground sloped gently down from the terrace to the clear still waters of the lake, still, except where they were rippled on the far side by a brook which leaped out in cascades from the cool shadows of the hillside. The water rushed into the little lake in a great flurry as though it had so much to tell of its adventures that it could not wait and was eager to stir up all the placid surface. But in a ridiculously short time, its turbulence was over and its babbling ceased, and it became part of the tranquil waters which lay undisturbed except by a falling leaf, or a passing zephyr, or when furrowed by the stately motion of a white-necked swan. All about the lake were white spring flowers and nodding violets, and beyond rose the undulating outline of green hills, melting into blue that beckoned one with the cloudy promise of new beau-

ties to be revealed, if you would undertake the quest. But with all this before my eyes I was still loyal to my garden. It had one added charm, that of being a secret place hidden in a great city; it was to be found only after seeking, and nothing about it bespoke its presence; while here the surroundings all proclaimed aloud that there must be sweep of lawn, gleam of water, and far-reaching vistas of hills; so that when you came upon it, there was no special feeling of discovery.

My room in the *château* was the same I had before; a tower room with deep window seats and walls hung with yellow tapestry. There was a tall canopied bed and quaint spindle-legged chairs. In the walls were closets that opened with secret springs, and clothes kept there, renewed their freshness and acquired a perfume of lavender.

The coffee that Alphonsine brought me had an added flavor because of the foaming hot milk which had a genuineness proven by the faint lowing of the cows in the distant meadows. I sat in the deep embrasure of my window while I sipped my morning nectar and watched the changing lights on lake and hills. All morning

it was very still about the *château.* Each one had his task to do and the unwritten law of the household was that no one should interfere with another's independence; so we were always left undisturbed, with that delicate appreciation of individuality which makes French hospitality so charming and so unexacting.

When the luncheon time came at the half hour after midday we were eager to meet, as well as to eat, and there was a spontaneity about both that might have been lacking if we had had a beefsteak breakfast or unlimited access to one another's society. The long windows of the great dining room opened out on the terrace, where the shadow of the tall trees always kept a deweiness, as of unbrushed morning, on the sward and the vine-filled moat. After luncheon we went out on the terrace where the easy chair of *la petite grand'mère* was comfortably placed under the tallest tree. On a table beside her was her basket of embroidery ready for her busy fingers. Then came Lucien with the tray of fragrant black coffee and when we had discussed it, the games were brought out and all of us joined in the famous *tonneau,* where marvellous scores were made and competition ran

high. Then the gentle Hostess arranged what we were to do during the hours before the five o'clock, and such was her discrimination that she always hit upon just the thing that we had been longing to do. Perhaps it was a visit to some old ruin, or to a neighboring *château,* or a drive to the little city where a gingerbread fair was going on. Before we were sent about our various pleasure trips, the gentle Hostess reminded us that the Academician was to arrive that day and would be at the *château* in time for the five o'clock. I was very anxious to meet the Academician, for he was the youngest of the Immortals and had won fame in many countries by his songs. He had been devoted to the Master, and his poet's soul had reverenced the mind in which profound learning had never stifled, but rather glorified, artistic ideals, and for whom the history of words meant the history of humanity.

Philippe, his sister Juliette, Germaine, and I went to the gingerbread fair, where we had a double enjoyment, that of seeing the wonderful array in the booths, and of watching the quaint Normandy peasants as they passed entranced from one fascinating display to another. The struggle in their minds between natural caution

and curiosity grew nearly tragic as they listened to the allurements of an attraction where, they were assured by the eloquent "barker," they would see one of the marvels of the world, something that they ought not to miss; for if the *bon Dieu* had sent into the world an armless, legless man, was it not disrespect on their part if they refused to see this manifestation of divine wrath? But *le bon Dieu* had permitted this poor trunk to learn marvellous things, all of which he could be seen performing for the ridiculously small sum of five sous. Some younger ones yielded, overcome by the specious eloquence of the pious showman, while the older ones shook their heads dubiously and passed on to the next temptation.

We were so carried away by the attractions of the place that we were late in returning; so that when we arrived we found every one assembled on the terrace and well on into the second cup of tea. The Academician, as the latest arrival, was the centre of attraction. He was a small slender man, very young looking, with delicate features and large eyes. He bore himself with an air of gentle deference that was very winning, especially when he turned to *la petite grand'mère*.

Indeed, it would have been most unfitting had he not recognized with the rest of us that this was the hour when she held court. She always had a charmingly regal air, but at this time more than at any other did she exercise her sovereignty by the right of brilliancy and wit. She had had her refreshing nap, and her conversation was more sparkling, her repartee quicker than ever. The spontaneous homage that was paid her exhilarated her and we all became her willing vassals. I think I never knew any one who so clearly made manifest in herself the relations of mind and body. When young she had been very beautiful, and her body had then been the dwelling place of a young and undeveloped soul, but, as the years passed her mind grew; intelligence of an unusual quality burned, and the light from within gradually transformed the features, which Time was touching with his withering hand, until the dwelling seemed to become a mere transparent covering for the brilliant mind that had been developing in a shelter, whose protecting beauty it now no longer needed, for its own glow was sufficient loveliness.

After the tea Philippe and the Professor challenged Juliette and me to a game of tennis.

Juliette is tall and dark and just now is suffering from an attack of Anglomania induced, so her affectionate relative says, by the attentions of a young English officer. Whatever may be the cause, the result of the malady is that she disfigures her pretty black hair by wearing a fringe and stiffens her slender neck by extraordinarily high collars. Her Anglomania has affected her beneficially, however, in that she cultivates all athletic sports and is a good tennis player. We get along famously together and she tells me a great deal about Philippe. I think it always speaks well for a man's character when his sister can be enthusiastic about him after several years of companionship.

The Professor is a little slow and almost too polite to play such a game, for he insists upon stopping to pick up all Juliette's balls for her and handing them to her personally, which takes a good deal of valuable time. Despite these enervating courtesies the game was soon under way and grew so tense that conversation was restricted to the terse expressions of mixed French and English, and nothing was heard but, "*Êtes vous prête?*"—"*Oui,* play"—"*Trente,* love"—"*Va, Fifi, vite cherche la balle dans la fosse!*"

The lengthening shadows of the tall trees warned us at last that we must go to our rooms and dress for dinner. There were certain rigid laws in the *château* household and one was that at exactly half-past seven we must gather together in the salon, and five minutes thereafter we would trail, two by two, down the great stairway to the dining room below. The only feeling of nervousness I ever experienced in this gracious home was at the thought of some time not being ready, and having to walk down the staircase and enter the dining room all alone.

The dinner was very gay, for the Patriot and the Academician became engaged in a lively discussion as to the value of epics in the development of a nation. It was perhaps because of the discussion that when we were in the salon after dinner we begged the youngest Academician to tell us of a pilgrimage he once made to Roncevaux with the Master, when they went to visit the scenes of great Roland's struggle and death. As he recounted simply but eloquently the events of those few days, when they lived with departed heroes, I recalled the tribute which this youngest Academician had paid to the memory of the Master

when he made his reception speech at the Academy. " One evening upon the very threshold of Roncevaux I left the Master. I had accompanied him to the last turn of the road of Valcarlos. He was to go on his way, I was to descend the hill again, for I did not wish to come between him and Charlemagne. Standing beneath an oak mighty as was his genius, near a spring clear as was his conscience, he waved me a last good-bye. Then at the turn of the road he disappeared — as he has just now disappeared from our eyes to mount still higher."

I came back from my memories to hear the Professor say in a less scientific tone than usual, " There is no more delightful task for the scholar than to enter painstakingly into the past, and to find amid his researches the unchangeableness and freshness of human nature. The same sins and the same virtues have existed since time began and ——" Here the Patriot interrupted him.

" And it is the highest duty of every man who loves his country to make the virtues of the past, as incarnated in great men, live again and so keep alive in every generation the power to appreciate what is noble in its own land."

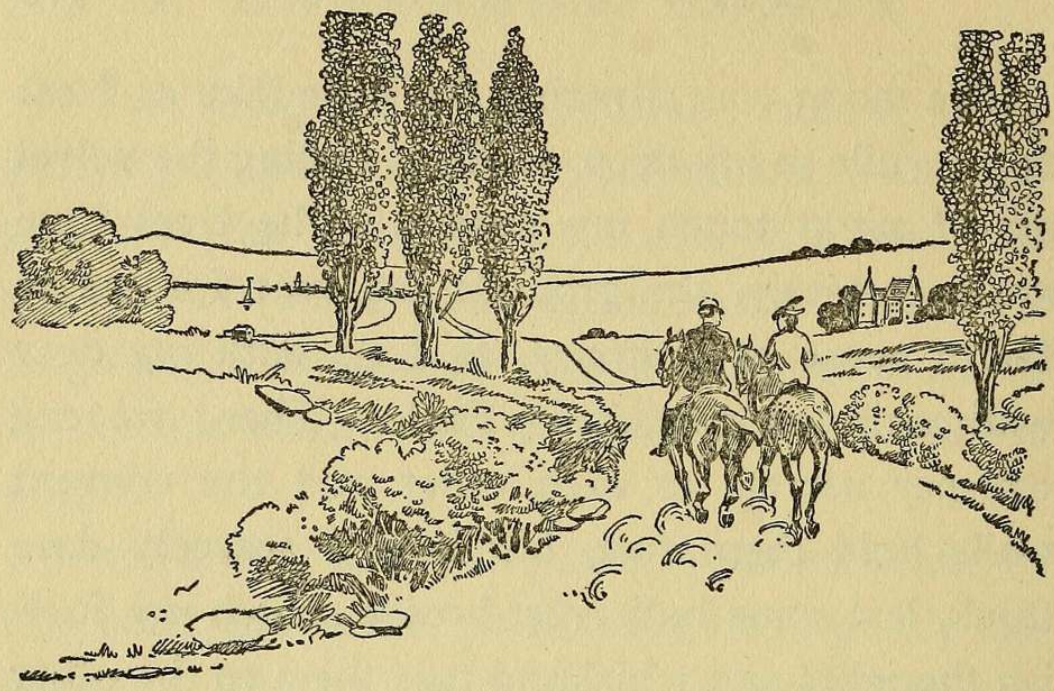
"Yes," said the gentle Hostess, looking affectionately at the youngest Academician, "and the poet who can understand the soul of a hero and make him live and speak again, so that thousands laugh and weep to hear him, has done even more, for he has known how to touch the heart of his people."

I was sitting beside *la petite grand'mère* and at this point she spoke, patting my hand gently the while. "The soul of the hero belongs to no one country and to no one generation. A countryman of this child taught me as no one else ever did the simple beauty and heroism of Jeanne d'Arc. Perhaps," and here *la petite grand'mère* smiled enigmatically, "perhaps it is because he is a humorist, but I assure you that he has understood the heart of a woman, of a heroine, and it is the same, be it French or Polish or American. In heroism there is no distinction of sex or race."

I drew nearer to *la petite grand'mère,* for I felt a warmer feeling at the heart and a deeper thrill of sympathy for her and all she represented. If we had the same conceptions about the real things of life, of what little consideration were local ideas and provincial training and so-called national differences?

The moon was silvering the little lake as I sat for a while in my deep window, feeling the velvet air of night touch my cheeks. The trees here are too stately, the grounds too vast for me to feel a sense of intimacy, as I do with my dear wall-encircled garden in Paris. There we can whisper secrets to each other and the convent walls hold them fast, but here I scarcely dare think, lest some indiscreet breeze snatch my foolish thoughts and whirl and toss them to the other side of the *château,* and heaven knows who might hear them! But I do allow myself to think with a grateful glow of *la petite grand'mère* and her words.

There are words so unfortunately uttered that they fix themselves in the memory like milestones, where they stand as marks to show the distance which is separating us from our friends, while there are others so fitly spoken that they are like the warm pressure of a hand welcoming us to a new and lovely home.



XXI

When East Meets West

"East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet."

I DON'T know why this little couplet should have been ringing in my ears when I awoke in the morning on the day before we left the *château.* Perhaps it was because of the warm discussion we had had the evening before, when the Patriot broke forth into a tirade against the poetical tricks of such writers as Kipling, and showed an animosity that would have been painful had it not been slightly ludicrous. The couplet haunted me in the obsessive and annoying

way a jingle sometimes has, even when I mounted and rode away with Philippe on our long-planned-for ride to the town by the sea. I amused myself by teaching it to him and then teased him laughingly about his accent. He speaks his vowels so musically and touches his consonants so lightly that he even inflates our wretched little definite article with some self respect.

The morning was glorious, with the sunshine flooding all the hills and lighting up the still dewy valleys. The joy of just being was an intoxication and my heart beat with the happiness of living, a happiness that invaded every part of me and made my nerves tingle deliciously. It was just the kind of morning to have a good horse under you, to feel yourself one with him, and to gallop over the hard roads, the breeze blowing against your face, and never a care in your mind as to when it would end, to feel exultingly that you could gallop on thus forever to the other side of the world. We did not talk very much. In the first place we could n't, for conversation cannot very well be carried on when your horses are taking long swinging leaps and the wind makes a rushing noise in your ears, and in the second place it had been rather hard to talk to

Philippe for the last day or two. Something seemed to have clouded our lovely friendship.

Philippe has, ever since I first knew him, been a dear audacious fellow and I've let him say nice poetic things to me that seemed all right, because they had a real literary value. Besides, he nearly always talked this way when other people were around. Of course no one heard what he said, but there was always danger of some one overhearing, and that made it seem all right for me to listen. When we happened to be really alone, we always talked of very serious things, of his work on Pascal, of the career of diplomat which his father wanted him to follow, of poetry and literature and all sorts of nice things. But since we came to the *château* it 's been different. The atmosphere perhaps has changed things. At any rate I don't feel that I can say trifling things here and it seems that every one ought to be very simple and straight-forward and truthful. Maybe Philippe has felt a difference, too, for when we have been together he has n't been the same, and we both experience a preliminary awkwardness of self-consciousness before we get fairly launched into the conversation. It is n't a bit pleasant and it makes one surmise all sorts of

ridiculous things. I don't like to have to wonder whether a person likes me or not. I want to be very sure that he does, so that I can devote my energies and intellect to speculating on my own feelings in the matter.

Now, up to this time, I haven't worried at all as to Philippe's attitude toward me: I just knew he liked me and the only question that bothered me was how much I should let him like me. But here at the *château,* in this place where generations of culture look down on me, where I feel a certain heretofore unfelt, sharp contrast between my own crudity and the ripe wisdom of all about me, I have become suddenly very conscious of the difference between the mental culture of two or three generations and that of forty. When I think that the people at home consider me an uncomfortable phenomenon of learning, and speak of me as a person who is "real literary," I feel a sinking sensation and a hot flush comes to my cheeks. I try to uphold my courage with the reflection that we are a great people, that ancestors are much less important than posterity, that we have done marvels as a nation. All in vain. My dignity oozes out, and I feel very flabby and unfit to

appear among those I would fain impress. All these things had made us change places as it were, and now I found myself anxiously waiting for Philippe to begin a conversation, and I had to make several trials before I was really comfortably in the running. This was most humiliating, and I made vast efforts to conceal my real feelings and I kept wishing that things might go back to their old friendly way, when I, at least, had no doubts. Doubts are horrid, especially when you have them about yourself. On this particular morning the gallop broke down any artificial barriers that self-consciousness had set up, and when our horses fell into a slower gait I forgot all about analyzing myself and was simply happy. Philippe looked very tall and strong on his big bay horse and it was good to be beside him.

Our principal errand to the town by the sea was to visit Monsieur and Madame Dupont. Their plain and unromantic name gave no hint of the poetic story of their lives as Philippe told it to me that morning.

XXII

The Romance of Mademoiselle Donatienne

MANY years before Mademoiselle Donatienne Fabre was the belle of the town by the sea. She was tall and slim and dark-eyed, with the gayest of natures and the tenderest of hearts. She loved old women and children best, and the young men of the town sighed in vain for her. There was one in particular, a quiet silent fellow who was known as old *mère* Dupont's son. His father had been watchmaker and jeweler to the town and when he died *la mère* Dupont carried on the business and brought up Pierre under a rule of iron. Pierre was now nominal master, but the legend over the shop *Dupont veuve, successeur,* spoke the truth, for the Widow Dupont still ruled and Pierre was a dutiful and submissive son. The widow Dupont was very large and stout, with sparkling black eyes and cheeks of rosy red, but the corners of her mouth were drawn lugubriously down, and before the public she always presented the pic-

ture of the inconsolable one, the light of whose life had gone out. Behind the closed shutters, however, and when alone with Pierre, her activities were devoted to devising ways and means by which the tidy sum left by the lamented Dupont should be doubled and perhaps trebled. Pierre had a soul for other things, he lacked acquisitiveness, he had a taste for romance and poetry which he surreptitiously fed by furtive reading of the *feuilleton,* or by a stray copy of Bernardin de St. Pierre, or Chateaubriand, that fell in his way. But he was a dutiful soul and so he plodded along his daily rounds and never disputed with his filial destiny but replied mildly to her oft repeated and irritatingly minute injunctions, "*Mais oui, ma mère, ne t'inquiète pas*——"

But when once the radiance of Mademoiselle Donatienne's beauty had lighted up the soul of the faithful Pierre it was destined never to grow dim and the love awakened glowed steadily through storm and sunshine. Pierre, alas! was not handsome. He was short and showed an early predisposition to stoutness. His face was round, his features undistinguished, but his soul was poetic even though consigned to the most prosaic and homely of earthly tenements of clay.

And so he worshipped Mademoiselle Donatienne, at first at a distance and then gradually emboldened, he came nearer to his divinity. His mother's violent opposition developed in him a gentle obstinacy which nothing could move. The widow Dupont had other plans for *Dupont fils, successeur,* and had already made overtures to a neighboring maiden lady of a certain age who possessed property, and a large nose, which was always red at the end. So the widow Dupont looked with strong disfavor on her son's leaning toward the fair Donatienne and resolved to break it off promptly. But Pierre showed an inactive resistance to all her efforts, which baffled her completely.

Then came a tragedy into the life of Donatienne. A dimness came over her bright eyes and, when they took her to a famous Paris doctor, who was at the neighboring seaside resort, he shook his head and said there was little hope, that perhaps some time later on there might be an operation, but for the present it must mean darkness. So Donatienne passed from happy daylight into black night, but her courage never forsook her. She was less gay and she was more tender than ever with little children. Her

lovers forsook her, of course, for none of them could think of undertaking the burden of a blind wife. Pierre alone was faithful and despite his mother's commands, taunts, and finally entreaties, he continued to go steadily to the little house where Mademoiselle Donatienne sat doing interminable knitting. He read to her and talked to her, but he did more of the former than of the latter, for he had never been very articulate. Finally, during a fit of rage, the widow Dupont was stricken with paralysis and her sharp tongue was silenced. Her huge frame lay helpless on the bed and refused to do the bidding of the mind that still seemed active, and that strove to express its will in the restless fierce black eyes that followed every movement in the room. After a year of this enforced silence on his mother's part, Pierre dared to tell Mademoiselle Donatienne of his love and begged her to marry him, but she refused to bring to him an added burden. She was poor, but she could help to support herself, and she was happy in his friendship. None of his arguments or prayers availed with her, for Pierre became eloquent in the eagerness of his desire.

The years passed. The widow Dupont clung fiercely to life, as if she knew that only thus could she keep her son from marrying a blind wife. Pierre grew bald and stout; Mademoiselle became more and more Madonna-like. She was always knitting, and she always had some children about her, except when Monsieur Pierre came, and then either because of established custom or from instinct they were left alone. Pierre would read from the *Petit Journal,* and when that had been discussed he would bring out a well-worn copy of Chateaubriand and read of the ill-fated love and wildly improbable lives of Atala and Chactas. Once in a while at some melancholy plaint of the gloomy hero, or at some new misfortune of the beautiful heroine, Mademoiselle Donatienne would wipe away a tear and Monsieur Pierre would stop, pull out a huge handkerchief, unfold it, apply the exact middle of it to the offending member, and blow violently.

But there came a morning when the widow Dupont did not open her eyes, and the helpless body that had been still for so long took on a more rigid look. Pierre dutifully arranged for an imposing funeral and he ordered an enormous

purple bead wreath to be laid on the coffin, the like of which had never been seen in the town by the sea.

A few days after the funeral Monsieur Pierre with a half-concealed look of satisfaction went into the room, which had been occupied by his mother, and opened a chest, which had remained firmly closed ever since his mother's illness. He unlocked it now without the least hesitation, drew therefrom a plump woollen stocking and emptied its contents on the table. When he had counted the coins his satisfaction became quite open, and with a smile on his face he gathered the money together, took it to the old notary and asked for bank notes. The next morning there was a great stir in the town by the sea, for it was rumored, then stated as a fact, that Monsieur Pierre had taken the early morning train for Paris. The *chef de gare* himself had sold him his ticket and when he had said to him, with casual cunning, " Monsieur Dupont goes to Paris to see about the inheritance? " Monsieur Pierre had only smiled and said enigmatically, " The weather is about to change and we shall have sunshine to-day."

The stir of the first day was but as the gentle

breeze to the roaring tornado compared with the excitement produced when, two days after, Monsieur Pierre was seen descending from the Paris train, accompanied by a tall man, who walked beside Monsieur Pierre with a quick, business-like air. They went directly, not to the house still bearing the legend *Dupont veuve, successeur,* but, most astounding thing of all, to the house of Mademoiselle Donatienne Fabre. They disappeared therein, and then the excitement took voice and it was said that this was the famous surgeon, who could perform marvellous cures on the blind, and that he had come on purpose to heal Mademoiselle Donatienne. And when the children heard this, some of them took to crying softly lest their beloved Ma'mselle might be hurt. Everything was known by nightfall, and it was the talk at all the little *café* restaurants that Monsieur Pierre had taken his mother's hoarded money — they all knew she was an old miser — and had gone to Paris to bring the great man down who was to remove the blindness from Ma'mselle. The operation would be in the morning and no one might know how it would turn out. When, the next morning, the surgeon was seen to go to Mademoiselle Donatienne's, a

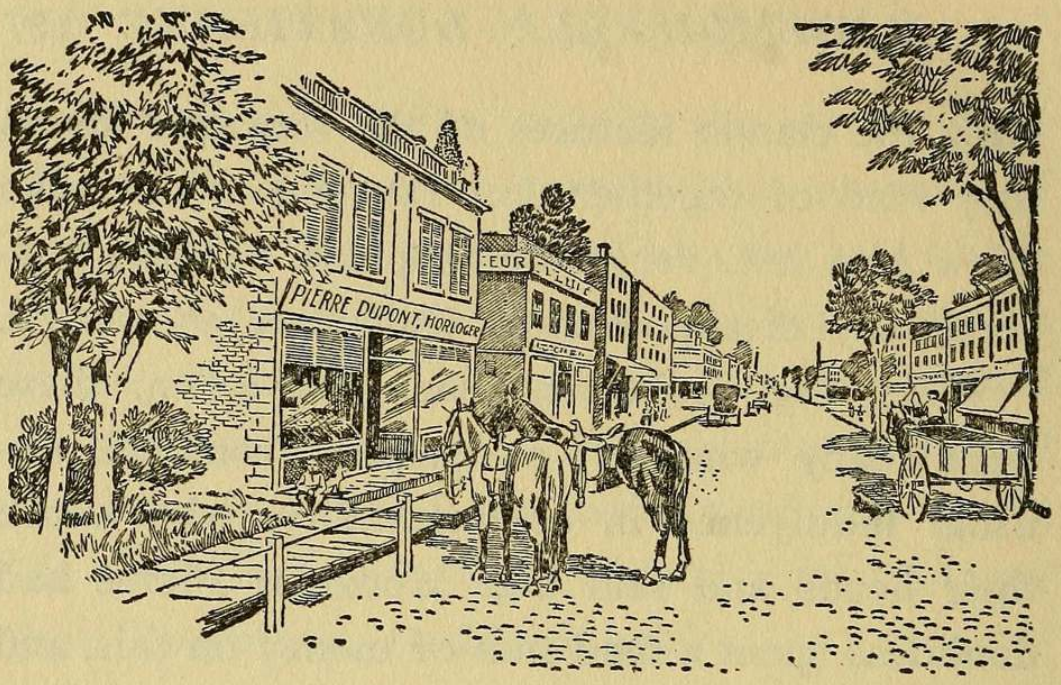
great hush fell on the town by the sea and their silence spoke more eloquently than prayers, of how close to the hearts of all was the fate of the Madonna-faced blind woman. As for Monsieur Pierre, no one saw him, for he had shut himself up in his mother's room, behind the shop, and the iron shutters of the night were still down. He would not have them opened until he knew that Donatienne would see again..

After a time of agonizing suspense a whisper was heard, "It has been successful. He says that she will see again." The great surgeon went to Monsieur Pierre and after a while the little errand boy came running out and began winding up the shutters. The display of watches, *à tous prix,* glittered in the sunlight; and soon Monsieur Pierre, a little pale and trembling about the mouth, was at the disposition of the public.

The great surgeon went back to Paris the next morning and, after long days spent in a darkened room, Mademoiselle Donatienne came gradually back to the light, and the first human face she saw was the round smiling countenance of Monsieur Pierre — no longer the young face of the lover she remembered, not in the least resem-

bling the classic features of the romantic lovers they read of together, but fat, and to one who knew him not, very commonplace. If she suffered any disappointment she never showed it.

When the excitement had died down, there were many who felt a reaction from the unusual indulgence in sentimentality, who shook their heads and said that Monsieur Pierre had doubtless spent a mad sum of money on this, and that it was a question whether it was worth while to spend it on an old maid who had grown quite used to her condition, and who got along very nicely as it was. However, no one criticised when, one Saturday, Monsieur Pierre and Mademoiselle Donatienne went to the *mairie* and signed some papers and the next day received the priestly benediction. The sign of *Dupont veuve, successeur,* was painted over, and instead there appeared *Pierre Dupont, Horloger.*



XXIII

The Revelation

AS Philippe finished telling me this story our horses' hoofs struck the cobble stones of the long main street and we walked them up to the very sign of the story. Monsieur Pierre Dupont himself came out to greet us, looking as little like the hero of a romantic tale as it is possible to imagine. His rubicund visage beamed delightedly as he helped me dismount, and he was profuse in his thanks to Monsieur Philippe for having come all this distance to bring the annual greeting from the *château.* Madame Dupont would be enchanted to see us if we would pass to the salon. We went into the dark stuffy

little room beyond the shop. When my eyes had adjusted themselves to the twilight I saw on the centretable an old-fashioned copy of Atala.

I was somewhat prepared for the sweet spiritual face of Madame Dupont, whose large eyes seemed to look through surfaces down into the soul of things. But my imagination, fired by Philippe's way of telling a story, was not prepared for the matter-of-fact little household. I'm not sure that I had any definite idea of what I expected, but the outside of the simple *ménage* betrayed nothing of the romantic history of Monsieur and Madame Dupont, except of course the volume of Chateaubriand.

"I suppose that rotund little man is a hero in the eyes of Madame Dupont," quoth I, as we were going homeward.

"Yes, and she is to him the realization of a beautiful dream," said Philippe.

We were passing a little church in the bend of the road just outside the town. A white-robed procession of children was marching toward it. The little girls wore long white skirts, which they managed awkwardly but proudly, and veils floated over their thin shoulders. Some of them had an air of self-conscious

importance that showed itself in preoccupation with their dress, while others walked with downcast eyes and hands folded over their little prayer-books, touched by the mystic significance of the communion ceremony. The boys followed, dressed in new black suits, with bows of white satin ribbon floating from their shoulders, and broad white collars. The proud parents walked alongside, but at some distance from the procession, looking with satisfied eyes on the little brides of Christ and feeling that the last great step in the religious training of their children was about to be accomplished. The more provident of the peasant mothers had baskets with little cakes of *brioche* in them, so that as soon as the spiritual necessities of their children had been ministered unto, they might feed their poor fasting bodies with something delectable and substantial.

We halted a moment to look at them and passed on, touched by the sight, and silent. Suddenly I heard an exclamation from Philippe, and looking up I saw an automobile coming at breakneck speed down the road. As it came nearer we noticed that it had a curious swaying motion as though not well controlled. We rode

up on the side out of its way. I looked at Philippe. He was staring at the oncoming car with a hard, strained look. I followed his gaze and noticed that there was no one in the car but the chauffeur. He was sitting in a queer huddled way and his head moved foolishly with the jolts of the machine. As the car passed us Philippe cried, "*Mon Dieu, les enfants!*" and wheeled his horse, digging his spurs in deep. I think my horse must have been stunned, as was I. I turned and sat nervelessly watching. It came over me as a horrid dream that the chauffeur was ill and losing control of his car, that the machine was a frenzied living thing, mad with sudden hope of liberty, and that Philippe was galloping after. Faster and faster went his horse, and I watched. The nerveless feeling gave way to exulting pride in the man on the horse and then, just before they reached the turn in the road, to a gripping fear that made my heart beat with a stabbing pain. For I saw Philippe alongside, ahead; then I saw Philippe rise and he seemed to shoot off his horse into the car. I covered my eyes with my hands, and I found myself sobbing hard, dry sobs. Then I looked again. The car was out of sight. It

had made the turn. Philippe must have controlled it and, giving my startled horse a sudden cut of the whip, I dashed down the road. It had happened so quickly and we had felt so much in a few seconds, that it seemed quite natural to find near the church a procession disappearing into its cool aisles, a procession whose rear guard was somewhat distracted from the contemplation of holy things by the sudden advent of one of those wicked Parisian automobiles driven apparently by two reckless chauffeurs, and accompanied by a riderless horse. The machine had stopped suddenly just before it reached them, and now one of the drivers seemed to be asleep. Those Parisians were astonishing! The white-robed procession disappeared entirely, the murmured tones of a sleepy priest were heard and the rustling sound of a kneeling congregation.

The chauffeur died soon after. The physician whom we found said that racing men often died suddenly thus from an attack of the heart.

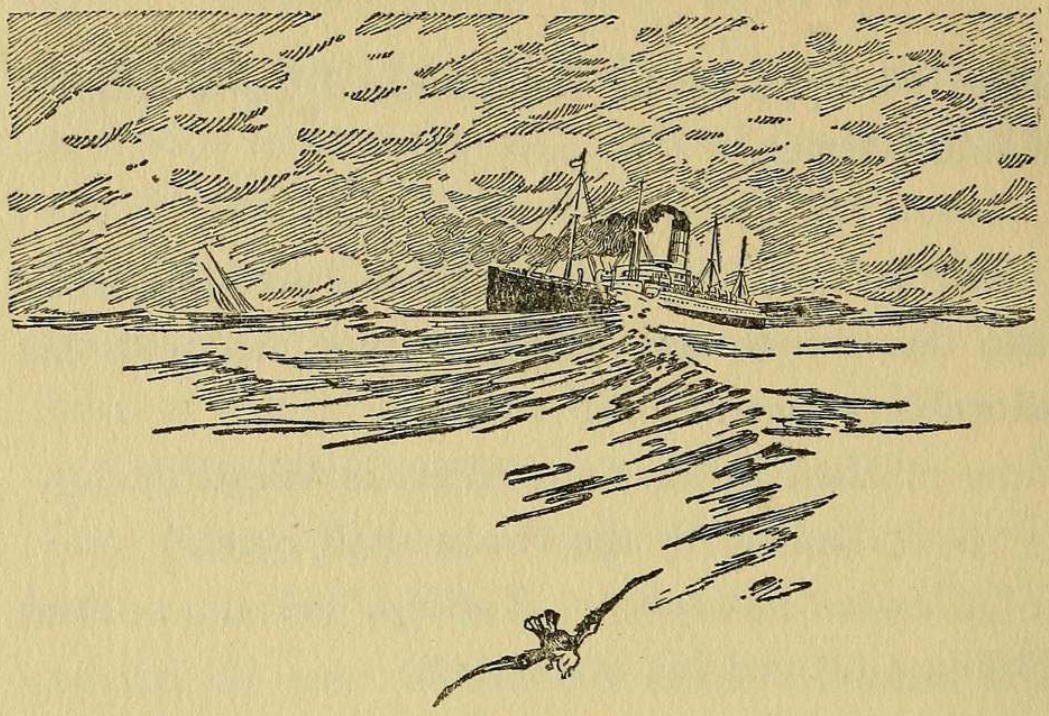
It was late when we at last reached the *château,* but as we rode home in the deepening twilight there was no doubt in my heart any longer and

when Philippe broke the silence I knew what I would answer.

The foolish little couplet of the morning came into our minds and Philippe repeated with his adorable accent:

"East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet."

"*C'est un menteur, ce Kipling.*" . . . And Philippe proved his statement.



XXIV

Evening in the Garden

THE *château* had now new memories clustering about it, and yet I was glad to come back to Paris. Only a few days were left before going to my real home across the sea. Was it to be my real home any longer? We had decided to keep our secret until Philippe could come and conquer the Anglo-Saxon. Not even the gentle Hostess was to know until paternal consent had been obtained. Only the Garden was to know.

The last evening came all too soon. It was a Friday just before the Fête Dieu. Philippe had come to dinner and as the evenings had grown longer there was a bit of twilight after we came

from the dining room and before Lucien lighted the lamps. Philippe was beside me on the balcony. *La petite grand'mère,* who feared a *courant d'air,* was seated in the salon with the gentle Hostess and little Germaine. Their voices, grown so dear to me, came in broken phrases as though the parting had already begun.

Philippe and I looked out into the twilight. Down in the convent garden, separated from ours by the low ivy-covered wall, the seven or eight remaining nuns, not yet driven from their home, had been gliding softly and quickly about among the paths. These poor nuns wore an air of pathetic sorrow, for they were in daily expectation of being compelled to leave the quiet home that had been theirs for years. They were glorified by the tragic beauty of something that is about to pass away. When the shadows grew deeper and the tall trees looked black against the silvery sky, we saw these silent sisters flit from place to place on the grass, stoop, rise and pass on. And everywhere they stopped they left a wavering greenish light like a captive glow worm. These spots of light grew here and there in the grass, and marked the trail of the black-robed figures as they passed from bush to low branch-

ing tree. In the shadiest part of the Garden, where the trees grew close together and the bushes crowded at their feet and the vines swung low, there stood a meek drooping figure of the Virgin. About her the lights glowed more radiantly and the rude carven stone took on a softened human outline, and Our Mother of Sorrows seemed to look with gentle and infinite pity on the sad little scene before her. For now there came from the convent door a solemn procession of black-robed figures, gliding like shadows down the winding paths past the huge glow worms in the grass and filing around the image of their Lady. As they walked they chanted in the clear, high passionless tones of those who live out of the world, or who do not know it yet. The hymn was addressed to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, an appeal to one who had known deepest anguish from those who were passing through deep waters of affliction. A silence fell upon them when they at last stood before the image, and then the sweet high monotone of the oldest sister rose and fell as she repeated the prayers, which were punctuated by murmured replies, like a sudden rustling in the leaves. After the last Amen the clear soprano voices

were heard again, the song rose with a more poignant note, and the shadows glided back around the winding paths and melted away into the darkness of the convent. Then the glow worms died one by one, the Virgin grew more still and faded into the whispering background, and the Garden was dark and silent save for the twittering of a sleepless bird.

The morning has come and I must say good-bye. All the world is astir. The sun is shining gloriously, the merle is gayly and heartlessly singing his farewell and cares little for the pang I feel at leaving him.

Jean has come early with the *voiture à galerie* and is already busy with Lucien taking down my trunks. Jean, our old Breton butler, brought me over from America and he feels that no one else can successfully take care of Mademoiselle. He has had a happy vacation on the Breton sands and is going back with a profound contempt for French kitchens, and their lack of modern improvements.

I swallow my coffee, but cannot swallow the lump in my throat. Then quickly I turn to embrace Germaine, still half asleep, and *la petite*

grand'mère, who says, "If it were only *au revoir,* but for me it is adieu," and then my perfect Hostess. Hurriedly I run down the stairs to hide my tears, and into the waiting carriage. Up at the window and framed by it, are the faces of those who have been so dear to me during the last months. *La petite grand'mère* calls out to Jean, "Take good care of our dear Mademoiselle," and Jean, striking a fine attitude, replies, "With the French Government guarding the American Republic, nothing can go wrong!"

The driver whips up his horses, we go clattering out of the stone-paved court and into the streets. The great green doors close upon me and now they seem to look benevolently at me as if to say, "Never fear, we shall guard your Garden and keep it fresh and cool and sweet. It will wait for you and when you come back, whether weary and disappointed, or glad and exulting, it will be here to calm you or to comfort you and to give you great joy."

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