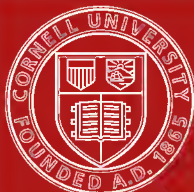
The PLEASANT WAYS OF ST. MEDARD



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924022036119

Cornell University Library
PS 2177.P7 1916

The pleasant ways of St. Médard,

3 1924 022 036 119 olin

THE PLEASANT WAYS OF ST. MÉDARD

BY

GRACE KING

NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1916

A. 387862

COPYRIGHT, 1916,
BY
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

Published August, 1916

To

The Memory of my Brother

BRANCH MILLER KING

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	3
A Journey Into a Far Country	11
Mademoiselle Mimi	47
Peace, Gentle Peace	77
Walking the Rainbow	106
"It Was a Famous Victory"	126
Tommy Cook	145
The Institut Mimi	157
Cribiche	172
Jerry	182
The San Antonios	202
A Bad Part of the Road	224
Mademoiselle Coralie	246
The Feast of St. Médard	267
The Faithful Warrior	281
At the Villa Bella	316
The Turning of the Road	332

THE PLEASANT WAYS OF ST. MÉDARD

INTRODUCTION

Do you remember, you who can remember as much as fifty years ago, when your ears hardly reached above the dinner table, the stories your elders used to tell over the wine and nuts?—stories about their time and their people, their youth and their doings; their ten, twenty, forty years ago. What stupendous elders they were! Truly to the opened eyes of the children looking up to them they were, indeed, as mountains walking or talking. And what stupendous tales they told of those dim prehistoric ages before our birth! What great things they had done in hunting and fishing, riding, and electioneering—aye, in fighting too; with the Indians, with the British in 1812, with the Mexicans, with the Spaniards, when they went filibustering to Cuba—even in the Revolutionary War, and with Napoleon, or escaping from the insurrection of the negroes in San Domingo. For what they did not of themselves achieve, their fathers and grandfathers achieved, and it all seemed the same to them in their stories, as it did to their listeners.

Ah, what fathers and grandfathers they had, and what wonderful men and women they had known! The children who listened then have never met the like of them in their long life since. Yet Heaven knows how patiently they have looked for them, and how gladly they would have welcomed the sight of them.

What a pleasant world that was, to be sure, into which we were born fifty years ago in New Orleans; what a natural, what a simple world! Then there was but one truth, one right, that of Papa, than whom alone the Father in Heaven above was greater but hardly more feared. That tall, dignified gentleman to whom his wife said "Sir," and his servants "Master," whose frown was a terror to his children, and his caress an awesome favor; who descended every morning from his silent apartment, as from a cloud, to breakfast in majesty alone; to whom there was but one easy means of approach, one sure intermediary, Mama, whose sweet nature and angelic presence so enfolded him that the sharp blade of his temper was as safely sheathed in it, as his flashing sword in his ebony walking stick. She was so pale and delicate-looking in her ruffles and laces, with her mysterious retirements to her apartment, through whose hushed and dimmed atmosphere (wherein the furniture took vast and strange proportions) the frightened children at stated intervals were pushed and jerked by whispering nurses to the great lace-curtained bed, and made to kiss some baby or other, some loathesome, red, little baby. It was brought there, we knew, by that hideous, wrinkled purveyor of babies, old Madame Bonnet, who had a wart covered with long hairs on her chin, and whose only tooth stuck out from her upper gum; the very image of the evil fairy, pictured in the *Magasin des Enfants,* the nursery authority then on fairies. Children would as soon have touched the devil as her, or her covered basket under the foot of the bed, in which she had brought the baby. And so, after the Mama had given them some *dragées* from the glass bowl

on the table at the side of the bed, they would creep out of the room, shrinking as far as possible from the nefarious figure sitting in her low squat chair.

And do you remember how those great Papas of ours went to war? And how God did not act towards them as they would have acted towards Him, had they been God and He a Southern gentleman? And how they came back from the war—those that did come back, alas! —so thin, dirty, ragged, poor, unlike any Papas that respectable children had ever seen before? If they had strutted in buskins of yore, as they had been accused of doing by their enemies, rest assured they footed it now in bare soles. And do you remember what followed? Families uprooted from their past and dragged from country to city, and from city to country, in the attempt to find a foothold in the rushing tide of ruin sweeping over their land. Outlawed fathers, traveling off to Egypt, Mexico, South America, in search of a living for wife and children, even into the enemy's own country. Some of them, with dazzling audacity, changing to the politics (or principles, as politics were then called) of the conquerors, for the chance of sharing in their own spoliation. And these, in memory, seemed always to have traveled the farthest from us. Some fathers of families, however, did nothing more adventurous than to submit to the will of God and His conditions (assuming Him to have been their judge and the arbiter in the war); these merely changed their way of living to the new conditions, retiring with their families to the outskirts of the city, where houses were cheap, living simple, and the disturbing temptations of society out of the question.

These were the ones, in truth, who had the most adventures afterwards in the quest for fortune. A living was a fortune then, setting themselves to work in the primitive fashion of their forefathers, when they faced a new country and new conditions. But in the wilds of a virgin forest and surrounded by savage Indians these had advantages that their descendants learned to envy.

The fighting the Papas had done in war was nothing to the fighting they did afterwards, for bread and meat; and the bitterness of their defeat there was sweetness compared to the bitterness that came afterwards. Bayonet in hand was easier to them than hat in hand.

And the delicate luxurious Mamas, who had been so given to the world, reading and weeping over fictional misfortunes—there were some of them who lived to weep for the security of food and shelter, once possessed by their slaves.

Saddest of all these memories, and not the least to be wondered at, the man who once had the most friends was the one who in need found the fewest. The old friends to whom we used to listen over the dinner table, who told such fine tales of adventure, courage, gallantry, wit, that we placed them in our hearts second only to our Papa and third after God, do you remember—but who does not remember?—how in the struggle for life that followed the tempest of ruin they yielded to the tide of self-interest, veering and swaying from their anchorage, often indeed cutting loose and sailing clear out of sight, leaving their crippled companions behind to shift for themselves? It was considered lucky when the deserter did not also turn betrayer and come back to

act the pirate upon his old comrades. Starvation is a great dissolvent of friendship, as the shipwrecked have found more than once.

Poverty is a land to which no one goes willingly, which all strive instinctively to avoid. There seems to be no rest or ease in it. Who goes there old is buried there. The young spend their lives trying to get out of it. But the way out of it is narrow and steep, like the path to Heaven. It almost seems to be the path to Heaven, so hard is the struggle to get through it. It is white with the bones of those who have died in it, as the way to Jerusalem was once with the bones of the Crusaders. Some, giving up the struggle, settle there, marry, and have children there; little ones who never lose the mark of their nativity. The trampling of the hard-footed necessities has told upon them; their hearts are furrowed by the track of hopes passing into disappointments. They know no other land than poverty, and are haunted by strange misconceptions of the land of the rich; the people who live in it and the people who get to it.

Who of us, who now inherit want as surely as our fathers did wealth, has not at one time or another made a pilgrimage to that Gibraltar of memory, the home of our childhood, of our Olympian beginnings? Leaving behind us the sordid little rented house in which care and anxiety have whitened the hair and wrinkled the face, we have threaded the streets to stand on the sidewalk opposite some grim, gaunt, battered old brick mansion, filled with shops below and a mongrel lot of tenants above, trying to fit our past into or upon it. "Is that the balcony," we ask ourselves, "from which

on gala days we used to look upon a gala world? Did that grim story hold our nursery, where of mornings we used to lie and watch the white angels pictured on the blue tester of our bed, and once caught them in the act of moving their wings? Was it there, when we woke suddenly at night, that the awful flickering of the taper in the corner, now brightening, now darkening the room, frightened us, opening and shutting, opening and shutting, like the terrible eye of God? Is that the doorway through which our great Past made its entrance and exit? Is that the court-yard where our slaves worked for us? That the building in which they were born to work for us? No, no!"

To you who have not made that pilgrimage, I say, do not attempt it; you will never find what you seek. Thread the way to it only in memory, if you would find it. And yet, ye who have been in this land we have described, who have buried some of your old ones there, and it may be some of your young ones, who have spent your life trying to get out of it, or helping others dearer than yourself on their way out of it, what think you of it, after all? What in truth found you there in default of the one lack that sent you there? Love, hope, courage, light in darkness, strength in weakness, fortitude under injustice, self-respect in the face of indignity and humiliation—did ye not find them growing there, growing naturally, not cultivated artificially as they are of necessity in that other and upper land? Was less truth to be met there, or more falsehood from others, less self-sacrifice, less wifely devotion or family loyalty, than in the land of your lost inheritance? Did you find the slim purse less charitable than the fat one, the heart under

the shabby cloth less sympathetic than the one under the fine?

And—but there is no use to ask it—whatever the land of poverty lacks, it lacks not ideals; the beautiful ones that, as Schiller sings, fly from us one by one with our youthful years, leaving us at last to fare on alone without them to old age. They, as we know, wing their way more fondly down than up the narrow path, toward the cradle in the hovel, rather than to the one in the palace.

THE PLEASANT WAYS OF ST. MÉDARD

A JOURNEY INTO A FAR COUNTRY

THE Parish of St. Médard used to be as far away from Canal Street, the center of life in New Orleans, as a slow moving mule could drag a car in an hour's time. It lay in the " faubourg Créole " the lower suburb of the city, the extremity that stretched down the Mississippi River. As cities progress upstream, not down, the other extremity was, ipso facto, as one may say, the American quarter. In it mules and cars traveled faster and distances were shorter than in the faubourg of the descendants of the old French and Spanish population. The limit of St. Médard, in truth the last street in the city, was held fixed by the buildings and grounds of the United States barracks whose tall fence ran in a straight line from the river to the end of the cleared land, almost to the woods in the distance, barring inflexibly any advance in that direction. Beyond the barracks stretched the open country; the rural and ecclesiastical domain of another saint, a region of farms and plantations.

On a bright May morning of 1865, the waiting St. Médard car on Canal Street was taking in its usual tale of passengers: Gascon gardeners and dairymen going home from the markets, soldiers on their way to the barracks, Creole residents of the quarter, and gentry

belonging to the plantations along the river, when there entered it, comers, new to the driver and to his patrons; an American family, father, mother, and four small children followed by their negro servants, a man, his wife, and their three half-grown daughters carrying baskets and bundles innumerable, the awkward bundles and baskets of country people. Curious enough looking, doubtless, they were to the eyes observing them but not unique as specimens of their kind at that date. All over the city, every day, other cars might be seen receiving just such passengers to carry from one home to another, from one condition to another, nay, from one life to another, ferrying them in their jog-trot passages in truth, like so many barks of Charon from a past to a future.

The father, a tall, thin, erect, scholarly-looking man, singularly handsome of face, was dressed in black broadcloth which, with his clean-shaven face, betokened at that time a gentleman of the profession. His wife, fair of hair and skin, was dressed in the grotesque and obsolete fashion of a half dozen years before. The children wore homespun and alligator hide shoes, the little girls, sunbonnets, the boys, or at least one of them, a palmetto straw hat, the other one was bareheaded. The negroes in their clean, coarse plantation clothes looked dazed and stupid; the woman, murmuring to herself all the time, without knowing it: "My God, my God!" All sat stiff and rigid, serious and half frightened.

The clouds of war had at last rolled by and the sun of peace was shining in full force again, but the city was still heavily garrisoned; companies of white and negro

soldiers in bright blue uniforms were marching through the streets, orderlies with papers in their belts, dashing by on horseback, officers glittering with golden braid and buttons and epaulettes, strode the sidewalks, dominating the soberly clad civilians in a manner quite out of proportion to their numbers, bands of newly freed negroes, ragged and dirty, the marks of the soil still upon them, straggled along, leisurely impeding the way of other pedestrians as they gazed about them. Confederate soldiers, still in their shabby gray, were to be seen everywhere; gaunt, gray, hungry-looking animals, fiercely eying the smartly-dressed soldiery that had conquered them, and now owned their city.

The sharp eyes of the children, roving restlessly about and springing back in quick rebound from the sight of the soldiers, seemed to see nothing that pleased them, that is nothing they were accustomed to. Even their Mama was as strange to them as everything else in her unnatural costume. They might well ask themselves, looking askance at her, if she were the same Mama they knew on the plantation, who used to go around in a homespun dress and alligator shoes; the dress that they had watched growing as cotton in the fields, and had seen spun, woven, and dyed by their own negro women; the shoes, from an alligator that they had seen swimming in their own Bayou, and which Jerry, over there, had shot, skinned, and tanned the hide to make into shoes. A sunbonnet then covered the head that now wore the ugly bonnet trimmed with great pink roses and broad blue ribbons. And yet, how often, when the little girls had been ill and restless with fever on the plantation, had their Mama taken her city bonnet as she called it

out of its careful wrappings and showed it to them as the greatest treat possible. It seemed beautiful to them then, and it always quieted them although it had no effect on the little boys and when she related to them how she had bought it at Florette's and what Florette had said and what Papa had said about it, it was the most interesting story, in truth she could tell them. The little boys never would listen to it but the little girls, even with the fever burning in their veins, could have listened forever to tales about Florette's wonderful shop and the beautiful things she sold. But now when they were on the very Canal Street that their Mama used to talk so winningly about, when their car was standing just in front of Florette's glamorous shop, they did not think of it nor did their Mama remind them of it! When the car started, children and servants gave a portentous start with it. The plantation! the plantation! the fields! the woods! the negro quarters! the sugar house! the stables! the blacksmith shop! the corn mill! the mules, cows, chickens! the Bayou! the Bayou! . . . The car seemed to wrench their hearts from it all. And from the steamboat, too, which during their five days' journey, they had learned to love and now regretted as passionately as the plantation. How proud they were to see it steaming up their Bayou and stop at their wharf! The greatest and grandest thing they had ever seen, greater and grander surely than anything in the world. How strange and small they felt upon it at first and oh! how curious it was to be nosing their way in and out of bayous and lakes, just missing a snag here or running into a bank there and nearly capsizing in a wind storm, one day in the middle of a lake when the captain cursed

so loud that they understood why the crew called him Captain Devil. They could hear him and the mate kicking and cuffing the crew above the noise of the storm as their Mama held them around her in the cabin. The storm began by blowing off Billy's hat and he had been bareheaded ever since. When they got into the Mississippi, what a surprise that was! A hundred times larger it was than their own Bayou, the biggest stream, they had thought, in the world. And what great plantations on both banks! They did not know that there were such big plantations in the world. Their own plantation had been the biggest in the world to them before. It shrank suddenly to a sorrowfully small one, as small as their steamboat, alongside the great steamboats at the city wharf. They were almost ashamed of the Bayou Belle then and they whispered to one another: "Oh! I wish she were bigger."

The father paid no attention to soldiers, negroes, passengers, or anything else, so absorbed was he in what he was telling his wife. He had been in the city or according to the expression of the time, back from the war, two weeks; she had arrived that morning from a plantation, so remote and isolated in forest and swamp that news of the progress of the war, even, came to it only in slow, straggling, roundabout ways. She would not have known that it was over if her husband had not hurried to her from his camp with the news. Of what had happened in the city, of the home she had left there, she had heard nothing, since she had left it to its fate at the hand of a victorious enemy.

Her husband was telling her a strange story indeed, of his adventures since he had parted from her on the

plantation, but she was not so much absorbed in it as he. Her blue eyes showed thoughts behind them other than the ones that lighted his dark eyes with heroic fire, and her wan delicate features grew more and more out of harmony with the full-blown, pink roses of the overhanging bonnet brim. Yet she could from time to time cast a look and smile of encouragement to her children and servants and at some call of youth and spirit, raise her long fair neck as proudly as if it bore the august head of her husband instead of her own.

A skiff here, a pirogue there, by cart, horse, or mule, on foot for many a mile, he had made his way through a country given over to lawlessness, a people demoralized, swarming freed negroes, an insolent soldiery, ruin, wretchedness, and despair, no one knowing what to do or where to begin work again in the uncertainty of what the victorious government intended further as punishment for the defeated. But the city! The anticipatory laugh at what was to come revealed a different face from the one that wore habitually a mask of stern hauteur; a frank, pleasant, companionable face. His wife smiled in anticipation with him. "Such a lot of ruined, ragged, hungry lawyers and ci-devant fine gentlemen! Each one trying to raise a little money, hunting some one to lend enough to pay for a decent suit of clothes, a night's lodging, and a little food; and all being dodged or refused by the smug money-makers among the old friends who had shrewdly stayed at home. Every pocket was buttoned up at the sight of a poor Confederate; and every day new arrivals from the armies or prisons, all about naked or starving, and all clamorous for news and 'views' of the situation, and every man

with a family somewhere to bring back. As I was walking along the street disconsolately, wondering what I should do next, whom should I meet but old Doctor Jahn, hobbling around just as he used to on his gouty feet.

"'Hello!' he said, 'you're back, are you?'

"'Yes,' I said, 'I'm back.'

"'Well, what are you going to do?'

"I told him, first of all, to bring my family from the plantation, find a home for them, and then go to work to make a living and educate the children; that as far as I could see, we were ruined, but that I had made a fortune once out of my profession and I could do it again. He nodded, smiled, and tapped me on the breast in his way: 'The first thing of all, my dear fellow, is for you to get out of these God-forsaken clothes and buy yourself a Christian appearance. You know we are great on our Christianity and our appearance now.' So he pulled me along by my arm, to a desk in some office and wrote me a check for a hundred dollars and hurried off.

"I rushed to a shop before any one could borrow of me and bought these clothes. Egad! I was actually ashamed to pay for them; it looked suspicious for me to have so much money, and the price, twenty-five dollars, seemed tremendous. Then I went straight to the levee and hunted up our old friend, Captain Devlin. Fortunately, he was just in with his boat. I gave him fifty dollars and told him to go and fetch you all here. 'In old times,' he said, 'it used to be two hundred and fifty dollars and a sugar crop besides.'"

The car left the broad street with handsome houses

behind it and entered a different district, that of the class that works for a living and lives for its work; the class of small houses and large families. Block after block of little cottages, hardly higher than the car itself, was passed; some of them no better than negro cabins on a plantation. Sometimes there would be a garden in front or at the side, and every now and then a cottage of brick and double-sized would be passed, protected from its surroundings by a high brick wall bristling on the top with broken glass; bananas, pomegranates, and crape myrtles stretching up above it. But this seemed a crest of prosperity; for blocks afterwards, the houses diminished in size and appearance, until a very hollow of poverty and squalor was reached. At short intervals, appeared a grocery, a drinking-shop, a bakery, at long ones, the church, school, or convent. On the low wooden steps of the little cottages sat women, sewing or nursing babies; around them on the sidewalk and in the gutters played their innumerable progenies of children, ranging in color, from the fairest skins, through all gradations of foreign complexions. The car went still slower through this quarter, for the streets, which had begun so handsome and broad at the beginning of the journey, grew ever narrower and more crooked. The driver was kept busy with his brakes and the plodding mule strained painfully over the accumulation of turns.

The husband, however, unconscious of street or gait, pursued his narrative:

"I thought it was then time to go to my office and see what had become of it. I knew that the building was still standing in its old place and that was about all I had been able to find out about it. I glanced at the names

in the doorway; mine was no longer there. I marched upstairs. On my old door was a fine, bright, new sign. What do you think I read on it? 'Thomas Cook, Attorney and Counselor-at-Law.'"

"Tommy Cook? Little Tommy Cook?"

"Tommy Cook and no other.

"I opened the door and walked in. 'Well, Tommy,' I said, 'What are you doing here?'

"He looked up, arose, and without any surprise at seeing me, answered: 'Taking care of your office as you told me, Sir.'

"I looked around. 'How did you manage it?'

"'I found a way, Sir.'

"'You did, did you?'

"'I stole it, Sir.'

"Well, that was literally what he did. He took down my name, put up his own. Who was to object, in all the stealing that was going on? And egad! he has business too."

"Tommy Cook! The little lame boy! Who used to brush your shoes and run your errands, and carry your law-books to court for you?"

"Well, he carried them for me this time, famously."

"But how can he be a lawyer without studying law?"

"I saw his license framed, hanging on the wall. And that was all I did see in the room different from the day I left it in his charge. The books were all there with the ledgers and papers in the bookcases, just as I left them.

"'T'was the only way to save them, Sir,' he said, 'to steal them myself.'

"I sat down in my old seat and he stood, as he used

to do, waiting for orders. I got all the news I wanted out of him and there is nothing on foot in the city that he does not know all about. I told him that the first thing we had to do was to find a house for you and the children . . ."

"You are sure," she said, interrupting him, hesitating and embarrassed, a flush mounting to her face: "You are sure, there is no hope still for our—our home." Her voice faltered. "I . . ."

He interrupted her. "Not the least in the world. As I told you this morning, it has gone with the rest."

He dismissed the subject, curtly, decisively, as he had done on the boat; but there was no dismissing it from her thoughts. She had not forgotten it an instant, since he had announced the fact to her. "I thought, maybe, that Tommy . . ."

"It was one of the first houses seized and confiscated," he interrupted her impatiently, and went on with what he was saying: "We looked for houses until I was tired out. Of course, with everybody coming back and wanting houses, no one I can tell you found the home he had left, if it was worth anything, for rents have gone up tremendously! The whole city seems to have been bought up by sharpers, who hold us in their hands, and squeeze us. At last Tommy found the place we are going to, for sixty dollars a month, and as prices go, it is a bargain."

She looked at the street they were going through. "I never was in this part of the city before, in my life."

"Nor I either until I came to look at the house. But we will find living cheap there. Tommy went all over the neighborhood; outside the barracks there is not an

American family in it. The barracks is a great drawback, but that is the reason the house is cheap; otherwise it would have been seventy-five dollars a month instead of sixty. It is worth about twenty. But the soldiers are troublesome only on pay-day, when ladies and children have to keep out of the cars and off the street. I had a time getting the furniture; everybody was buying just what I was; beds, tables, chairs, and we had to pay for the commonest the price we used to pay for the handsomest. You will find it all in the house, with a stove and some groceries; about all I could think of. We shall have to live economically, and educate the children . . ." and so on and so on.

He unfolded the map of the future before her in the quiet determination of manner and terse language characteristic of him, as if it were a campaign to be fought again. She let her mind follow his with her characteristic docility, embracing his views, adopting his conclusions, conceding that the great future was his, the husband's, the man's affair; the little future of daily life, hers, the woman's, according to the traditions of conjugal life in which she had been raised. But with all her acquiescence of heart and mind, she had presentiments—they were all she ever had to oppose to his clear reasoning. Somewhat like her freed negro servants she was not sure of what she was riding into and she could have murmured with Milly: "My God! My God!" without knowing what she was calling on Him for.

As their hearts had been wrenched from the plantation where they had passed their lives, so was her heart wrenched from the home and the part of the city where she had passed her life, the only home she had ever

known, to which, for four long years, she had been hoping to return, and for which her heart was now calling out with passionate longing.

What did Peace mean to her? What could it mean but to return to the past as she left it? The past! It had gone from her as if it had been a spoil of war. And as she saw it in her woman's way, her future, too, had been taken away from her as a spoil of war. She belonged to a period, a childhood, when parents of wealth secured the future of their children, as they called it. She was born into a secured future, so was her husband, so were their children. All of a sudden she was bereft of it. It had disappeared like a meteor from the sky. The prospect she had been looking at all her life was changed; another and a different one substituted. It was as if—for so also it came to her in her confused imagination—as if her husband, the man to whom she had been married for twelve years, that aristocratic gentleman with classic features and noble expression of countenance, should be divorced at a stroke from her; and a coarse, plain, common man substituted as her lord and master, the father of her children . . . and she had been no surer of her husband than she had been of her future.

About two-thirds of the route there was a station where passengers were transferred to an older, shabbier car, a stiffer mule and a rougher track. Three uptown cars were the regulated portion of the second car, and therefore it never started until well filled. Our family, being in the last car waited for, found but a poor accommodation of seats at their disposition and had to wedge themselves in wherever space could be procured by shoving. An old gentleman with a white beard, who

looked like the picture of General Lee, was sitting at the end of the seats; he reached forward and lifted one of the little girls and placed her beside him. As soon as she was seated, she lifted the cover of a little basket on her arm and looking into it with a bright smile, whispered: "Kitty, Kitty."

"What's its name?" asked the old gentleman beside her.

"I just call her Kitty now, because she's a kitten, you know."

"But what will you call her when she's grown up?"

"Oh! I don't know, Kitty still, I reckon."

"But you wouldn't like to be called Baby, after you are grown up, would you?"

"Oh! Mama calls me that now, most of the time."

"Yes, but you have a name."

"Oh, yes! My name is Marian, but they call me Polly, because I talk so much. Even Papa calls me Polly. That's Dickey, I mean Richard, over there and that's Billy with his hat off. His name is William and he's got a dog tied to that string in his hand. Bob is his name, because he's got a bob tail. Papa told Billy not to bring Bob with him, so Billy has to keep him hid under Milly's dress. That's Cicely, leaning against Mama. She has chills and fever. . . ."

Catching her mother's eye and a warning shake of the head, she stopped abruptly, but in a moment after, peeping at her basket and calling, "Kitty," she began again; "I hate the city, don't you hate the city? I think the city's so funny, don't you? Everything looks funny in it. Mama looks so funny, and don't Papa look funny? Billy says if he was Papa, he'd be ashamed

to go about in them clothes." She stopped short, frightened, and gave a quick look at her father. "I mean *those* clothes, I'm glad Papa didn't hear that, yes indeed," with a laugh. "He promised us that he would punish us next time we used *them* for *those,* like niggers, I mean negroes; and the next time Billy said it, he punished Billy. Billy don't say it no more now when Papa can hear him. And he makes us say saw instead of seen. I think it's funny to say saw for seen, don't you? But we don't say seen any more." . . .

Again the warning shake of the head stopped her for a moment.

"Them's Yankees over there. Ain't you glad you ain't a Yankee? They're so ugly, ain't they? I hate 'em. Don't you hate Yankees? Everybody hates Yankees, I reckon, except Yankees. We're going to live right by the Yankees, and Papa told us this mornin', before he took us off the boat, that he didn't want to hear no more such talk about hatin' Yankees and that we mustn't go about tellin' people how we hated 'em. That ladies and gentlemen didn't talk that way, and that we were ladies and gentlemen and he expected us to behave like ladies and gentlemen. But Billy says he's goin' to kill every one he sees when he's a man and so is Dickey——

"I would hate to be a Yankee wouldn't you?" she resumed when her mother took her eye from her. "I wouldn't be one, and havin' people prayin' for me."

"Praying for Yankees. Who prays for Yankees?" asked the old gentlemen.

"Mama makes us pray for 'em because they're our enemies and she says we must forgive 'em too, and

anyhow, the more we hate 'em the more we must pray for 'em. Pshaw! I'm glad I'm not an enemy to have people forgivin' me. Billy says he's goin' to train Bob to bark at 'em," and she laughed gleefully. "I would like to live on a steamboat, wouldn't you? But you ought to hear the Captain curse! Billy can curse just like him. Billy says he's goin' to be a steamboat captain when he's a man. But Dickey ain't. Dickey's goin' back to the plantation and I'm goin' with him. It's too funny in the city. Have you ever been on the Bayou Belle? I tell you we had a bully, I mean a nice, time on her." . . .

After the Station, the track ran over a rough country road with a deep ditch on each side, crossed by ragged-looking lanes. On the left, beyond the gardens, dairies and open fields, stretched the outline of the forest in the distance. To the right, the river could be seen by glimpses between the great groves of magnolia trees that surrounded the houses facing it. An exhilarating breeze blew fresh and strong from that direction. The children craned their necks to look at the Gascons toiling in their gardens; whole families, from the grandmother in her headkerchief, to little children, raking, hoeing, gathering vegetables and working the great long swinging poles over the wells.

Even the eyes of the negro servants brightened with intelligence at the familiar sight of it. Billy, who had made his way to the platform, could be heard excitedly imparting his sentiments about cows and gardening to the driver who seemed to welcome any distraction of his attention from the hard, dry, belabored back of his mule —no more sensitive to the whip than a painted wooden back would be.

The Gascons slipped off one by one as the car went along. The negroes left in a body at a path that led to a great brick ruin of a building—" the Settlement "—they called it. At last, long after patience had come to an end, the journey came to its end also. The soldiers made a bolt for front and rear door; the other passengers waiting for them to pass. By the time the American family were out of the car with their baskets and bundles, the driver had taken his dram at the corner barroom; for this flower of civilization which had followed the track through the length of the city bloomed here also at the end of it.

" And now," said the father cheerily, " we must foot it awhile." The sidewalk consisted of a plank fastened upon the ground along which the party could advance only in single file. He took the lead; wife, children and servants tailing after him, he turning his head and calling out to them, his handsome face aglow with animation. He was never so animated and eager and never looked so handsome as when leading up to some hard pass, some breach of disappointment. The plank walk ran in front of a row of new, brightly painted little cottages, set so closely together that the lounging men and women on the steps could talk to one another, as if they were seated on a long bench. The women appeared only half dressed in their loose sacques and gowns and with their hair in disorder. The men were soldiers, but they seemed more abashed as the little procession passed in front of them than the women did.

Across the street was the high fence inclosing the barracks grounds. Soldiers were drilling inside; from the noise, the place seemed filled with them. Further

on, towards the river, the officers' quarters could be seen through their surrounding groves of trees. Over it all, above trees and buildings, above everything but the blue sky, waved the United States flag.

The head of the little procession, turning sharply to the right, strode down the opening that served for a street. Its ruts and holes had been baked by the sun to stony hardness; but the little feet stumbled along over it, following the resolute tread in front without lagging or complaining. Children and negroes looked around them joyfully for they were in the country, the dear country again. The low-lying blue heavens overhead, flecked with white clouds, was the country sky; the bright, hot sun was the country sun they knew so well. The weeds growing rank and wild along the sides of the road, the droning bees, the mosquito hawks, darting hither and thither among the leaves and flowers, as well as the breeze that blew fitfully, just as it used to blow over the fields,—all that was the country, not the city. The sound of chickens, geese and ducks, the smell of manure; what a glad exchange this was for the long ride in the car!

Again they were wheeled abruptly, and led alongside an old, swaying fence, with an inside hedge of wild orange whose branches touched the heads of the taller ones among them. At a gate in this fence, stood a little bare-footed boy, who at sight of them, darted away, screaming at the top of his voice: "Madame Joachim! Madame Joachim!" And from the end of the street at once, a stout woman hurried forward, her wide blouse volante of calico, flying out behind her, showing her fat feet in white stockings and carpet slippers. Wide as

the blouse volante was, it fell only comfortably over the rotund parts of her body. Her well oiled curling black hair, drawn back tightly from her swarthy face, glistened in the sun, and her face, as far as it could be seen, wore a smile. She carried a great bunch of keys and after shaking hands all around selected the largest key—a ponderous iron one—unlocked the gate, threw it open, and stood aside for the family to enter their new home. The house also had suffered a revolution in fortune. Its paint hung upon it in rags, showing the naked wood beneath. The gallery was hidden by the vines that hung over it from the roof, the accumulated luxuriance of years; parterres and paths in the garden were grown together in a tangle of vines and shrubs. Over the outside of the rotting cistern, green moss followed the line of trickling water.

Madame Joachim, in spite of her size, lightly mounted the steps of the gallery ahead of the newcomers, and taking another monstrous key, unlocked the central one of a row of green batten windows, and with a smaller key, the glass door inside; and again, with a polite gesture, motioned the family to enter before her.

Without a word, they did so and stood in the dim interior while she went from room to room on either side, opening the glass windows and heavy green shutters. The clanging of the heavy iron hooks as she let them drop was the only sound heard until all were opened. The bright day illuminated a room at the back and two on each side. In each stood a small allotment of furniture.

"This," said Madame Joachim, waving her hand with pride to the glistening whitewashed walls and freshly

black-painted mantelpiece, "this, as you see, is like new; the rest," with a shrug of the shoulders, "is according to nature."

She led the way out to the back gallery. Across a large yard, shaded with a fine wild cherry tree, stood a long, low cabin; the kitchen and servants' rooms. The fence here was lined with a row of old and gnarled fig trees. "St. Médard," said Madame Joachim, pointing to a small steeple that dominated the sky here, as the flag did in front. Descending the steps and crossing the yard, she opened the doors of the kitchen building, leaving each key carefully in its keyhole as she had done in the house.

The little group, instead of following her, remained on the gallery, silent and still; the husband, forgetting to be animated, the wife forgetting to look at his face, the children imitating her, looking ahead of them at nothing. The clear voice of a mocking bird in some near tree alone broke the silence. They were standing as she had left them when Madame, returning across the yard, reached the steps. There, springing forward, she exclaimed: "But that poor child has a chill!"

It was so. Cicely, the sickly one, was having a chill, *her* chill as the children called it. She and every one else had forgotten it in the excitement of the moment, but true to the day and hour as it had been for three months past, it had not forgotten her. The child was clinching her teeth and hands tight to keep them from shivering, but her poor little thin face was ashen, her lips blue and trembling.

Madame Joachim picked her up like a baby and with her soft swift walk carried her to the nearest bed,

Cicely's face pressing into the great fat breast as into a soft pillow. When she was laid on the bed it was discovered she was crying; she who never cried, whom her Papa always called his Marshal Ney, because she was the bravest of the brave. The little family clustered around her in consternation; most of them feeling like crying too. It was as if this sorrow and disappointment were all of a sudden too much to bear. And whereas, on the plantation, the youngest child would have known what to do for a chill, now they stood as helpless as if they had never seen the miserable thing before.

It was Madame Joachim who hunted up sheets and spread them over the bare mattress, who undressed the child, and eased a pillow under her head. Then, slipping to the back gallery, and running her practised eye along the fence and selecting a certain hole, she called out in quick, sharp Creole patois: "Cribiche, my son, run fast, get some orange leaves and tell Joachim to make some tisane, as quick as he can, and you bring it; *Courri vite, mo di toi.*"

When the tisane came, she gave it herself to Cicely, petting and comforting her, with the sweetest, softest voice in the world. "Never mind, never mind, bah! What is a chill! Everybody has chills! Now, one more cup, eh! There, there, see how good it tastes! By and by, you will take another cup, and you will sweat, and when you sweat, you know, you are most over it, and you will shut your eyes, and you will go to sleep, and when you wake, it will be all gone." She spoke in the soft singsong English of the Creole who has learned the language by ear. The little one obediently closed her eyes, and listening to the mocking bird, and hearing the

cowbells and the faint droning of the insects outside, fell into the delusion that she was again on the plantation; delusions are the saving grace of chills.

Madame Joachim, with her finger on her lip, stepped softly out of the room, and, as she never forgot anything, went to the kitchen to see what was needed there. Milly and her daughters, having kicked off shoes and stockings and some of their stupidity with them, were moving about with something like a servant's activity. A fire had been made in the new stove, water put on to boil, but like all country cooks, when they do not know what else to do, Milly was proceeding to make biscuits.

"But your soup, my good woman," exclaimed Madame Joachim, amazed at such a want of sense, "put on your soup! don't you see the soup meat there on the table? And the loaf of bread? Get your rice ready to boil! parch your coffee!" She put on the soup pot herself, poured in water, added the soup meat and looked around. "Ah! The soup vegetables! Cribiche, my son!" she called out of the window, toward the fence, "Cribiche! run quick over there to Monsieur le Curé and ask him for some onion and some parsley and some carrot for the soup pot! Run quick, I see him in the garden now!"

Cribiche, evidently did not like this commission. It was one thing going to the blacksmith's who had nothing against him and another going to the priest. Joachim feared neither God nor devil, it is true, when he was angry, which he was not now, but the priest . . . Cribiche had his reasons for avoiding him. "But will you go when I tell you," impatiently called Madame Joachim looking out of the window, "or"—her threat was vague but effective. Cribiche at once crossed the

street to the priest's garden where Père Philéas was hard at work, his cassock twisted up high around his waist.

Behind the church was the priest's habitation, for it could not be called a house; and behind the house was the vacant ground which he, by no better right than squatter sovereignty, had appropriated for his garden. He did not raise his head but remained bending over his weeds until Cribiche came up close to him, and he would not hear what he was saying until he came very close; then, like a loosened spring, he shot up in the air, seized Cribiche with his left hand, boxed him soundly with his right, and shook him until the boy's clothes cracked.

"Is this the way you pull up my weeds? Is this the way you come straight back when I tell you? Is this the way you think you can fool me?"

Rough as he was, Joachim with his strap was worse, this was all the consolation Cribiche had. He submitted without a struggle and without an answer, since both were useless. He saw, in truth, that he was himself in fault, he should not have come so near, too near to dodge or run; the next time, he swore to himself, he would know better.

When the priest heard the request, he at once went to work to comply with it, and generously, although it was only with parsley, onions, and carrots and a bit of thyme which Madame Joachim had forgotten to ask for. It is so pleasant to give that it is a wonder people do not more generally yield themselves up to this form of self-indulgence. As for poor old Père Philéas, he was a very sybarite about giving. His homely, honest face beamed as his knotted fingers pulled up carrots and onions and picked the parsley and thyme. And as he lost no occasion

of advancing the merits of God with such a partisan of the devil as Cribiche, he spoke to him thus, before handing him the bouquet for the soup (who would ever suppose that only a moment before he had been cuffing and shaking him?):

"You see, my son, how good God is! He sends the friend to those who need one, and he sends the good deed to those who need that; to those who can bestow nothing else, good deeds, my child, are the picayunes of the poor. We are never too poor to give one of them even if we have not a cent in the pocket. The devil can always provide us with money, but it is only God who can provide us with a good deed. And even when one has money, one is always glad to have a friend as one is glad to have the moon of dark nights."

Cribiche showed as much appreciation for moral lectures as a snapping turtle for favors bestowed upon his back; and as a snapping turtle under a disagreeable ordeal advances his head out of his shell from time to time to peep with his little shrewd eyes and see if the way is clear, so did Cribiche peep from under his obstinate stolidity and dart his shrewd little glances around.

The priest accompanied him to the gate and held him by the shoulder, while he added affectionately and gently: "And now when you see the fruit of our labors, my son, are you not glad that you did even a small portion of the work here? See, we can give the vegetables needed for the soup of a neighbor—a stranger whom we do not know, who does not know us. Think! Yesterday, that old house was vacant, silent; today, it is filled with people; and just as we transplant a vegetable from one garden to another, the good God has transplanted our

new neighbors here, to St. Médard, from whence, we know not, and the old house becomes an object of our good will and friendly services. And we will grow together, henceforth, like plants in the same plot. The difference, the difference, my child, always think of the difference between yesterday and today, . . . and fear and love God, for He alone accomplishes what we think we do in the way of good, as the devil alone accomplishes what is evil, and makes us evil. And be very careful that the devil does not put you up to some mischief to our new neighbors. If he tries to, put him behind you, or you will feel Joachim's strap. Ah! your friend, the devil, never saves you from that, you know. He can lead you into temptation but he cannot save you from the punishment . . . And do not forget to be in time to ring the Angelus."

But Cicely's chill proved to be not her chill, the one the family had grown accustomed to, that came and went like an easy tempered conqueror. A different and a savage enemy indeed, now invaded her little body. It would not loose its grasp upon her; and, when the fever came, it raged like a conflagration, consuming remedies as if they were tinder. When called, her face brightened in response and she strove to raise her head.

"Not yet, not yet, my child" coaxed the mother tenderly, bending over her, "stay in bed a little longer and then you can get up and dress and help us."

"Cicely loves to work," she explained to Madame Joachim. "She never complains and never gives up, and as soon as her fever is off she is as well as ever, eh, Cicely? . . . For three years she has had chills and fever. I may say she is never without them. Oh, yes!

Sometimes we were able to break them and she would be free, but only for a little while. They always came back, they were sure to come back in the Summer. But never mind! it will soon be over for the day, eh, Cicely! she added cheerily and turned to her work again. She had taken off her unnatural costume and wore her short homespun gown once more.

"Cribiche has never been sick in his life," answered Madame Joachim, following her around and working as busily as she. "We have not much sickness down here, a little fever sometimes, and sometimes chills and fever. Oh! if Doctor Botot had to live from his practice," dragging the physician into her conversation by the hair of his head, "he would not live down here. No! he would go uptown among the rich Americans. It is curious, how the rich are always sick. But Botot is a good doctor, why shouldn't I know it? When he comes to a sick one, the first thing he says is: 'Where is Madame Joachim? Send for Madame Joachim.' He lives on the levee in that fine house below the barracks. Oh! I guarantee, he lives with his mother-in-law, old Madame Séréno. She says she is poor, but don't you believe her; she is rich, very rich, as Doctor Botot knows. He married her daughter, *en secondes noces*. The first time he married the daughter of old Beaume, old 'Beaume tranquille, we used to call him, the *pharmacien* on Enghien Street. Botot thought he had money, but he made a mistake, old Beaume did not collect his debts, or that is what they said," shrugging her shoulders; "anyhow he did not leave any money, and when Botot became a widower he married Mademoiselle Marie Séréno. She is the eldest daughter; Mademoiselle Amélie is the

youngest. Mademoiselle Marie had not much sense; everybody thought she was going into the convent, that it was her vocation. Bah! it is well to say that when one wants an excuse. She is dead now, and the doctor is a widower, but not for long, I promise you. Some people believe that chills and fever won't fool you. Don't you believe that. Chills and fever always fool you if you don't cure them. Botot is a good doctor, but not as good a doctor as he thinks he is. It is always his worst cases that he cures; as he tells about them. When people die, he says nothing was the matter only they did not take his medicines. But he knows how to cure chills and fever. I have seen him cure them. He is called into the barracks sometimes and it is well for the sick that he is, for the doctor there looks as much like a doctor as Joachim like a priest. It is the season of the year to cure chills and fever."

"They generally go away in the Winter," said Mrs. Talbot.

"Go away! Yes! But, my God! They come back again; if you are there for them to come back to. Sometimes you are not there. To believe what Botot says, and to believe what you know, are cats of a different color. But if he says he can cure chills and fever, you can believe that. . . . You can see him pass here any time, going to church. He goes to church every day, he is very pious. Mademoiselle Marie married him on account of his piety. She also was very pious. You should see him praying in church! When he puts on his 'bon St. Joseph air, bon St. Joseph vas'!" . . .

"He is very rich," Madame Joachim resumed to break the silence, "that is in prospect. Mademoiselle

Amélie it is, who will go into the convent. Oh, no! She will not get married . . . She will not meet a doctor as pious as she is. No, no, she will go into the convent, Botot will lead her there himself. And he will fasten the black veil on her, himself, if she wishes. You ask him if Madame Séréno is rich, he will shrug his shoulders. He will say: 'Who is rich after a war?' But listen to me, old Madame Séréno is rich; she did not lose a cent by the war, not even her niggers. Look at them, they are with her still. Lose her money! *Tra, la, la,* the geese in the street know better than that. Other people did but she did not. Not that the Yankees did not find out she was rich; they found out she was rich, just as Botot found out she was rich. Did she go to France? No. Did she hide and pretend she had gone? No. She sent for Louis, her man of affairs: 'Louis,' she said, 'see this paper, the Yankees have sent me to sign . . . they will come for it in three days.' Then she showed him some money, not paper money, but gold, *gold,* I tell you. 'You know, Louis, I could sign this paper; I could take this "*host*"'", Madame Joachim called it. "'It is no sin to lie to robbers, but I don't want to be bothered. Here, take this paper and I give you the money; but, you understand me, eh? If I am bothered, I will sign the paper, I will take the host, and I will get absolution for it; but you'—Madame Séréno raised her finger, and shook it at Louis—'you will lose your place. I will give it to Simon. Simon is not a fool.' Simon, he was like the tooth-ache to Louis, and that is the way Madame Séréno did, and kept her money and property. God knows if it is true; but that is what I heard. I heard too that it was not Louis but an

American, she sent for. But how did Louis make so much money then? Doctor Botot is a good doctor. His father was a good doctor for children. Only he was not a doctor but a leecher. They used to send for him and his leeches all over the city." And Madame Joachim with her fingers imitated how leeches were worked into a soft ball of clay. "I have bought leeches from him often, . . ." etc., etc. She talked on as unremittingly as she worked.

At last, the day, that in the morning lay like an unknown coast before the family, drew to a close, and evening began to enfold it. But the future that the father had planned, that the family was to enter upon at once, the very next day, had to be put off. At one time, it seemed indeed as if the family would enter it with one member missing. Cicely did not respond to her name; she was found to be, not asleep, but in a stupor; she could not be aroused. Cribiche had to be summoned from ringing the Angelus to run for the doctor.

Ah! Now it was seen that there was but one terror in life, only one; and it came from no earthly enemy . . . that there was but one loss that counted in the world . . . but one thing God could grant that was worth praying for!

The children would creep on tip-toe to the door and peep through at Cicely lying delirious, with half-opened eyes. "Is the fever going down, Mama?" they would whisper, and when she would shake her head, they would creep softly away, more and more frightened by the look on her face. They had seen her lose battles, armies, a fortune, a home, but they had never before seen her lose a child.

In her delirium, Cicely babbled about the plantation; laughing and laughing over her drolleries.

"Merciful God!" thought the mother sitting beside her. "What had she there to laugh over? Sick, sick, sick, all the time, hardly a day, never a week without fever . . . The doctor has no hope, I could see it . . . She has fought and fought, but her strength is exhausted. She has no chance! She is doomed! Too late! too late! . . . Perhaps a month ago! . . ." She would slip her hand under the sheet to feel the burning body, she would pass cooling cloths over face and hands . . . "Nothing but skin and bones" . . . How she yearned over the emaciated body! "Her poor little hands, her poor little hands like bird claws." She laid her cheek upon them and the tears gushed from her eyes—she who had boasted, that she never would or could give up hope for a child of hers!

Her heart rose up in passionate revolt and through her mind raced a mob of thoughts as senseless as Cicely's delirium.

"I thought, I thought, when the war was over, and peace came, when we could get back to our home and get a doctor, I thought we would then be safe. . . . Would to God we were back on the plantation! Would to God the war was still going on! Would to God I were still there, in that lonely, gloomy place all by myself; for there I could still hope, I had still something to look forward to . . . night after night watching and nursing my child . . . longing for daylight just to see her clearly again; but never losing courage . . . praying that God would work a miracle and send a doctor down the Bayou when I knew no doctor could

come; running to the window to listen, sure that I heard a skiff and that it was bringing a doctor . . . hearing only the rippling of the water under the gunwales that sounded sometimes like the whining of a child in pain . . . God did not send a doctor, but he heard my prayers. He cured my child. He had to cure her, for we had no medicines to give her! There, her fever always went away at last!"

On the other side of the bed sat her husband; his face graver and sterner than ever.

"He should not have taken us to that fever-stricken place!" Her gentle thoughts, changed into furies by her grief, knew no bounds in their pitiless course. "He should not have kept us there! He knew it was a swamp! He knew it was unhealthy! He knew it, he knew it! Other men could send their families into healthy refuges. Other men could send them to Europe!"

To Europe! She had forgotten the scorn and contempt she once poured upon those patriots who preferred for their children the easy comfort of Europe to the heroic hardships of war; upon the poor-spirited women who could accept the despicable role of flying from danger and from their husbands, of abandoning their country fighting for its life, armies weltering in their blood on the battlefield!

"He said the war would not last! It would soon be over! And we would all be home again. Ah! he always imagines that what he thinks is going to happen! He thought it was our duty to stay and look after the negroes! He could think of them; he could not think of us! Duty! Duty! Duty is his God! And it costs us the life of our child! . . . She was always delicate

and frail but the prettiest and brightest of them all! When she was born, I felt so happy! I never had thought that earth held such happiness as I felt then! . . . And when he came to me, he made me feel so proud! I would not have changed places with the greatest queen on earth!"

And now the little, bare, uncomfortable room in St. Médard changed to the great, luxurious, dimly lighted chamber, where in a lace curtained bed, she lay with Cicely at her side. She heard again the soft tread of her husband over the carpet, . . . was it his tread, or the beating of her heart she heard? She lifted her eyelids, he was there, he was there bending over her . . . Cicely had ceased her delirious babbling, a gentle calm had fallen over the room, the shaded candle in the corner made a soothing twilight. The long black hours passed, holding the suspensive balance even. The gray dawn came, the light of day fell over the bed. "Cicely! Cicely!" her father laid his hand on her cooling forehead and called her. The good little thing, who had never known what it was to be disobedient or hold back when she heard her father calling, was seen to strive to answer, but she could not. "Cicely! Cicely!" She heard him, she was wanted, she could not answer. Her heart strained and strained, her thin breast lifted, fell and lifted . . . at last a faint moan came through her lips and her eyes opened, she tried to smile.

"Doctor Botot! Doctor Botot," exclaimed Madame Joachim. "Did I not tell you that there was no better doctor in the city for fevers than Doctor Botot?"

"Madame Joachim," said the doctor later. "Well, if you want a good nurse, you send for Madame Joachim.

Joachim," he added, "Joachim looks like a pirate, but if you ever want good Spanish wine, you send to Joachim."

Ah! the future could begin now whenever it chose. The land, that the day before lay like an unknown shore before them, they were in it now, and what a beautiful land it was!

The mother and all the children followed the doctor, as captives a deliverer, surrounding him as he stood on the front gallery, their faces aglow with gratitude and admiration. To a question the mother answered lightly, and pleasantly. "Oh! where we were living, on the plantation, it was so far from any doctor that we had to learn to doctor ourselves. It took a day to get to the nearest town, and of course a day to return, and then as likely as not, when our messenger got there, the doctor would be away, a day's journey off somewhere. But we had doctor's books and we followed their directions, that is so long as we had medicines, but we got entirely out of medicine." And here she laughed as at a humorous recollection. "When the quinine gave out we had to use willow bark tea. It was as bitter as quinine anyway and at first it seemed to do Cicely a great deal of good. And there was an old Indian woman doctor; the Indians were our nearest neighbors, they lived on a mound in the swamp. We sent for her to come every now and then. She brought her herbs with her, and sometimes they did Cicely a great deal of good too."

"Why did you not come to the city?" asked the doctor.

"To the city! But it was in the hands of the enemy!"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. "And you were not in the hands of the enemy, eh? on the plantation?"

" It was the swamps all around that gave us chills and fever," she replied simply.

" You had the chills and fever there too?"

" Oh, yes! all of us had them, and sometimes," with a smile, " we all had them at the same time. My husband said, when we went there, that the enemy would never find us and they did not until last year . . . . we were so far away, we could not get letters, we could not get newspapers . . . ."

" But you could get the chills there," the doctor interrupted facetiously.

" Oh, yes!" with a decided affirmation of the head.

" And plenty of food?"

" Oh, no! at least not at the end. Food became very scarce then. And after the overflow, we had nothing but corn bread and some fat meat. All the cattle, you know, were drowned."

" You were overflowed?"

" Oh, yes! Twice, two years in succession. Once for six weeks. When our people cut Grand Levee, you know, to prevent the advance of the enemy, or their retreat, one or the other, I don't know which. All of our section of the country went under water then."

" Yes, yes."

" We had food up to that time. But one day, a gunboat passed, that is a steamboat with cannon and soldiers on it. We believe it must have got into our Bayou accidentally, for no one in that part of the country would have piloted them" . . .

" And after that you had no food?"

" No, the soldiers threw our meal and meat in the Bayou."

"And Cicely was sick then?"

"She had just had a hard chill; it was her day to have it." She paused and as the doctor said nothing, she continued: "We fished up some of the meat out of the Bayou as soon as their backs were turned but after a little while we could not eat it. The soaking in the water spoiled it. It was not very well cured anyway. We cured it ourselves but we did not have salt enough, salt was very scarce." . . .

The doctor was a handsome man and if nearly as old as his mother-in-law as Madame Joachim said, he did not show his age, unless Madame Séréno was in the neighborhood of forty-five. His short curling black hair and beard, his teeth and eyes were all favorable to his appearance; and if his dark complexion showed lines, they were still far from being wrinkles. He had a genial voice, his linen was fine, his broadcloth well made, his watchchain was massive with a great seal ring and a number of trinkets dangling from the loose end over his waistcoat.

"Well, keep her quiet," he admonished, "in bed" . . .

"That," interrupted the mother, hastily, "we will never be able to do. Even her father cannot make Cicely keep in bed after the fever and chill are over."

And all the children who were standing around listening, shook their heads and murmured their doubts about Cicely's staying in bed. "She must stay in bed now," ordered the doctor decisively. Turning around, he went back to Cicely in bed and repeated to her: "She must stay in bed now and when Monsieur le Chill comes again, he will find us in bed to receive him, eh, Cicely? and

we will arrange it so that he will not come so often, and then he will not come at all. We know how to get rid of an importunate visitor, eh, Cicely?" He looked down upon her with what Madame Joachim called his "bon St. Joseph" air and Cicely gave in to it, as his wife had done, and his mother-in-law and sister-in-law, and his little patients at the convent gave in to it; all the nervous irritability of her long, wearying illness, disappearing from her thin peaked, wan little face.

As he walked back to the gallery, his face for a moment looked somber.

"As my husband says," the mother apologized hastily, "it is the fortunes of war."

"There are no fortunes of war, Madame," he retorted sharply. "There are no fortunes of war for women and children. It is all misfortunes for them, they are the sufferers; and their war goes on after the peace, they will be still suffering for it, when the war is forgotten." He stopped abruptly but the children did not hear him, they had stayed with Cicely.

"Well, you will give her good food now and plenty of it." He told her what to get and where to buy it, the meat from this one, the bread from that one, the milk—"Get your milk from Madame San Antonio, yes, from Madame San Antonio, I will tell her about it."

"We must send them at once to school"—the mother pursued the important thought in her mind—"the boys to the public school, we think . . ."

"To the public school! No, no! you cannot send them to the public school now, the public schools are demoralized. The niggers go to our public schools now. No, no, you send them to my friend Badeau. Monsieur

le Colonel Badeau, an old officer in the French army. He teaches well and he maintains discipline. His father was an officer under the great Napoleon, not the little one, and his son believes in the discipline of 'le petit Caporal.' You ask him about 'le petit Caporal' and you will hear some good stories. I will see Badeau, myself for you. The little girls will go to the convent, of course."

"Oh, no! We are Protestants, you know."

"But that makes no difference. Protestants can go to a convent as well as Catholics. A convent is the best place to educate little girls in and those ladies of the Ursulines . . ."

"Oh, I am sure they educate perfectly, but my husband thinks . . ."

"Oh, well! I understand," he now interrupted her, "then you must send them to Mademoiselle Mimi, Mademoiselle Mimi Pinseau, s-e-a-u; not Pinson, s-o-n; ha, ha, ha.

> "'*Mimi Pinson est une blonde,*
> *Une blonde que l'on connait,*'"

he quoted. "Mademoiselle Mimi is the teacher for you. She has a school, just there," pointing in the direction of the church. "You go to Mademoiselle Mimi, no, no, I will go to her myself and tell her to come to you."

He descended the steps of the gallery and walked down the garden path murmuring to himself:

> "*C'est l'étui d'une perle fine,*
> *La robe de Mimi Pinson* . . ."

MADEMOISELLE MIMI

Mademoiselle Mimi lost no time in going to the Americans who, according to Doctor Botot, might need her services; who, she hoped, would need them in some infinitesimal fraction of a degree as much as she needed their money. She walked along hurriedly as if the opportunity were a car she had to catch; and not a slow mule car that jogged by every fifteen minutes, but a steam train that would flash past out of her sight, never perhaps to be seen again. As she went through the lane, the weeds looked so green, their flowers so saucy, the darting butterflies and bees so gay, the sun so bright,—with the breeze blowing from the river with such exhilarating freshness,—that she could not but argue well from such auspices. However, when there was something for her to do and a few extra dimes to be made, she cared for auspices, favorable or unfavorable, as little as did Mimi Pinson. Thunder, lightning, and rain would have been just the same to her as flowers, butterflies, and a blue sky, if at the end of the lane was to be found a patron with little girls to teach. Her fingers ran over the scales and exercises, they were always playing in imagination while her mind ran hurriedly over all she could teach the said little girls, the little girls of a lady and requiring more in the way of education than those of her Gascon clients. English and French, music, solfege, history, geography, arithmetic, grammar, litera-

ture, synonyms, mythology, cosmography, drawing, embroidery, and marking in cross stitch, even. In fact there was stored away in her mind a beautiful and expensive education; everything had been bought for it that money could buy. Some of the articles, it is true, like some of the dresses and finery in her armoires, never had been used or at least worn only once or twice, but they were there, and what she had learned she could teach. To go over her curriculum would be nothing more to her than going through the well learned steps of a quadrille. And she could teach dancing too, for she had learned also that accomplishment so valueless to an ugly woman; for dancing is like marriage, a lady must be invited thereto, and what beau leads out an ugly partner unless she be rich? And unfortunately, Mademoiselle Mimi had become poor at the very time when her money, so to speak, might have floated her ugliness into society.

These thoughts she spoke quite frankly to Mrs. Talbot when their scholastic arrangements had been made, for she was unused to business methods and ignorant of the profits of reserve if not of misinformation.

The mother, quite as open on her part, went back to her usual starting point, her recent life on the isolated plantation in order properly to introduce her husband's ideas about the education of women, or ladies, as she called them.

"He has a perfect horror of learned ladies, 'blue stockings' who quote Latin and Greek and talk algebra and astronomy. They are to him, simply, ladies with big feet. He likes charming ladies, those who are good looking, who dress well, have exquisite manners, who talk well, who have tact. Oh! he is most particular

about tact and talking well. He cannot stand stupid ladies. Those who have no tact and cannot talk well, they are monsters to him. The woman who always says the right thing, and does the right thing, and is always dressed the right way, neither too much nor too little, . . . that is his ideal for his daughters. And it seems, he met just such women when he came to New Orleans from Virginia, when he was a young man fresh from the University. He often talks about them."

"The father proposes, but God disposes," quoted Mademoiselle Mimi. "My father too had an ideal like that, but . . ." she shrugged her shoulders significantly.

Mrs. Talbot looked at her in some confusion, as over a lack of tact on her own part.

Mademoiselle Mimi was not, it must be confessed, the realization of an ambitious father's dream for a daughter. She had not a desirable feature in her face, which to begin with, was slightly crusted with the heat, that kept it all Summer inflamed and red. Her eyes were light, round and protuberant; her hair curled, it is true, but it was thin and scant over the temples where it was most needed, for they were unduly high. Her mouth, like her eyes, was protuberant, and the teeth that might have beautified it were defective and patched with gold in all directions. This, instead of what should have been—according to physiologists and physiognomists—a long thin, oval face with tender eyes and the soft luxuriant hair of a Saint Cecilia, for instance, with a figure to correspond instead of the one she had with its inelegant appearance of being long-waisted and short-legged at the same time. Alas!

It would seem absurd, even to suggest the truth, that Mademoiselle Mimi's face, notwithstanding all the negative votes cast as it were against it, was on the whole agreeable and winning, and stranger still, that, far as she evidently was removed from the charming conversationalists of Mr. Talbot's memory, she was, in her way, an interesting talker; for she did not talk to please, a drawback to the charm of the above-mentioned lady conversationalists, any more than she ate to please, and would have been as incapable of telling a lie to adorn her conversation as of telling one to a stranger asking the way of her.

It was Mrs. Talbot's amiable delusion that all impoverished ladies and gentlemen were in the same box with her husband and herself; that is that their losses came through the fortunes of war as she docilely called the process. And as she seldom reflected when her heart was moved and as it was moved now in Mademoiselle Mimi's direction, she assumed this delusion in her talk, as a matter of course. It produced an instant disclaimer from Mademoiselle Mimi. "Oh, no! You must not think that! We have no such good luck! There is nothing to be proud of in the way we lost our money! We, simply spent all we had! Threw it away in good eating, good drinking, good living, enjoying ourselves! Dissipated it, in truth and we have not been able to make any more, that is all. We are like the *cigale*: '*Nous avons chanté tout l'été,' et nous travaillons maintenant.*"

"Oh! Oh!" began Mrs. Talbot again in confusion . . .

"No! No! It was very polite of you on the contrary," interrupted Mademoiselle Mimi, "to assume that we

were distinguished patriots. If you had lived here a little longer, any one would have told you that our poverty antedated the war by a good many years. We came down here not yesterday, but before the war to take refuge from our past; this is our ' Terre aux Lepreux,' " alluding to the old custom of forcing all lepers to live in one definite locality which became in time named after them.

There was not much in Mademoiselle Mimi's life that was not known to her neighbors, and that her new friend did not find out later from Madame Joachim and the doctor, and the priest and Cribiche . . . All knew something and each one was willing to make common property of individual collections from hearsay, observation and deduction. The history of St. Médard himself was not better known.

Mademoiselle Mimi, as all were glad to proclaim on all occasions supported her father who had dissipated his own and his wife's fortune and thus impoverished the daughter. She supported him by teaching anything she knew to any scholar she could get, and as the expression went, she " held " the organ in the church. But like the priest she was always the last paid creditor in the parish and generally the worst paid for her services; and like him, unfortunately, too often she had to accept provisions, " nature " as it was naïvely called, for legal tender.

Madame Joachim's ultimate reference and repository, God alone knew how much or how little Mademoiselle Mimi made for the Gascons in the parish of St. Médard are no more bigots for truth than Gascons elsewhere; but, as no one did tell, the truth may be looked for any-

where in the long medium between poor pay and none at all.

Monsieur Pinseau had been celebrated in his day as a beau, a wit, a gourmet, a *farceur,* as everything, in short, that passed for charming in the high society not only of New Orleans, but any metropolis of fashion, elegance and good living. Now, he was briefly described as a notorious spendthrift, an old *roué,* who deserved all the punishment he had received as just penalty for his past sins. He had not married young, he had been too much of a beau for that. The real beau, like the real belle, cares little for marriage; they are lovers of the fragrance of the flower, not of the flower itself, and when either gets married, it is for considerations, one might say, rather than desires. Monsieur Pinseau made a most considerate marriage, one that showed a sound business ability, such as few believed he possessed. A great folly had been expected of him with all sorts of ineligible ladies; from a pretty, unknown girl met by chance, to a pretty ballet girl met by appointment. But "nenni," as Madame Joachim said, "he had another dog to whip when it came to marriage." Hè put folly aside before this serious question and married his second cousin, who was known as the richest heiress in Louisiana, and the plainest. Heiresses do not marry for money, and it is they who commit a folly when they marry for love, as the world knows. And the plainer of feature an heiress is, the plainer of intellect, the more surely is she apt to rely upon that unreliable adviser the heart. Whatever were Monsieur Pinseau's feelings in regard to her, she loved him . . . and hence her suffering.

When his bride's virgin fortune was placed in his hands, Monsieur Pinseau, with the new accession of means, obtained such an accession of pleasure, that from his own point of view, his marriage might have been called a happy one. Particularly, as before this event he had had moments of unhappiness over the certainty of his happiness.

But Madame Pinseau, poor Madame Pinseau, as all authorities call her, when the glamor of her situation had worn away sufficiently to allow her the natural use of her eyes, grew wan and ill-tempered, not only for want of love but from seeing her money spent with such open-handed prodigality. Money had been the distinction of her family for generations; it was their rock, their fortress, their sure refuge in every time of trouble. When death carried away in due season the reigning head of the family, it was always a consolation to the survivors to feel that the money still lived, that it was left, the family fortune, intact. And Madame Pinseau, the heiress of it, to whom it had come safely, undiminished, in all the rounded perfection of its rare golden bloom—she knew as perhaps no one could know better that a woman's money is "her greatest ornament, and priceless boon in life"; that, as it has also been poetic-expressed in regard to her innocence, once gone, no repentance ever brought it back. Innocence! She knew that the Church and Society did accept spurious innocence, but spurious money, or repentance in lieu of the stamped coin! Never.

What Providence should have done, according to Madame Joachim, was to despatch Monsieur Pinseau and let Madame live. Unfortunately, Monsieur Pinseau

was strong and hearty; his wife, nervous, hysterical, sickly; always in the hands of her physician or when not in his hands, in the hands of her priest. And beyond an accident, Providence seems to have no legitimate way of getting rid of a man of strong constitution; nor save by a miracle, of preserving the life of a weak one. As Madame Joachim complained with bitterness, after killing his wife, Monsieur Pinseau was rewarded by having another woman, an angel, to support him. And the prospect was that he would live upon her until she was as old as he was now, which must be sixty or past. And, unfortunately, although he was an invalid, and incapacitated from work, yet he had no suffering to complain of, that is as far as any one knew, for it was notorious that he never complained of his gout. "But thank God!" said Madame Joachim, "Mademoiselle Mimi is as strong as he used to be, and has more sense than he ever had."

Ladies, even the best of them and the most devout, have a way of avoiding confession to a priest who knows them. They say there are reasons why a stranger, or at least not a familiar or an intimate of the family, makes a better confessor. Mademoiselle Mimi was not of this kind. When she came into the parish of St. Médard, she accepted the church and the priest just as she accepted the little house that had been placed at her disposal for a home. Père Philéas, therefore, was speaking with the authority of one who has the means of knowing to a certainty whereof he spoke, when in his hard, rough, peasant French he told his flock that although they talked so surely of one another's affairs, and judged one another with such certainty, and said what

God ought to do and ought not to do, that they only knew of life what they could see with their little, miserable, cunning, human eyes; and what they saw of it was little better than what their corn and cabbages saw of it. But God above saw what life really was. And he would compare what God saw of some of the characters of that little parish,—that poor little humble St. Médard, where there had not been found money enough in twenty years to paint the inside of the church,—he would compare such characters, "God's illustrations of life," he called them, with the illustrations that were drawn by the artists of great journals, in which the rich gifts of life: youth, beauty, health, strength, talent, sentiment, piety . . . were disposed of in such a way, that a simple reader might suppose that all these prize qualities had been driven, hissed, hounded from among the poor who are also called the "lower classes," and had, therefore, taken refuge in the "upper classes," as the rich, were called; and that vice, only, and crime and ugliness had stayed with the lower classes. No, not like Versailles, he assured them was God's picture gallery. (He had once been to Versailles when a Seminarist and what he had seen there had made such an impression upon him that he brought it into almost every sermon.) "Not like Versailles, was God's picture gallery." He doubted whether any court beauty would be found in it, but it was not to be doubted, that every poor, honest Christian who lived not for self alone but for others would be found there; that in short, God's beauties, different from those of Louis XIV and Louis XV, would be the ugly ones of the earth; his great ones, the humble and the lowly ones; his rich ones, the poor of the earth. All of

which, as Père Philéas intended it to be, was comforting to his parishioners, who for the most part were poor and ugly enough and undistinguished enough to suit any amateur of such works of art. Indeed, the only rich people in it were the San Antonios.

But to return very far back to our subject, Monsieur Pinseau was really better than his reputation. Although he had spent all his money, he had retained his good qualities, the qualities of his defects, which were usually left out of his description now. He was good-humored, amiable, intelligent, kind-hearted, now, as he had always been. And, in fact, if he had not possessed these good qualities, could he have been the spendthrift that he had proved himself to be? There could not be such a thing as a sordid, mean, stingy spendthrift; or a stupid one, for imagination has been the tempter from Eve downwards. The castaways of the *beau monde* are as a rule the good fellows who have spent their money in it. Society in the length of human memory has never cast away a bad fellow if he has kept his money. Society can forgive, and has forgiven, even criminals if they are rich. If the rich man slaps it on one cheek, does it not turn the other one also? If he takes its coat, does not Society straightway offer its cloak also?

But all this wisdom came to Papa Pinseau long, long after he was able to profit by it; and, it seemed, the less he was able to profit by it, the more abundantly it came to him. He was now almost incapacitated by infirmity, and never again in this world would he be able to apply the knowledge within him; yet, nevertheless, it rolled in upon him in waves and tides and always from the same source, from his past life. His physical impotence was

even more prolific of wisdom than his financial impotence had ever been. His constitution had been his pride and his boast; and he ruined himself when in such full vigor that he might at the time have made his living as a common laborer if he had been an Irishman or a negro; the only common laborers of his halcyon days. But in these halcyon days, ruined gentlemen were far removed from the lot of a common laborer. It was a poor city indeed, and New Orleans was never that, where there was not always a living to be bestowed upon a man of proved incapacity to make one; some supernumerary living for a gentleman out of money; a place in a bank or a clerkship in a court or the city government; a sinecure in a counting-room or a political office. Money was made easily then and it was lost, also, so easily, that the emergency was provided for among gentlemen by a tacit budget.

Unfortunately, however, it is not every spendthrift who under the first stroke of misfortune becomes wise, who by one illumination,—to use the hackneyed illustration,—is turned from a Saul into a Paul. Wisdom is generally the fruit of many misfortunes. And, here again, it is the good qualities of a good fellow that are turned against him. The qualities, the very qualities that would have made him less agreeable as a comrade, that he abhorred in others, the qualities that no one would think of cultivating in a child; a cross spirit, an ungracious manner, a grudging hand in giving, the very ability to say "no" to a friend; these, Monsieur Pinseau found out are some of the means and no insignificant ones to regain wealth. And, so, he who could never make two ends meet on twenty thousand a year did no

better on ten, five, three, two, nor yet one; and he had all these chances offered to him, one after another. As he himself confessed, the only income within whose limits he could ever keep was that of his daughter. And strange to say, the robust constitution that had stood without a strain all the excesses of the moneyed period began to weaken and finally went to pieces under the régime of sober eating and full sleeping; the remedy for most men had proved the bane for this one. But still a berth might have been found for him in the ship of State or City, for a man does not exhaust all the opportunities of benevolence in ten years, had not the smoldering war between the North and the South, at last broken out.

Of all his lost opportunities to be deplored, of all his regrets—and he should have had of them more than the full measure of a man—what Monsieur Pinseau most deplored and regretted was not being able to go into the war and fight. He, who erstwhile had braved every risk of weather and accident in hunting and fishing on the lakes around New Orleans; he, who could no more fly a danger than a temptation; for whom, camp life, camp stories and the wild rush of a charge seemed specially intended; when the great opportunity of his life came, he was crippled in his feet by gout, all but palsied in his hands, and short winded with asthma. If the war and the ruin of his country had come ten years earlier it would have found him a man and not an old woman of sixty; bundled in flannels and coddled with tisanes.

Then at last, when he could not work, he saw that he might have worked once. Then he watched and strug-

gled, as one in mid-ocean watches and struggles, for a floating spar, for something, anything, to do to earn a living. *"Autre temps, autre guitarres!"* He found that the prerogatives of birth (or berths) were abolished with slavery, and the thing called business competition had taken their place; and that this was a foot race where the prize goes not to past good qualities but to the fleetest of foot and soundest of wind—with no quarter shown to the defeated. Business is hell as well as war to those who wish to make it so—it is only a question of the disposition of the commander. All of this in Monsieur Pinseau's life and in Mademoiselle Mimi's confession furnished some of the theories of art advanced in Père Philéas's sermons.

The home of the Pinseaus was a long cabin almost resting on the ground with a wide gallery in front over which hung the eaves of a pointed roof, alive with mosses and creepers. One would have said that its back was built against the side of the church, if it were not obvious that the church, on the contrary, as the newer construction had been built against it. It might have faced a street, if it had not antedated all streets in St. Médard by half a century. As it was, its end was turned to the street, while its front looked vaguely in the direction where once, in its power and grandeur, stood the master's dwelling. A native of the place would have recognized it at once as one of the dependencies of the old time, built for the accommodation of some of the numerous attendants that then accompanied a family establishment of any pretensions; an overseer's house, or a gardener's lodge, or the cabin of a favorite slave. It was cut off by the street now and separated from its seigniory, which

shorn of all its appanages and reduced in territory to its surrounding garden and hedge could be seen forlorn and estranged in the distance.

An old *pieux* or picket fence inclosed the cabin still, guarding it as jealously from the outside world as in the time when bulldogs added to the strength of its defense. But the aged timbers were tottering beneath the vines for which it served as a trellis, and it bulged from the pressure of the Yuccas inside with their ungainly bulk of dagger-shaped leaves against it. The gate, of more modern date, was of smooth plank which in its best days had been painted green. Over it rose an arch, twined with wistaria and honeysuckle.

Mademoiselle Mimi lifted the latch and hurried through, a cartload of news within her. News! They, who know what it is to live year in and year out with no more news than the calendar furnishes, know what a godsend she felt she was bringing to her Papa.

He was seated on the gallery in his old cane-bottomed chair with his old hunting dog Belle at his feet, just as she had left him an hour ago. A very good-looking old gentleman he was; with his short white hair and white mustache, and his blue eyes, never without a twinkle in them, and his humorous mouth, seldom without a smile on its lips. His face was as handsome as his daughter's was otherwise, and his figure, though somewhat thickened by age and an inert life, showed still what it must have been in its athletic, graceful youth. He wore an old, faded, brown velveteen coat with deep pockets in the sides, a relic from the heroic period of his hunting days; and his linen, which was really linen, showed that it came also from a distant past, being fine pleated, with a collar

of its own, a broad rolling one tied up with a careless-looking old scarf. His expression, as he sat there all alone, was so free, frank, and natural that a stranger on seeing him indubitably would have said: "Here is an old gentleman with an agreeable past behind him, a serene future before him and a benign conscience within him; he looks as if he had done nothing but make a pretty garden all his life."

It was a pretty garden, the one he had made and was now looking upon. There was not a foot in it that had not been turned to account and there was an air of untrammeled grace about it that made one think of Nature, rather than of an old gentleman, as its author. It was, in truth, what the old-fashioned "keepsake" of a romantic era so poetically purported to be: a garden of sentiments. Monsieur Pinseau's eye, roaming over it, hardly missed a flower that he loved, a shrub that he cared for: japonica, mimosa, sweet olive, Magnolia fuscata, pomegranate, for the sake of the rich scarlet blossoms that pretty Creole girls used to wear in their black hair, (the ground under the bush was red with them now, for the pomegranate flower does not fade on the stem but falls in its full beauty) . . . sweet shrub, oleanders, white and pink, and, fair to look upon when the sun first touches them in the morning, rose geraniums, citronelle, crape myrtles, rose colored and white, (their bloom as dainty and fragile as the ball dresses of the pretty dancing Creole girls of Monsieur Pinseau's dancing days) . . . *Jasmin;* the "Night," of course, hidden in corners, whence its mysterious sweetness steals upon the soft Summer air of moon-lit nights; the Spanish, the star, and the beautiful wild creeper, that twines around the

great forest trees, and droops down to the clear water of the still bayous—bayous that Monsieur Pinseau used to wander under when spring flowered in the woods around the city and in himself—latana, purple and yellow, though most people despise it. And of roses—all kinds: the great *Reine,* for its generous fragrance, . . . the *Thé* for its romantic loveliness; the Provence, for its air of innocence; the Lamarque, to embower his gallery; the *Géant de Bataille,* for its name; the minute *Picayune,* out of memory of his mother's garden; there were violets, for another memory, and mignonette, to remind him of Paris, *hélas!* . . . But no fish geraniums were to be seen anywhere; nor prince's feather, that favorite of his Gascon neighbors; nor lilies, neither Joseph nor Easter because of their air of piety (or his wife's); no *immortelles* with their discomforting suggestions; no pansies, or *pensées,* as they are called in St. Médard, no indeed! for in his garden, as in his life, Monsieur Pinseau indulged his prejudices as far as possible.

Out of sight and as far back as possible, lay Mademoiselle Mimi's *plat,* the *plat* of the Christian virtues as her father called it; where grew medicinal herbs and seasonings: rosemary, balm, sage, thyme, mint, horehound, absinthe, mélisse, parsley, anise, . . . with catnip, naturally, for the babies; Mademoiselle Mimi's heart itself was not more prolific of virtues.

The spot was as bare as a chicken yard when Monsieur Pinseau moved to it, and seeing all that had been accomplished in it by one unassisted pair of maimed hands and halt feet under no other inspiration than poverty and misfortune, surely it might well be set (by the recording

angel) against some of the other sowings and plantings of the old gardener's life in the period of other activities and inspirations.

When Mademoiselle Mimi had anything to say, she did not wait for the formality of an inquiry; and when she began, she talked as easily and naturally as the rain rained. But the rain itself would have found it difficult to keep up its supply of drops from so barren a source of moisture as St. Médard was of news. Nevertheless, when did she ever come in from the street without some interesting report? She herself, it is true, alone knew the twisting and turning and seasoning she had to give to the poor little bits of hearsay gossip in order to convert them into any semblance of appetizing novelty. Less ingenuity would be required for the daily feuilleton of a Paris journal. But, today, for once she could rain down the tale as she had gathered it.

After repeating what we know, she added: "Madame Talbot has very exalted ideas about education, which come from her husband, a very exalted personage indeed, it seems. It was 'my husband says this, my husband says that' all the time. He desires nothing less than perfection in his daughters, and they are to be trained simply for that. Eh! Mon Dieu!" she exclaimed. "How is it, Thou canst keep parents so naïve?"

Monsieur Pinseau listened apparently as usual, with his eyes running over his beloved garden, noting what was to be done tomorrow in it. But what he was thinking during his daughter's relation was something like this: "What a miserable little world, or rather, what a miserable little city this is! Even when we get away from the old places, we are always coming upon the

same people. If the good God would only let us do occasionally what we please! When we need Him and invoke Him He has no difficulty in letting us alone, and yet He is always intruding upon us when we do not need Him, when we want to be let alone."

He determined to read Voltaire at once. Whenever he felt this way he read Voltaire; he had a complete set, the entire seventy volumes, bought in Paris when he was twenty years old and equipping himself for life. All young men of his age at that date equipped themselves for life in Paris, with, among other things, a full set of Voltaire, bound in calf, the handsome edition.

In Voltaire, he felt he would find some solace for the *contre temps* before him. "The reason," he continued thinking, "that we succeed so well when we are young, is that no one knows us. We can make what pretensions we please, who is there to contradict us? Our parents are only too glad to cultivate their own vanity in us, and would without hesitation kick out any servant or teacher that would try to enlighten them. The greatest fools I have known in my life started out as clever children, and those who I thought were the greatest fools in my young days, they turned out to be men of sense." This was indeed a somber reflection to him, for no one could start in life with a greater reputation for cleverness than he achieved as a child; to the admiration and adoration of parents and servants. "Providence," he pursued, "treats us like idiots. I come down here in this miserable hole to lose myself; who but a God-forsaken creature like myself or a Gascon, or people who could not get away from here would live here?" a satirical twitch of the lip accompanied his reflective look into the

garden. "Whig and Democrat, Democrat and Whig, what the devil does it matter now? I feel like my old Aunt Angèle when she was dying and some one came and told her that her American son-in-law was going to make Protestants of her grandchildren; 'My friend,' she whispered, 'I am near enough to death to see now how silly all that is.' And she had been fighting Protestants all her life. If we could only pass an act of oblivion against our memory when we get old!" . . . He might just as well wish for an act of oblivion against Belle's fleas. "What asses men can make of themselves in politics! As if they needed any extra occasion for the purpose! I had to turn politician and go around playing the fool, making speeches. I, who never could make a speech in my life; insulting people, fighting duels, carrying torch lights, walking in processions, shouting, hurrahing, for Fildepeau, and against this man Talbot, denouncing Talbot in all times and places, as I would denounce a parricide, spending my money to defeat him as if that were the greatest pleasure my money could buy." No wonder Monsieur Pinseau hated the flower that was named for thought! . . . "Well, we did defeat him. Talbot was beaten and Fildepeau was elected, and Fildepeau turned out to be the rascal. He is now living in France on the plunder he picked up in politics, and Talbot was the honest man. And what did Talbot want, in the name of politics, to be elected to the legislature for? To have some law passed for the improvement of our criminal courts! And Fildepeau, he wanted to get there to push the rascality he was interested in. Fildepeau I shall never see again, but Talbot comes down here to live alongside me. Every-

body else gets killed in the war, but Talbot survives. . . . And Talbot, unlike the elegant, the courtly, the patriotic Fildepeau, does not forget." . . .

Sad as the fact may be to women, it was not peculiar to Monsieur Pinseau, as other gentlemen can testify, that the nearest thing to remorse that troubled him in the haven of old age came not from his domestic but from his political mistakes. And this episode, in which he saw himself working for Fildepeau, making speeches, walking in processions, and "electioneering," as buying votes was then called, was one of which he was ashamed enough to blush over, even now when any blushing was out of season for him. So instead of listening further to his daughter, he rose abruptly from his chair and hobbled into the garden; as if, suddenly, he saw something amiss there; his old dog Belle as stiffly followed him and Mademoiselle Mimi went into the house.

It was not here as in the home she had just left. Ruin having come here in the form of bankruptcy had stopped short of destitution. The Pinseaus had emigrated into poverty, so to speak, and had carried some luggage with them. For in the first room Mademoiselle Mimi entered, a low one with whitewashed walls and one small window, were to be found a sofa and some rosewood chairs covered with faded blue and yellow silk that had once stood in her mother's grand salon; and a gilt-framed oval mirror and its ornaments on the little black wooden mantel. An old velvet carpet covered the rough plank floor and the remnant of a fine lace curtain hung over the little window. In the next room were the mahogany table and chairs and, filling one wall, the sideboard with some cut glass from the old dining-room. Then fol-

lowed Mademoiselle Mimi's bedroom, where, as in a cell, stood the great four-posted bedstead of her mother, without its tester—the pompous tester of rose-colored satin and rich pendent cords and tassels that had reared itself so haughtily of old, under the high ceilings of wealth and pride. In the next room; a startling contrast, was the small wooden cot and the plain chairs and table that Monsieur Pinseau had affected in his gilded youthful days, when hardihood, and defiance of soft ease, were his theme and profession; following the piquant example of royalty and other sybarites of his day.

The last room in the row was the kitchen, and here also stood an old piece of furniture from a former estate and a former day: the old negress Aglone. Bowed, wrinkled, a mere handful of bones in a loose skin, her clothes hung over her body like rags on a scarecrow, her headkerchief toppled on one side, her eyes were bleared; her mouth, toothless. She did not show her history, and it had been a fine one.

Among the masters and mistresses of New Orleans it was a general belief that every slave who became the mother of thirteen children purchased, with the birth of her thirteenth child, its freedom and her own. When Aglone bore triumphantly her thirteenth child she was still young, fresh and good-looking, for she was but fifteen when her first child was born. But she bargained with her master to give the freedom she had earned to her eldest child—a boy—which was done; and according to the law, a piece of property was placed in trust for him as a home, and he was apprenticed to the carpenter's trade; and did well in it as youth and man. When ruin came to her master, Aglone refused the choice

of being sold with her family in order to remain with him and his family. When again emancipation came and all slaves were freed, Aglone stood to her bargain. She would not accept the freedom she had refused from her master, as a gift from "strangers," as she called them; and given to good and bad alike. It was owing to this obstinacy of the old woman that Mademoiselle Mimi and her father had a servant to follow them in their emigration and that old Aglone still had a home and a family. For her large brood had scattered. Freedom had loosed not merely the shackles but all ties and children; grandchildren, great-grandchildren were all out of her life now; each working in separate capacity for separate aims.

She had become very childish, often mistook Mimi for her grandmother; the young mistress for whom she had been bought when both were children; and often she would call her master "Amédée" or "Dédé" as if he were still a little boy. When Mademoiselle Mimi entered the kitchen, Aglone was grumbling as usual, in her creole patois, complaining about Monsieur Pinseau. "Amédée bothers me all the time, he is always coming into the kitchen, he tells me how to do this, how to do that; but who is the cook? If I am the cook I must do my own way. Why doesn't he keep in his garden and bother with his plants? I don't want children in my kitchen, '*Vieu-Maitre*' always made the children keep out of my kitchen . . . they bother me too much . . . Dédé tell me how to cook! No! I will not do what he says, I have been cooking since before he was born. What does he know about cooking? Ha! he did not do that in the old gentleman's time! The old gentleman knew how to make him

behave! The old gentleman did not spoil him, ha! The old gentleman knew I was a cook . . . he taught me himself, ha! and he paid Larose to come and teach me . . . gave him five dollars just to show me how to make a *galantine*. . . . You could not tell my *galantines* from the *galantines* in the fine restaurants and my fricassée of turtle! He, the old gentleman, knew what good cooking was. They don't know what good cooking is now . . . they eat things now that a cook would have been sent to the calaboose for in old times. Ha! the old gentleman never came into my kitchen, he would send for me and he would say 'Aglone do this, Aglone do that,' and that was all . . ."

The poor old thing's head shook, her hands trembled, her voice whined shrilly. She could not stand agitation any longer, she was always slightly demented by it. And poor Mademoiselle Mimi, she suffered too. It seemed hard to her that she could never leave the house without finding some trouble on her return; always some disagreement, some dispute and old Aglone's feelings hurt. She had but one course of reasoning in the matter: "If Papa would only attend to his garden and leave other people's affairs alone! I can manage old Aglone so well; but he, he teases her, he puts her in a temper. He is too meddlesome, that is the truth." And she bitterly reflected, how in books, ladies and gentlemen going into poverty leave all their faults behind them and take only their virtues with them; at least so far as she could judge from the "Lives of the Saints," the only book she ever had time to read. But not so her father, he went into his place of punishment for past folly, without a single renunciation—in fact with all the honors

of war in his defeat, with his colors flying. How much easier would have been her lot had it been otherwise. If in all these trying experiences, he could have imitated some of those poor saints and martyrs, that he looked down upon. The rich, she admitted, might have what tempers they pleased; their money, there was no denying it, bought them indulgence. But the poor, the poor must, no other word is possible, the poor must be patient, good, gentle, forbearing, self-denying, long suffering, spiritual, meek, etc., etc.; not captious about seasonings, truculent over *gombos* and *grillades,* sensitive as to the color of a *roux.* "After all," she would commune listlessly with herself, going a little aside from the point of her argument, "what is sent to us to bear even in the hardest lives? Disease, misfortune, death, privations! I am not a saint, and have I not stood all that, and a sad childhood in addition which Papa certainly never had to stand? But, what of it? What is there in it all that cannot be borne? Nothing! Nothing! Absolutely nothing! But the truth is, we do not seem to be made in the proper way to support the very misfortunes that God himself (who knows all about us, what we can stand and what not) sends." And she would sigh, and as her father invoked Voltaire, she, in certain moments would invoke a certain rebellious thought of her own: "How easy it would have been for God to have made every one good at once? Then there would be no more trouble for us! We could then all lead the lives He gives us and not mind it. But as it is, He has arranged it so, that we fit in our lives like big feet in little shoes or little feet in big shoes and our tempers are as agreeable as colors that swear at each other. Aglone is

obstinate, cross and forgetful, that is the fact of it. She has almost forgotten how to cook, and Papa, Papa, of course has not forgotten what good cooking is . . . and good Heavens! He has few enough pleasures now and he might at least have his poor food cooked in the way he likes. Of course it would be better if he were like Père Philéas; but Père Philéas was a rude peasant, what can he know about good cooking? He eats only to satisfy his hunger, he knows no more about good cooking than he knows about good music. Ah, if Papa, would only grow indifferent to his tastes, become religious, ascetic, as some people do when they grow old!"

But there was no hope for this, as her good sense warned her. Monsieur Pinseau would never gratify her by a growth in this direction. No! On the contrary, he would continue to torment old Aglone and worry her about a *salmi* or a sauce as if St. Médard were as far from him as St. Peter, and Père Philéas as the Pope. Old Aglone was very devout; and the only way to get around her obstinacy about her cooking and turn her from her distress was to lure her away from the present, and this could always be done by talking to her of the church, recommending some new saint or prayer or scapulary to her. She confessed every Saturday of her life and took the communion every Sunday: a pure kindness, this was, on the part of Père Philéas, which however Aglone repaid by scrubbing the church. No one to see her, so old, so decrepit, would imagine she could go over that church upon her knees, scrubbing-brush in hand, rain or shine, hot or cold, once a week. But she did it, mumbling her prayers all the time, casting her eyes first up to the statue of the Virgin, then down to her

soft soap and red brick. As with her father Mademoiselle Mimi always took the part of Aglone, so with Aglone, she took the part of her father. What she called the thought in the back of her head she kept to herself.

"Poor Papa," she would say to the old negress, "you must remember he is a sick man and all the trouble he has had in his life. And you know how good-hearted he is! He would take the coat off his back and give it to you if he thought you needed it; and after all, all that he asks is a little more pepper or a little less salt, or the garlic, or the onion, or the bay leaf put in, in a different way. He may be wrong, but if he wishes it? My Heavens! all that seems so little to ask! If he wanted me to put molasses in the *gombo,* I would do it; if it gave him pleasure, I wouldn't mind. And what difference after all does it make to you? I should not think you would care, so long as you go to church and do your duties there. What would the blessed Virgin say if some one should say to her: 'You see that old Aglone down there, that good woman who never forgets her duties to the church, who is always ready to make soup for the sick, chicken or beef—no matter which—who rises before day and stays up till after midnight to do her work, who scrubs the church out once a week on her knees although her old legs are as stiff as broomsticks with rheumatism . . . well, she does all that, and then she refuses stubbornly to do what her old master asks her about *gombo* and *grillade;* her master that she nursed as a little baby and spoiled too.' Oh! you know it! So that he would run away to you from his own nurse Láloute, who tried to kill you once, you know, just from jealousy over that. You know that yourself!

And who was it, eh? Who nursed you when you were so sick three years ago? Who used to get up in the night and go to you, and give you foot baths with his own hands and made poultices for you and put them on, and give you tisanes, and would not wake me or call me when I did not hear? Who sat by your bed all day keeping the flies and mosquitoes off you? You did not think of *gombos* and *grillades* then, you thought you were going to die, and you were glad enough to have him by you! And now you cannot do what he asks you, some little thing, I don't know what, about parsley or onions, nonsense like that! And when I come home and see you bothered, and hear you grumbling; all my pleasure is destroyed. And what pleasure have I but my comfort here and you, and Papa?" and so on and on ran the little discourse.

The old woman would listen, charmed by that low sweet voice, her hands would quiet down from their trembling, her head stop shaking; while talking Mademoiselle Mimi would go around the kitchen, putting one thing and another in its place, peering into pots, pans, buckets, and jars, tasting here and there, to see what the old thing had forgotten or overlooked, for she was as blind as she was forgetful.

And then Mademoiselle Mimi would go and talk to her father while he smoked his pipe in apparent indifference. The pipe too, belonged to the velveteen jacket days and the rough life of the hunter.

"Poor old thing! She tries her best, but she is failing; she forgets, and pretends that she does intentionally what happens. She is ashamed to confess that she is not as good a cook as she used to be. Sometimes when I peep

into the kitchen I see her wiping the tears from her poor old face. . . . It is hard to live only to please and then not succeed. And what is there in her poor old soul for consolation? And when I think what we would be without her, and what we would have done all these years without her, I am willing to stand her faults which are only the failings of old age, and so, faults that we are all liable to. Suppose she were not here, and that we had to get in somebody else! You know how pleasant that would be! You see what the negroes have become, what they are about us. I would rather do my own work than have one of them; dirty, lazy, thievish, ignorant, insolent, they are not fit to be servants, they are not fit to be even slaves now. Ah! There will not be any more hereafter like Aglone. I should think the saints in heaven would like to look down upon her . . . she is a saint too in her way! Up before daylight to make our coffee, and you must acknowledge there is no one in New Orleans can make coffee like her, and out of so little and that of the cheapest quality—the quality that once we would have been ashamed to give to our negroes. And she is past eighty; just think! She was bought in the time of the Spaniards and was a grown woman working for us at the time of the battle of New Orleans. Don't you remember, how Mère used to tell us of her making coffee then all night long, to send down to the battlefield? Working for us then, she has been working for us ever since. And she would not take her freedom when it was offered to her, but gave it to that selfish Alcibiade, and refused to be sold, when she could have been sold with her family! And old and blind as she is now, who can market as she does? She makes

twenty-five cents go as far as a dollar used to go, you say that yourself. I don't know how she does it. She is more careful of our little money than I am, and in her heart, she is devoted to you, she adores you, there is nothing in the world she would not do for you, I believe it would break her heart if any one else carried you your cup of morning coffee. And you remember what a tragedy it was last year when I hired some one else to iron your shirts, because her poor old eyes could not see well enough to iron them? When I had to call in Père Philéas to talk religion to her? But I know she is old and very trying; I have to coax and pet her all the time, my poor old Aglone! She is too old to work, she ought not to be working. Some of her children or grandchildren ought to support her. They are free now, nothing prevents them. But, in truth she has lived too long with whites, and she could not now live with negroes any more than I could. Her place is with us after all. I beg Père Philéas not to let her bother him; but you know how he is. He says that the church is her only light in her darkness. He is right, I would do as he does, I would not diminish any light she has. On the contrary, I would give her more of it if possible. As for me, I would like her to think that God and all his angels are always delighted with her; or anything else she chooses to think about them to give herself comfort. I am afraid I should not care so much for them as she does, if I had her life. If I were God, I never would have created negroes; I would have everybody white, and rich besides; and good, even if the virtue of resignation should die out of the world in consequence."

And the old gentleman, although he did smoke his

pipe in apparent indifference, listened to her words, no matter how often they were repeated, as if he too, like Aglone, were charmed; as if they were an old faint perfume, or an air from an old song. The humorous twinkle would go out of his eyes, and his hands would softly pinch Belle's ears. His wife had never found it out, but his daughter had, that he was very soft-hearted. But he, nevertheless, would be just as cross at dinner when Aglone would bring in some mishap of seasoning which she, in spite of the charming she had received, was as apt as not to do.

In short, the only way to have the seasoning right and the dinner as it should be and so avoid disagreeable consequences was for Mademoiselle Mimi to slip into the kitchen, herself, a moment before dinner and season every dish over again.

PEACE, GENTLE PEACE

DURING the first days of evil fortune as many of us know, hopes have a deceitful way of realization, of incarnating themselves as it were, in some mere piece of good luck. Later on in the experience they keep to their proper position in life, always flying well ahead of us, like those birds we can catch only by sprinkling salt on their tails.

Cicely's recovery was followed by the arrival of what was taken as a herald of the new prosperity coming down the road of the future to her father. An old debt, proscribed by the war, was paid by one who refused to avail himself of his legal acquittance of it. The mother therefore, in the strange and out-of-date costume she had worn on her journey to St. Médard, with her little girls in their sunbonnets and homespun, sat once again in the slow mule car, retracing the route, going back from her Terra-incognita into that fair region of fashion that had lain so bright in her memory, during the stormy gloom of the past four years; for, as it was but right and proper, the rude and coarse garments of War were to be discarded and seemlier ones for Peace assumed. Surely, none could be too bright and beautiful for it! Nor for an earth whose day could be so radiant, whose sky so blue, foliage so rich, flowers so plenteous and sweet of perfume, and breezes so fresh and pure and playful. The chariot of Apollo and not the slow, dingy mule car, should have been the vehicle for it!

"What has been lost after all? What has been lost after all?" Any one in the car might have read the thought, that moved her lips to utter the words aloud and lifted her head so proudly, and flashed into her eyes so much light and color, when youth and strength and love gave the answer: Nothing! Nothing!

"No more fear! That was the best of all, no more fear." She recalled, that before the war she had never all her life known what fear was . . . how could she? Who on earth was there for her to be afraid of? She never knew what fear was, until the day after the city was captured, when soldiers marched through the streets in all directions searching houses and capturing prisoners; and a squad of them, with their guns in their hands, entered her house, the room she was in. She had never imagined such a thing! They were looking for her husband! He was not there of course, he had made his escape with all the papers of his office. But she grew so white when the officer questioned her, and became so weak, that he eyed her suspiciously and accused her of lying. She was sure he would shoot her husband on the spot if he found him. The bright day, flowers, the breeze, Apollo's chariot, were all driven from her mind, by that hideous day. When the soldiers marched out of the house, she fell into a chair, she could support herself no longer. She knew what fear was then! It was Gideon, their negro boy, who ran off to the enemy as they entered the city, and told them not only that his master was hidden in the house, but guns and ammunition and gold and silver belonging to the Confederate government. Gideon, the rascal, who was not worth his salt, whom she had saved from so many

whippings he had richly earned; and once when her husband had made up his mind to sell him, had pleaded and argued against it, even shedding tears, to save him from being sent among strangers, because she knew that then he would meet the treatment he deserved. She shook her head and looked out of the car window to get rid of the memory. She made up her mind not to think of the past; for even to remember it was to bring it back. She determined to dwell only on her relief from it. But what surer way of remembering it? For, she had not ridden any distance, when her thoughts took up again just where they had left off. "It was good now, not to wake up at night, feeling that the world was full of fighting and bloodshed. And, oh! above all! not to hear the guns bombarding Vicksburg! The first time she heard them, her heart stood still. She did not know what it was, and then, knew it was the sound of cannon. Cannon being shot off by men against men. She was alone on the plantation, that lonely plantation, with her children and one hundred and fifty negroes dependent on her. Even the overseer had gone into the war. She rose from her bed and dressed, saw to the fastenings of the doors, and knelt down and prayed . . . and stayed kneeling until daylight. The next day a swamper passing in his pirogue told her it was the Yankees bombarding Vicksburg. Oh; Those cannon! Night after night she heard them! for weeks, months. Even after the place surrendered, she imagined she heard them still . . . still counted the shots as they fell, imagined still, that every shot was killing, killing . . . sending husbands and sons out of life, and mothers and wives into grief that would know no end . . . and

she would picture these mothers to herself, these wives . . . until she could not remain on her knees but would pace the floor up and down, up and down, wildly praying in that position to God, that her sons might never shed human blood. Many a mother or wife—oh! she saw it all; over and over again,—perhaps, the one whose son or husband was killed at that very moment would not know it until the war was over and maybe would be waiting to see her boy or her husband come back, alive and well and strong . . . and he . . . a mangled, shattered corpse! Perhaps, she would read it in some old, soiled, ragged newspaper, such as then was passed along from hand to hand read in such a newspaper, handed to her casually by a passing stranger, . . . what at other times ministers, friends, relations, could not find words kind enough to prepare her for . . ."

Again she shook her head and looked out of the window, but the streets were all so strange she could not tell where she was, how far from her ride's end.

"Mama," whispered Cicely, plucking at her sleeve, "make Polly stop talking, she is telling everything to that stranger."

She leaned forward and looked at Polly, who was seated by the friend of her first ride in the car,—the old gentleman who looked like General Lee.

"Oh, we hate the city," she was telling him, "we all hate the city. But we don't mind it."

"That's right," answered the old gentleman heartily, "it's best not to mind things one hates."

"Yes, that's what Papa told us," she assented affably. "He told us not to pay any attention to the Yankees, the United States soldiers, I mean; to walk right along when

we met them just as if we didn't see 'em, them, I mean."

"But if you do that, you may forget to hate them."

"Oh, no, indeed," confidently, "we would always hate 'em whether we saw 'em or not. Everybody hates Yankees, I reckon."

"Mama, Mama," whispered Cicely again in agony, "please make her stop talking."

The mother shook her head at Polly, but the stranger smiled when he saw it, as if he were anything but a stranger, and far too much amused to wish the conversation arrested. And then, again—so strange it seemed in a street car—came to the mother's mind, another memory, that clutched and held her fast, struggle as she would to escape it. Another night it was, the night when lying awake—for by degrees she grew afraid to sleep at night,—she heard a noise on the Bayou, a noise that made her think she was dreaming. She slipped out of her bed and crept to the window and, lifting one little corner of the curtain, peeped through, and saw—if she had seen the heavens open and hell itself revealed to her, she could not have been more terrified—she saw a vessel gliding stealthily by, down the Bayou, a transport—she could make out the cannon on it. She almost lost consciousness, she was so frightened, she shook as if she had an ague, she could not speak for the chattering of her teeth, she clasped her hands together with her utmost strength to stop their trembling, and when there came a muffled knock at her door, she almost screamed. But it was only Jerry who had seen the boat and he had come at once to her in case she too had seen it. She was herself again at once, and quickly ordered him to saddle his master's horse and ride as fast as he could

through the woods, to the nearest Confederate post and report that he had seen a transport filled with troops. Jerry did not want to leave her, but she told him she was not afraid, and from the window she watched him put off in a skiff and cross the Bayou, the horse swimming behind, and Jerry pulling easily so as not to awaken the other negroes in the quarters. How light the memory came and went, like a flitting shadow. . . .

A white crape, hanging from one of the little cottage doors, carried her thoughts back again to the plantation. Everything took her back, there. She could not get away from it rowing as hard as she could against the current of her thoughts, as she used to see the negroes row against the current of the Bayou; and still the current would carry her on.

She saw now, in a moment, the whole picture of that Summer, that terrible Summer, when the typhoid fever broke out, and ten of the negroes, stalwart men and women, died, one after the other, in spite of all that the doctors' books recommended, in spite of all that any one could do. She wore herself out, nursing them and used up all her fine white linen sheets for winding sheets —the negroes' sheets being unbleached and so coarse— not all her sheets, for she had saved two, for herself or her husband or in case one of the children should . . . no, no! she must not remember that. When she did it, how afraid she was that some one would find it out—that she was saving two sheets—that terror was the worst of all the terrors of the war. The others were nothing in comparison to it—the terror that one of them, one of her children or her husband should die like the negroes in helpless misery. That Jerry, the carpenter, should come

and measure the corpse for a coffin as she had seen him do so often for the negroes. Ah! how she used to wonder what she would do—for she could not control her thoughts then any more than now—if she would allow the negroes to come and sing as they did over their own dead. No! she knew that she could not, nor her husband, brave as he was, if he were there. And the coffin would be put into a skiff, and they all, in their skiffs would row down the Bayou, following it, the skiff with the coffin, which was always rowed by the best pullers—Lafayette and John Bull. They died too of the typhoid fever, themselves, the last of all. She sat by them to the end, first one and then the other; telling each how good he had been to master, mistress, and the children and that God would be good to them too and forgive them all their sins. But they had no sins at that moment in her eyes; and they would all meet again, some day, and would all be together in heaven. That was the best consolation for them all—that they would all meet again. And they all asked, men and women, that their master, or if he were not there, that she would stand by them until all was over, that is if they were conscious; for some of them went into delirium at the first access of fever and never became sensible. The men would laugh and talk and whistle to their dogs thinking they were at a coon hunt or snap their fingers and try to move their feet thinking they were dancing, crooning their songs about a "yeller gal" or the "paterol" catching them. And she saw herself and her children, in the skiff of mourners, gliding over the dark, deep water of the Bayou. The plantation, bright with the sunset on one bank, the great forest on the other,

silent, mysterious, dark as if under the very wings of death itself, the tall cypresses, standing in long files—like innumerable multitudes of departed shades, far, far as the eye could see and above all; the Bayou and the forest, the blue sky, so serene, so serene . . . and thus, the measured stroke of the oars alone breaking the silence, they would come to the high knoll covered with oak and gum trees, cleared of underbrush, and the open grave——

"Mama, Mama, here we are and everybody is getting out," called the good little Cicely excitedly, pulling at her arm. They were at the end of their route at last.

She looked around eagerly. Yes, yes! this was Canal Street! The bells were ringing gaily for twelve o'clock and the sun was at its brightest overhead. As she stepped out of the car, she stepped out of the power of the memories that had fascinated her; like a hideous face she could not avoid and yet wished not to see. Once in the street, and looking about her, her eyes met only pleasant faces, smiling expressions, and show-windows full of pretty things.

To a stranger, one that is who had traveled and knew the proper standards of comparison, it was an ugly enough street, this, that represented the shopping center and fashionable boulevard of a rich and luxurious city. But she who looked at it was not a stranger and had not traveled. When she looked up and saw the blue sky, just as she remembered it, so close above her and so clear, that as a child she was sure she could see the angels flying in it; and when she saw the irregular line of the roofs so familiar that at any time on the plantation she could have drawn the pattern of it as easily as a scollop

for embroidery; and when she saw all the old names there over the shops: American, French, Spanish, Italian names, that she had learned to spell with her first a, b, c's, and the confectioners' shops standing each one on its corner, with orange trees in tubs before it; and the old church, too, like the sky, just where she had left it, and just as she had left it; when she saw all this so beautiful, so supremely beautiful and beyond comparison with anything else in the world as far as she cared, she stood still, and like the daughters of Jerusalem, her mouth was filled with laughter. Her little girls looked at her with astonishment, and almost disapproval; they laughed that way, but they had never heard her laugh that way before.

"The first thing," she said briskly, "is shoes." Taking the hand of each one, she crossed the street, through what seemed to their rustic eyes a most perilous throng of vehicles, more than all the plantation carts together in the Grinding time.

"See," she exclaimed, "Henry Clay's statue, that I have told you about so often! And there's the river! and the levee! where we landed! And all the steamboats! I wonder if the Bayou Belle is there still, don't you?" and they all laughed together. The Bayou Belle! They had all but forgotten her.

In a secluded and aristocratic community such as New Orleans had been hitherto, sentiment and tradition have more sway in the patronage of shops, than in the cities where the very restlessness of its progress, as commercial prosperity is called, makes too unstable a soil for such growths, which require above all things, the long continuous routine of habit. And among a people too rich

or too careless to care for price if the quality suits, and where competition, consequently, is a matter of no moment to tradesmen, there grows up between families and their purveyors,—be they of hats, or books, confectionery, laces, or silks—a loyalty of patronage and service not to be severed lightly any more than a friendship. And when ladies have only to select and furnishers to offer agreeably, shopping assumes a different aspect from the sordid bargaining, which, alas! dire necessity forced it to assume at a later day.

Mrs. Talbot entered the only shoe shop she had ever known, and such, it must be confessed, was its unprogressive character, that she found it just as it was not merely, when she left it, four years before, but as she remembered it from the time she was a little girl. There was the same dark red velvet carpet on the floor, with its great white medallions holding bouquets of flowers; from the ceiling dropped the same chandelier, with its bunches of red glass globes; the low chairs with red velvet cushions for grown customers, and the tall ones to which children were lifted to try on their shoes, were the same to which she had been lifted or later had sat upon as a young lady to try on her first party slippers. And to complete the picture, there was old Grégoire, in his short jacket and long apron and great spectacles, looking as cross and surly as ever. But his stolid face softened into a smile as he recognized her and she would gladly have shaken hands with him. He lifted the little ones to the tall chairs and getting down slowly to his knees in front of them took a shoe off each and held the ugly little things close to his glasses; then raised his perplexed eyes to the mother.

She laughed. "Oh! We made those on our plantation! And I can tell you we were very glad to get them! The skin came from one of our own alligators, shot swimming in our own Bayou, and our own shoemaker tanned it and made the shoes and I," she concluded with pride, "I made the eyelets myself."

"My God!" exclaimed the Frenchman, "and they are so bad too."

He got up as slowly and stiffly as he had got down, and walking the length of the room down one side, opened drawer after drawer, gleaning various kinds of little shoes from them, and came back with them hanging by their strings over his arm. He held them for the mother's inspection: "How thin," she cried in a dismay that rivaled his on seeing the other shoes. "How slight! Why they would wear out in no time! They would not last for one walk and the heels are too high!"

"They are the shoes that ladies wear," he said, "they are the shoes you always bought yourself before you made them things,"—looking at the specimens on the floor.

"Ah! How countrified and rusty I have become;" she answered gaily. The old man, without listening to her, commenced to try on the new shoes. Again, in consternation, he held up one of the little feet and looked at it through his spectacles as if to make sure of its identity.

"Oh!" exclaimed the mother apologetically, "I forgot the stockings. I should have bought the stockings first, I am so sorry!"

"You had to make your stockings, too, out there?" he asked.

"Oh, yes! we knit them, we all wore knit stockings."

"Well, the niggers wasn't worth it," he said.

She looked on while he fitted the shoes, smoothing them carefully with his hands as if they were gloves, looking at them with his head on one side and saying as he always used to do: "They look as well as if they were made to order."

"And I am going to try a pair of ready made shoes myself," she responded, "instead of going to the expense of having them made to order. We must economize now, you know." When this was accomplished, however, she went out of the shop in the old way without asking the price of what she bought or giving her address. "And now," she said, "we must go for those stockings before we forget them again." There was but the one place for stockings in her experience, the place where she and her mother before her had always bought their stockings—at Sinclair's, the old Scotchman's. His shop was rather small but every article in it was imported and therefore in local opinion, good.

Old Sinclair was walking up and down the aisle between his two counters in his same old morose, abstracted way. He did not recognize her, but the clerk she addressed did so at once.

"You should have seen the way old Grégoire looked at our knit stockings," she explained humorously to him. Those he showed her were fine, soft and firm, and exquisite as of yore in their finish.

"They are the real lisle thread," she murmured, as she held them in her hand. She said the words as if in a dream, they were so familiar and yet so strange. How important the meaning used to be to her, before

she found out what the real knit stocking was! What it was to watch the cotton growing, to have it spun into thread by her own favorite spinner among the negro women, and so particular she was, to see herself to the dyeing, from indigo grown on the plantation and prepared according to a recipe from an old encyclopedia of useful knowledge. And then, the knitting of them in the long Winter evenings by the light of her log fire; the children scattered on the floor around her or perhaps sleeping in their beds which she could see through the open door. If her husband were there, he would be talking to her of what they would do when the war was over. And if he were not there she would be thinking of him; wondering where he was and listening with tense ears while she watched her needles. But the plantation would be all quiet, save for the barking of a dog or the hooting of an owl now and then. And her heart would glow as she would think how her husband would praise her if he knew how tranquil the plantation was, and the work going on so smoothly, and the children so well, and life, after all, so comfortable . . . and an electric current would seem to pass from her heart into her needles, they would click and flash in her hands and the stocking would grow marvelously. On such evenings, she loved to knit; would knit with poetic fervor thanking God that there were so many stockings for her to knit. Ah! rough and uncomfortable as they were, the homely knit stocking had an advantage in sentiment and association over the soft lisle thread ones; they were merely a purchase, the others an achievement.

This time, she remembered to ask the price. It did

not go in one ear and out of the other, as it might have done, for it was too large.

"That's very dear," she exclaimed, "I mean," with a polite smile, "they are too fine, I want the quality I used to wear. I always paid the same price for them! I have forgotten what it was, but it was not nearly so high."

"Perhaps," the clerk suggested timidly, "you had better take a cotton stocking."

"Cotton stockings! How cotton stockings? Cheaper lisle thread, you mean. I have never worn cotton stockings in my life . . . and I never shall."

"Then, Madam, you must pay the price of these."

"I suppose, I must, if you say so, but it seems to me, instead of being poorer, we ought to be richer, if we have to pay so much for things."

The clerk smiled at her foolishness; not old Sinclair, who despite his abstracted manner, was always watching his clerks and listening to what they said to customers. He abruptly and almost violently joined in the conversation. He told the lady, still not recognizing her, that in his opinion, the war had been brought on for this very purpose to enrich the North and ruin the South—to increase the price of Northern manufactured goods and force the South to buy them; to raise the tariff higher and higher, and force away foreign competition and then put their miserable counterfeit substitutes for honest fabrics up to the price of the real, genuine article. She would see the day, raising his voice and shaking his head until his wig slipped awry, she would see the day when the tariff would be prohibitive against imports, when there would not be a single im-

porting house left in the city, when the whole Southern country would be the monopoly of the Northern manufacturer.

The old man turned away still talking excitedly to himself. She smiled now at his foolishness and told the clerk out of her wisdom that the day would never come when ladies would ever wear anything but Scotch lisle thread stockings, French silks, and English flannels. The clerk leaned over the counter and watching the back of his employer, said in a low voice: "The old gentleman is not well, he is suffering from great excitement. He has lost a great deal by the war and has a claim now against the government for an invoice of goods that were seized and held when the city was captured. He is going out of business, and back to Scotland. This is our last year."

She went now to the general furnishing establishment of the city—Fortuny's. On the way she pointed out to her little daughters the celebrated place, as she called it, where all the brides used to get their wedding dresses, and where they bought their real lace veils and flounces, and the jeweller, where the diamonds and silver came from.

In the center of Fortuny's the aisles and counters left a respectful circular space where, when he was in the shop, Fortuny always stood. Where now, stood his viceroy, Volant; a short, square, good-looking old Frenchman, extending to strangers and friends his alert greeting and friendly welcome, with all the shrewdness of a trader and all the *bonhomie* of a host in his face.

Before he saw who was approaching he had his smile ready and his "Ah, Madame, I am very glad to see you,"

but when he saw who it was, this was turned into a paternal: "*Tiens,* is it really you? Our little Madame Talbot! When did you arrive? But when did you come back?" he repeated in his strong French accent.

"Only this month, Monsieur Volant. I ought to say, only this minute," she added brightly, looking around. "And I am out of everything I need, everything, everything."

"Then it is not in Paris you have been this long time?" he asked with affected *naïveté,* "in Paris, the Paradise of the ladies, where as Eve did, they learn how to dress themselves."

"In Paris! In Paradise!" she retorted with real *naïveté,* "I have been in the wilds of Louisiana, Monsieur Volant, in the swamps, in the war. It does not look here as if you had ever heard of the war; everything, so rich—so beautiful."

The words died on her lips as her eyes followed the unfolding of silks, holding up of gauzes, the opening out of laces in all directions with here a showcase of fans glittering with spangles and tinsel, there a rustling heap of ribbons and wide sashes, and a never-ceasing procession of shoppers, coming and going, just as they used to do. "Humph," grunted Monsieur Volant, "do not be mistaken, my child, we have been to the war too, we are still there I may say, but," shrugging his shoulders, "you know the proverb, '*il faut prendre dans la foret de quoi la bruler.*'"

"And Monsieur Fortuny? How is he? Is he here?" She asked after the proprietor of the shop according to the polite usage of the ladies of the city.

"Monsieur Fortuny is here, he departs for France, no

later than tomorrow. He is well and looking young, of course. Men of his age always look young when they are well, and old when they are not. Monsieur Fortuny is going away with ideas, he has plans, he is going to enlarge, to beautify, in fact, to astonish his patrons."

"Then he is not like poor old Sinclair, who talks as if he were ruined."

"Monsieur Fortuny is a man who would never talk as if he were ruined, Madame; he is a man who could never be ruined, no matter what happened to him. He makes gains out of his losses. The blood of the martyrs, you know, is the seed of the church. Shall I send for him, for you?"

"Oh, no, thank you, Monsieur Volant. I shall see him some other time. In fact I am very busy today. I have so much to buy and I know I shall forget half."

"As the ladies always do. And when one thinks; just a little notebook and pencil—a little list—a little memorandum—a little notebook, no larger than this"—he had been putting his hand in his coatpocket and now took out a little notebook to show her, showing the pencil, too. "And you have only to write down one after the other, everything you are going to buy—needles, buttons, pins, tape, ribbon, hooks and eyes, cologne, these are the things the ladies forget. They never forget a silk dress, a velvet cloak, a lace flounce." All the time he was talking, his eyes were busy watching the clerks and looking down the aisles to see who were coming in and going out. He did not have to walk up and down and pry and listen. Knowing the people under him as well as he did, and the people of the city, and being in addition a keen physiognomist, trained from childhood by the best of

trainers, necessity, to study faces and learn what lay behind them wherever his eyes reached, he knew what was going on without resorting to the base usages of old Sinclair.

He always talked to his lady customers as if they were children or at best only on the verge of intelligence. It sounded strange to Mrs. Talbot now after the training she had been undergoing since last she had heard Volant talk, but she went back instinctively to the time and the manner of the time that Volant recalled: the amused attitude of a lady who could not burden her mind with such details as the trouble she gave people or the price of things.

"A lady comes here," pursued Volant, "and spends her morning shopping for things she cannot wait for; they must be sent to her by a special messenger at once. Well, the messenger is no sooner off with his bundle than here comes a negro boy flying down us—'Mistress has forgotten pins, please put them in the bundle'—and he is hardly out of sight when here comes Madame's maid running into the store—'Mistress forgot needles, please put them in the bundle.' That is the way it is all the time. It gives them trouble, it gives us trouble . . . and all for want of what? A little notebook and pencil."

"Oh, yes! I know it, Monsieur Volant. You are perfectly right. My husband is always telling me the same thing. He thinks too, that ladies should write their accounts in little books so as to know exactly how much they spend; and keep their receipts, too, of the money they pay out. But when money is spent, what is the use of remembering it? On the contrary, the sooner we forget it the better." That is the way, precisely, that

she used to talk and feel. "My husband is a real American in his ideas."

"Our ladies and business methods!" Monsieur Volant raised his eyes and hands at the absurdity of the connection. "Why, they will not even handle the money in their own purses when they can avoid it. They prefer to charge a paper of pins rather than pay for it and so the clerk has to write it down on a check and the check has to be written down in the account book and that has to be copied in another book. Ah! You should see the great book upstairs that all the accounts are kept in. There are letters on the margin. He turns until he comes to your letter, and then till he comes to your name and then he writes down: 'One paper of pins, five cents.'"

"That is so." She laughed in a pleased way as if the description were complimentary and Volant laughed in a pleased way also, for it was complimentary in his eyes. What he most liked in "our ladies," as he called them, was their easy, careless extravagance, their utter indifference to their money and to the trouble they gave. That was being a lady as he saw it. To be hard-working, saving, wrinkling up eyes at a price, drawing down the mouth over a bargain, that was being a woman, being in fact what his own sturdy, common, coarse mother was.

"When strangers come here, Northerners," he went on, "and they look at their change, and find no pennies, they are amazed. Yes, and some of them are indignant, too. 'But you owe me two cents,' they protest, or 'one cent.' And then we have to explain that we have no smaller coin than five cents; and if we had it we could not make use of it; our clientèle would not take coppers in change."

"Of course we would not, Monsieur Volant! The idea of carrying around a lot of ugly coppers for the sake of one, two, or three cents! I like to have things charged too instead of paying for them at once. It is like asking the price of things," she went on easily and inconsequently, "when I think of it I ask, but the answer goes in one ear and out of the other. I never pay attention to it. But after all, what difference does it make? If one needs a thing, one must have it."

"And ladies always think they need what they want."

"Of course," she answered, not seeing his fine irony.

"It is upon this truth, Madame, that we build our trade. It is our rock," his eyes twinkling maliciously, "and the one who makes most profit in our business, is precisely the one who is most successful in making the ladies believe that what they want is what they need.

She laughed pleasantly. He was the same Volant that her mother used to chat with just as she was doing now when she was a little girl like Cicely and Polly; and he looked no older then, than he did at that moment.

By an effort she recalled all she intended to buy when she left home and a great deal more, many things that she did not know she needed until she saw them. Just as she used to, just as she used to, when sometimes she would go into a shop "*en passant*" without wanting to buy a thing and these would be very likely the occasions on which she would buy most. But as the clerk always assured her, if she had a thing in the house she could always find a need for it. Many a time when she heard of a case of distress, all that she had to do was to go to an *armoire* and take out flannel, linen, calico, a shawl, and send them to the unfortunate woman without having

to buy a thing. Hats she could not find at Fortuny's. From time immemorial, Florette's was the only place for hats; that is, since Florette the handsome black-eyed girl who used to take the bonnets to the homes of the ladies, to try them on there (for exclusive ladies would not try on hats or dresses either at a modiste's) since Florette had found the capital, the fates alone knew how or where, to buy out her patron and set herself up in old Victorine's place. A youthful and blooming successor she was to that ancient milliner about whom the old grandmothers used to whisper such interesting stories to one another. But the stories! the stories! whatever a woman does seems to contain a story, even to selling bonnets.

Many a court beauty, however, has received her advance in life for no better qualities and no more beautiful black eyes than Florette's. And like many a thus advanced beauty, Florette displayed such aptitude in her opportunities, such cleverness, such tact, quickness of tongue, versatility of decorum, that she exorcised her past from the memory of those who knew the truth about it. To people who did not know the truth, and these after all are the only impartial judges in this world, she seemed to have stepped from obscurity into full-fledged divinity, by as natural, simple, and innocent a process as Minerva or Cinderella. She was now well on the way to old age, herself, and by the utmost reach of her art looked no younger than fifty, yet, she was still handsome, still amiable, still the black-eyed, strapping Florette who used to carry bandboxes through the streets, past all the rich gentlemen's offices, even if she had to go out of her way to do so.

When her old client entered the room, Florette gave an exclamation such as one utters at a calamity.

"Ah, Madame! Is it you? No, it is not you! No, impossible! Ah, *Dieu!* Just Heavens! Ah! Ah! No! No! not here! Not out here! In my office, in my office!" leading the way into a kind of boudoir at the back of her shop. "But when did you arrive? Three weeks here without coming to see me! You should have come straight here from the boat. You should not have gone through the streets before coming to see me! I would have sent to the boat to you! I would have sent César to you! César! César!" she called aloud and when her principal shop woman came, a sedate, plainly dressed woman, with a black silk apron on (Florette had no Florettes about her, we may be sure). César, bring some bonnets for Madame and for the young ladies."

She took off Madame's bonnet herself and raised her eyes to heaven as she held it up in her hands: "Ah! war, war, what do you make us suffer! It is what I say all the time; nothing, nothing, is worth a war. If you cannot gain what you want in peace, give it up! The church is right, it is better to forgive your enemies; you lose less in the end." It is hardly necessary to say that Florette was on good terms with the church. One of the qualities of such women is to disarm their official judges, nay, even their executioners, and she was quite in the position to quote the church, accurately or inaccurately. Until César came back with the bandboxes, she continued her subject.

"Nothing is so old-fashioned, nothing, as an old-fashioned bonnet! Only five years ago, this was the last smile of fashion. The changes, you say, the changes

in politics? I assure you the changes in politics are nothing to the changes in fashion. I myself, what do I know, I came from Paris last fall. I go in a month, I may find everything changed. When I left, it was all, Empress Eugénie still; . . . a graceful, beautiful figure *de rigueur;* the Andalusian figure, and to be *blonde;* the hair in curls, *en cache peigne.*" She turned her head to show her luxuriant bunch of artificial curls falling like a waterfall over the top of a comb. Very appropriately, while she was speaking, Henriette, the hair dresser, came in through a back door having finished her duties of combing Florette's shop girls. She was as old as Florette but looked her age. Both dated from the same period of time in the community, but while Florette was carrying bandboxes, Henriette, infinitely better dressed, was carrying only her little straw basket on her arm. Her mistress had apprenticed her to a French *coiffeur* in the city (all intelligent, young negro maids were then sent to school to a *coiffeur*) and Henriette had profited so well by her instruction that when her mistress died, she was able to buy her freedom.

She was perfectly black, a fact of which she was very proud, for it meant incontrovertibly the virtue of her ancestresses and she therefore considered herself as much above mulattoes and quadroons as they thought themselves above her. This consciousness gave her a fine carriage; she held her head high and walked like an African queen! Florette, herself, did not walk more admirably.

She was dressed, (no one had ever seen her dressed differently), in a purple calico gown, with a black silk

apron, a white kerchief crossed over her bosom; large gold rings in her ears, and on her head, a *tignon,* of real Madras, from which a loop of soft black wool, made a deep scallop on each side of her face. Here was some more unchanging reality in the apparently universal change.

"Still here? Still combing, Henriette?" exclaimed Mrs. Talbot, speaking as if after a lapse of fifty, instead of four years.

"Why should I not be here, Madame? And combing? I have been free and working for my living long before there was any talk of the freedom by the war." Her voice was musical and low in tone, but she shrew a dash of contempt in her words.

A shop girl came in with a large glossy black box filled with white Spanish lace scarfs. She spoke in an undertone to Florette, showing one or two.

"A stranger?" asked Florette, in a tone of indifference.

"Yes, Madame."

"An American?"

"Yes, Madame."

"The price is marked on it, go by the price."

"But, Madame," the girl sank her voice to make an explanation.

"Eh! Ah! he says that, does he? That he can buy it at Fortuny's, eh?" She turned upon the girl with an ominous look in her face.

"And you, Mademoiselle, repeat that insolence to me instead of putting the box back on the shelf and telling him to go then to Fortuny's? You . . . but I will speak to Madame César about you." The crestfallen girl

stumbled and almost fell in her confusion as she left the room.

During the colloquy, Henriette, in her grave, business-like way had undone the hair of the little girls and passed her comb through it, softly feeling the scalp. "This one," she said of Polly, "is thick but you must not cut it so often, it is wrong to cut the hair so often. This one," of Cicely, "has fine hair but thin. You must put some pomade on it. Put it on once a week and rub it in softly. The Americans brush the hair too much and they use too hard a brush. Use a soft brush, not a hard one and do not brush too much. The Creole ladies have softer, prettier hair than the Americans, whose hair is stiff and straight."

She plaited the little girl's hair again and tied it with a ribbon that she took from her basket and then took out from it a curious little pot of pomade. Florette brought the little pots from Paris but Henriette made the pomade herself. It had been one of her ways of getting rich for she charged for it as Florette did for her goods, not according to value, but to the customer. She rolled the pot in a piece of Florette's especial, heavy, unglazed dark-blue paper and gave it to one of the little girls; saying to the mother who made a gesture toward her purse: "Oh, no, Madame! pay me the next time you see me." And then, with her customary, ceremonious courtesy and "*Je vous salue, Mesdames,*" she left as she had entered by the back door.

The messengers from the shop were coming in now with constant interruptions and ladies were being conducted through the boudoir on their way upstairs to have their dresses fitted on.

"But who are they? What are they to be going upstairs in Florette's shop?" Mrs. Talbot wondered to herself. "And to be so excessively, so obsequiously polite to Florette? 'Madame Florette this, Madame Florette that, and I beg your pardon, Madame.' Since when, I should like to know, has Florette permitted herself such air and graces with customers? In old days, she would have been well put down in her place for such pretensions, such cool impertinence, in truth."

Florette tied the bonnet on the lady with her own hands, sparkling as they were with rings, commenting as she looked at the reflection in the oval mirror draped in rose-colored cretonne: "Altogether in your own style; plain and simple as you see, only the absolutely necessary, but elegant; a bow of ribbon, in truth, is all you need, but it must be the proper ribbon, and the proper kind of bow. The imported hats! . . . ah, bah! you can be independent of them. I know, I know," nodding her head significantly, "they are not for such as you." And yet Florette would tell another customer that she sold only imported hats and that to be without a becoming bonnet was worse than to be without a becoming soul; that it was the fashion that made the woman; that it was better to go without bread, than the fashion, that; etc., etc. And in spite of her friendliness with the church, she would shrug her shoulders and say: "What will you? It is God's affair! He created the world and He created women. If He had wished us otherwise, He would have created us otherwise. We in fact are His millinery."

She placed their hats on the little girls and gave to each her sunbonnet neatly wrapped in paper with the recommendation always to wear it in the sun so as not

to get freckled, and presented each one with a *cornet* of bonbons, tied with ribbon. She was patronized as much for her bonbons as for French fashions, selling them, however, only in her own *bonbonnières* which were as costly as her bonnets. But the more they cost, the more eager were the gentlemen to buy them and the ladies to receive them on New Year's day, and on anniversaries.

It was now three o'clock, the fashionable hour and the *banquettes,* as sidewalks are called in New Orleans, were well filled. The lane back of the home in St. Médard was not brighter with reds, yellows and purples than the street was with the gay colors of dresses and bonnets. Ladies and gentlemen were swarming like bees in and out of the two confectioner shops whose cases of bonbons, crystallized fruits and cakes of all kinds, and their marble-topped tables, and orange trees in green tubs, were prolonged indefinitely by mirrors cunningly draped with curtains like windows.

How such places dwell in the memory! It had been one of Mrs. Talbot's pleasures on the plantation—when cruelly fretted by a spoiled appetite, discontented with a monotonous fare of hominy, bacon, corn bread, and molasses—to dream of the *sorbets* and *biscuits,* cakes, *patés,* and bonbons of Félix. And she used to picture herself, when all the tribulations of the war were over and ended (ended as she always ended them with the triumph of the right people), how she and her friends would drop into Félix's again and laugh and talk of their adventures as they would laugh and talk of adventures at a masked ball, over the supper table. But it was not she nor her friends who were doing the

laughing and talking now. She looked around, most of the men were officers in uniform. A few months ago, had they come to the plantation, she would have been frightened to death at the sight of them and very likely, they would have accosted her, pistol in hand, threatening to hang her husband if they caught him; and she would pray God to keep them from ever catching him, or burning her home as they also threatened. And now, she and they were eating cakes at the same counter! Silver half dollars were raining down on the marble counters, and the *argentine* laugh of the ladies fell as richly on the ear. For ladies, when in company of officers in uniform, always seem to accentuate their joy by much laughter.

She bought a bag of cakes to take home with her and this was as near as she came to the fulfilment of her dream on the plantation. But when she was about leaving the place an unexpected pleasure seemed to fall to her. A smile came over her face, the instinctive smile at recognizing a friend among strangers and aliens. Mademoiselle Coralie, it was, Mademoiselle Coralie Chépé, her old protégée, dependent and kind of nursery governess and companion, not that she had needed either, but Mademoiselle Coralie's troubles were at that time, very great, and her manner of describing them, pathetic.

And, in fact, it was her necessities not her abilities that had secured to Mademoiselle Coralie her position —which included, besides a home and a salary, all that a kind-hearted, rich friend is willing to give to a poor and needy one. Who, save a friend, would have recognized Mademoiselle Coralie in a fresh silk dress, scintillating with jet trimmings; her coquettish little head with

its crisp, curling black hair loaded with a bonnet full of flowers, her black eyes, brimming over with arch looks, her full lips, with smiles, her dark complexion, roseate with cosmetics? No one would have supposed, she was not pretty, she knew so well how to convey the impression that she was; even a very ugly black mole on her cheek had been touched up into a kind of ornament.

Her old patron extended her hand, stepping forward, but before she had time to call Mademoiselle Coralie's name, she saw that the lady was not she, that is she looked and acted as a stranger would have done. There was no recognition in her face, none at all, and she turned away with her companion, an officer in uniform.

"That is very strange!" exclaimed Mrs. Talbot, involuntarily aloud: "I was sure it was she but she was dressed too fine for Coralie."

It was not so strange as she found out afterward.

WALKING THE RAINBOW

In spite of the careful attention of friends and the assiduities of talebearers, we live in a woeful state of ignorance as to the true condition of the sentiments of any one about us. And when we interrogate our own judgment, we get no better enlightenment, for unfortunately we are all addicted to the pleasant habit of counting as friends, those whom we like; as enemies, those whom we dislike.

For that reason alone, and only that reason, Mr. Talbot's memory did not carry Monsieur Pinseau as a friend. The ridiculous attempts at speechmaking and the undignified campaign activities in favor of a political trickster, that rankled so painfully in the creole gentleman's remembrances of the past, did not trouble the American at all; but the things that Monsieur Pinseau passed over with indulgence, those were the ones that Mr. Talbot's memory recorded with unalterable condemnation. In his own defeat and the triumph of the rival candidate, he attributed nothing whatever to Monsieur Pinseau whom he frankly did not credit with an idea in his head above fast living and extravagant spending of his wife's money—of, in short, playing the fool, as he called it and of making associates of men who were also given to that pastime. Which shows among other verities, how much more importance than they deserve we attach to our pitiful efforts to overthrow

a good character and reputation. When Mr. Talbot heard his wife's report about Mademoiselle Mimi he was vastly pleased. " All the money in the world," he said enthusiastically, " could not procure better instruction or instruction that agreed better with his ideas." It was what he had hoped, when he had money with which to realize his hopes. " A lady," he explained, " must furnish example as well as precept to her pupils." His objection to most governesses and teachers was that they were such a warning against themselves; generally, an ugly, forlorn, disappointed, and soured set of women with far more of the furies than the graces about them. A teacher should represent to a little girl what she would like to be, for little girls learn by imitation mostly.

Mrs. Talbot never contested the opinions of her husband. Her way of entertaining him was to let him talk to her and to agree with him. As for the reasons of things, she seldom thought of them. The things themselves she was wont to say were as much as she could tackle.

" Give the little girls a good model," he continued, " and the battle is half won." He would never allow a daughter of his, to [emphasizing his meaning] be taught by a man, for she would end by trying to imitate him and the result would be a hobbledehoy. Mademoiselle could teach all that it was essential for a lady to know; that is, how how to take her place in society and maintain it.

He smoked his pipe for a few minutes in silence and his wife knew as well as if he had told her that he was thinking of those old salons on Royal, St. Louis, and Chartres streets where as a young man fresh from the

University of Virginia he had met the charming society of the ladies whom he had never ceased to admire and whom he had chosen as the models for his daughters.

The only drawback he could see in Mademoiselle Mimi's school, was Monsieur Pinseau. And he charged his wife not to encourage any intimacy between the two families. He himself had never wished to know the man; had always avoided him and he would not suffer his children to be thrown familiarly into company that he disapproved of. If the world were to be made of such as Monsieur Pinseau was reputed to be, there would be no morality and no law in it. He knew personally nothing against him, except that he went with a set of men that flaunted their follies and so demoralized society. It was always easier to prevent than to break off. He thought that Mademoiselle Mimi had better be told this at the outset, firmly and frankly; then there could be no misunderstanding in the future. He confided to his wife this flaming sword and even instructed her as to how her delicate hands were to wield it.

"Do not let your politeness get the better of you. Be firm and decided. There is nothing that a mother should be so decided about as the surroundings of her daughters. Mademoiselle Mimi is a sensible woman and she will understand the importance of maintaining the standards of good society. A man cannot make his assertions in such matters as a woman can. A man represents at best only intellectual force, women, spiritual." After a pause he continued: "If women chose, they could rule the world through Society. We can better get along with a corrupt judiciary than a corrupt Society. Do not hurt her feelings but make your point clear. You

can be clear enough when you want. And you had better warn the children a little, let them understand."

"Yes."

"I will depend upon you to manage it."

"Yes."

"Do it in your time, and your own way. Ladies have a gift for such things. A smile, a word, no more; but what a rebuke! A volume couldn't tell more, a pistol shot be more killing."

He sank deep in his reflections, perhaps over some such pistol shot in his own memory.

When there was no alternative between doing his will and being disagreeable, his wife was forced to exercise some of the gifts which she also possessed in common with the charming ladies of his memory. For as much as he knew about them, she knew more. He saw the outside of their gifts, she, the inside machinery. "Tell a daughter," she said to herself, "that her father is an improper acquaintance for little girls who know nothing against him and never will know anything against him! Make Mademoiselle Mimi understand that there must be no intercourse between the two families, because in short, my husband is better than her father; Where? Great heavens! Where? In what salons ancient or modern did ladies say such things one to another? Perhaps in the wilds of Virginia, where my husband was born, but not here in Louisiana, where, thank heaven! I was born. If it were the truth, which it is, Mademoiselle Mimi would surely know it better than any one else! How could she help knowing it? What did her whole life mean otherwise: her misfortunes, her labors, her unselfish devotion? What did it all mean to her if

not just that? But tell her so! Make her understand it, which means to make her acknowledge and confess it! Mademoiselle Mimi would very soon put an end to any such conversation as that! And to save Society! Heavens above! Go around denouncing one another's fathers, brothers, husbands! That would be a feasible way of saving it, eh? What society would be left? And what woman would be sure enough of her own father, husband, brother—aye, sister and even mother?" There had been this consideration in some families that she knew of! "Go around denouncing this one and that! No! No! Women maintain Society by just the opposite plan. Men denounce the criminal but hold on to the crime. Women denounce the crime but hold onto the criminal. That is the difference between them. And Mademoiselle Mimi was right! A thousand times right! as a woman."

Husbands, despite their convictions, and their superior assumptions to the contrary, have really no advantage over other men in knowledge of a woman's mind, or, in short, of the inner determinations of a wife's mind. They can only know in truth, what the wife chooses to tell them, and a discreet wife often chooses to limit her communications of this kind. Wives for example, such as Mr. Talbot admired in the old salons, who were as unlike missionaries as one can possibly conceive. They were not women to brandish moral swords! They were women on the contrary, like Mademoiselle Mimi.

So Mrs. Talbot was quite clear, in this at least, that Mademoiselle would be talked to as her husband directed at the Greek Calends and not before.

The bright glow of sunset shone in the sky. It bright-

ened the spire of the little church and seemed almost to give a golden tone to the thin, weak voice of the Angelus bell. A few oranges still glittered amid the dark foliage of the hedge, the sour, bitter kind,—not the sweet ones whose flowers so poetically used to symbolize the hopes of brides. And the old garden, as an old face does sometimes from inward illumination, flushed under the golden and rose light of the sky, into a flicker of its pristine witchery and beauty. The children were scattered through it, fondling and caressing it, as if indeed it were an old face.

"I have never worked for anything in my life that I did not get it in the end." The husband spoke meditatively from another mile-stone in his thoughts. This was true, but his wife had never heard him say so before. There never had been any need to say it before. It was taken for granted. Now?

"But you worked hard for what you wanted," she responded quickly with her sure instinct of affection. "It was always said about you, that you were the hardest working young lawyer at the bar. I always remember a story Papa told about you. He was passing your office once in the middle of Winter, long past midnight and seeing a light in your office; all the other windows were black, he went upstairs to see if anything were the matter, opened the door, and there you were over your books, dressed just as you had come from some dinner-party or ball."

"'Well, Talbot,' he said disgustedly," her husband took up the story with a laugh, "'you must love work.' 'Love,' I answered, 'I love it better than meat and bread.'"

His face showed his satisfaction at the memory of it. She possessed the art of recalling such things and repeating them appropriately. Her memory was a treasury to her. She never forgot a face, a name, a good deed, a pleasant speech or a humorous incident.

"Yes," her husband repeated, with gusto, "I always loved to work. I cared in fact for nothing in life that I did not work for. What a man makes up his mind to work for, he can obtain," he added confidently. And then he began to explain his plans again to her. Any one could understand them, they were so simple and natural. It was true he had lost a fortune; everything he had worked for and gained since he had been a lawyer—and he did not count in this what he should have inherited from his father who had died during the war and whose estate had been settled in Confederate money. He counted as his own only what he had made, and no man had made more or larger fees than he. He called over, as lawyers never tire of doing, his cases in the past and the briefs, the "historic briefs" he called them, that he had written. Having saved his library, he said, was the greatest piece of good fortune that could happen to him or any lawyer. If that had been lost, he would have considered himself unfortunate. The loss of his plantation would have been nothing in comparison to it. With its accumulation of private notes and records, it was perhaps the most complete in the city, he knew he would not have exchanged it for any he had ever seen. And he was lucky too in having his same old office. He could take up just where he had left off four years ago and as far as he could see, it was only a question of work

with him, to catch up on the losses of the war. Fortunately, litigation could not be captured, confiscated or burned. "The fact is," he concluded, with a frank laugh, "if there is any important lawsuit, there are four or five of us who are bound to be retained on one side or the other."

The only change he would make from former plans, was that instead of sending his sons to the University of Virginia, as he had intended, he would put them to work just as soon as they knew enough of the requisites —that is Latin, Greek, and mathematics, with sufficient science for respectability; which was far more than the greatest Americans had started with fifty years ago. If there was anything in the boys, they could get along on the education he was able to give them. If they could not get along on that, it was a pretty good sign they would not get along on a better. The daughters would suffer less in education, for they could learn easier, all that ladies needed to know, and take more time over it. He had always counted on giving each one her dower when she became of age so that she could marry or not just as she chose. He had seen some unfortunate young girls marry for money, some literally for the means of living. A dower, he feared, would be beyond his reach now. The consequences of the war would fall heavier on the women than on the men. The lives of the men would be changed comparatively little. But the women . . . it was slavery alone that had kept them from domestic drudgery . . . he shook his head, and repeated, "domestic drudgery added to family duties." He smoked his pipe a moment and continued with a new variation of his subject, his wife listening without assent or dissent, look-

ing through his telescope whichever way he wanted; either end the right one for her.

He ran over the list of his friends who like him had broken away from all that had constituted life to them to go into the war. As he gave the name, his wife's ready memory supplied her usual pleasant addenda of reminiscences; how they used to like this one and that one, and how this one and that one used to like him and praise him to her, and all sorts of other items in connection with his friends that he had forgotten; tossing over her little memories, and rummaging in them as she once would have done in her great bureau drawer of scraps! And like the ladies' scraps of that time her bits from memory were all of beautiful quality: silk, velvet, brocade, real embroidery, real lace; buttons and buckles that looked like jewelry, ribbons, ostrich and marabout feathers, all too pretty to throw away but so useless to keep except as souvenirs. The duel that he had prevented, the ugly family quarrel he had stopped, a reconciliation between a husband and wife bent on divorce, the last will and testament he had turned from resentment into forgiveness of injuries, and how he had always stood by the unfortunate. There was not a friend or client he could name that she could not connect with some personal obligation. It was only the good lawyer's usual showing at that time and the wife's usual version of his services; services that only lawyers and their wives enhance with any glamor of sentimental obligation; for a lawyer's clients have no such glamor in their view of the transaction.

But it was a pleasant review and a drawer of scraps that any lawyer's wife would be glad to own. Even

old Benton, millionaire and miser that he was, had owned to her that the beginning of his great fortune was laid when Talbot was a young law student, and he, Benton, a porter carrying bundles of goods on his back up and down four and five flights of stairs. And there was Tommy Cook, whom he had picked up out of the gutter, for he could never see a bright boy run to waste without stretching out his hand to prevent it . . . and . . . and . . . friends, friends, friends, wherever they looked in the past they saw friends and not an enemy. For according to the pleasant weakness already mentioned, they saw in the past none to whom they were not friendly; forgetting, of course, contradictory experiences.

"I shall let Tommy Cook keep his desk in the office."

"What does he want with a desk there?" the wife asked innocently.

"Well, not to black shoes on, you may be sure. Tommy is a lawyer now."

"How can he be a lawyer?"

"By study and work like other men."

"But I always thought that lawyers had to be gentlemen. I have never known a lawyer who was not a gentleman."

"You have been very lucky then," he answered dryly.

There was silence between them for a moment, and then he took up the fallen thread of conversation again. "He has a pretty good practice already. He gained a suit for Benton the other day."

"What! did Benton employ him?"

"He needed a lawyer and Tommy is about as decent a one as he could find. He has been associated, at least, with the bar."

"Yes, as bootblack."

"Some of the others wouldn't have made even decent bootblacks; butlers, and camp followers, mostly."

She looked disgusted but said nothing.

"What," she asked, brightening with a sudden inspiration, "what has become of the Riparian case?"

Always before, that is before the war that had separated them from their past; in their talks about the future, they would discuss this case. She had completely forgotten it! What a prominent object it had always been in her husband's horizon! For years his ambition had rested on it. It was to be, in his eyes, the masterpiece of his profession, to give him fame throughout the legal world. He used to say that if he never gained anything else but that one case he would have secured wealth for himself and his children, so far-reaching would be the effects of a favorable decision. The fee was contingent, but he was as sure of getting it, he used to say, as he was sure the heavens would not fall.

From the time that he had been called to the bar he had aimed at that case, he had studied and worked his way into it with such consummate patience, and legal keenness, that he was considered the only man in the city who had a perfect record of it in his mind. It was as much his own as any piece of property he could have bought. No matter when it was opened, now or twenty years hence, it could not be opened without his appearing in it as principal counsel.

"How strange! thought the wife, "that everything else should give way in the South—government, states rights, social order—and that a great war should be fought and thousands of lives lost, and a mere question

of the city's Riparian rights should survive! That like a lighthouse it should still be standing after the storm that has strewn the shore with wrecks!" This led her to ask about their friend Dalton who, having studied law in her husband's office, had been employed in some minor capacity in this very Riparian case.

"Dalton? Oh, Dalton went into the war a private, and has come out a major."

"Well, is he any more human? any less like a fish—cold and slippery?'

As she had done about the Riparian case, her husband might well have wondered how such an idle and futile prejudice could survive the fierce tempest that had almost engulfed the National Government, and wrecked its apparently indestructible fortunes. He answered quietly: "He is very much improved in appearance and seems full of energy. He will stay in my office and use my library until he is able to set up an independent establishment."

A click of the gate's latchet caused them to raise their heads and look in that direction, and as they saw who was coming down the walk toward them, both exclaimed: "Harry Linton!" Both stepped forward to meet him; the aunt repeating with a glad smile, "Harry! Harry! I was thinking about him only today," She had not seen him since he waved his cap in good-bye to her from the car window when his company left for Virginia: the gay, young nephew, who had lived with them while he studied law with his uncle, whom she loved, it may be said, for his faults, for he had made no display of the family virtues. He was still boyish-looking, and had still the same old irresistible expression of friendliness and

good humor on his round freckled face and in his blue eyes, and his light hair stood out as it used to in thick curls over his head. The only change was a long ugly scar that extended over one side of his face, from forehead to chin, cutting across an eye. He looked taller and showed the effect of drilling in his bearing but he was still shorter than his uncle by a full head.

They drew their chairs together, the children clustering on the steps in good hearing.

"Well," said his uncle, "what are you doing?"

"No, no," protested the aunt. "He must begin from the time he left us and tell us all his adventures. I want to hear the whole story from beginning to end."

The young fellow laughed and told hurriedly how, after he was wounded in Virginia he had been sent back to Louisiana to recuperate, and then had been transferred to the Louisiana command where, in a desperate fight on Red River, a small company tried to delay the advance of the Federal army, which they succeeded in doing; how he received his wound in the face, and was insensible when he was taken prisoner and brought to New Orleans. After he was discharged from the hospital he was kept in prison until peace was declared. The children crowded upon one another to get nearer to him while he talked along in his gay, bright, reckless way.

"As soon as I could get out of the city," he continued, "I started for home. I hadn't heard a word from my people for a year and didn't know anything about them except that they had taken refuge in Texas—you know our place was just on the line of Banks's march."

His uncle nodded.

"And then, and then?" his aunt's voice quivered with impatience.

"The chimneys are still standing and that is all that was left to show that there had been a human habitation there."

"Oh! Oh!" wailed the aunt, "that beautiful old house! That fine plantation!"

Harry was too much amused at the story to come to waste time on the lament. He threw his head back and laughed as at a joke.

"I wish you could have seen the family come back! I was lucky enough to get there the day before. I camped during the night in the shelter of my ancestral ruins, that is in the furnace of the sugar house; there were not enough ruins of anything else to shelter a cat," laughing. "I knew they would come straight to the place as quick as they could travel, and I had a presentiment that that would be about as quick as I could get there from the city. Well, I was standing in front of my furnace, *looking* about for something to *look* at, when, here they came, just about dusk! First a broken-down buggy tied with rope, drawn by a limping horse. Elizabeth was in it with Heatherstone. Behind them came a little cart with a kind of cover over it, drawn by an old gray mule. Mother drove that and it seemed filled with children, their heads stuck out in all directions like chickens in a basket."

All laughed with him at this picture.

"Heatherstone was shot all to pieces at Mansfield, you know. I had heard that he was wounded but I really did not know until I saw him that he had lost both an arm and a leg."

"An arm and a leg! Oh, Harry!" cried his aunt in horror.

"Yes, and on the hand he has left he has only three fingers. The thumb and forefinger had to be amputated."

"Oh!" . . .

"How does he stand it?" asked the uncle, curtly interrupting the soft, sympathetic voice. "He was the last man in the country to play the invalid with success."

"Invalid! He an invalid! whew . . ." Harry threw back his head and whistled. "I was fool enough to think I might say something to him to show a little feeling, to express some sort of sympathy and that sort of thing about his being a cripple. By Jove,"—the young man jumped up to act the scene for them—"he turned upon me as if I were a Yankee. 'Damn it, Sir! Do you dare sympathize with me, Sir? Damn your sympathy! I don't want any man's damned sympathy! Take your damned sympathy where it is needed, Sir! We don't need it here, Sir.'"

He was a capital mimic and did the scene so well that one saw the tall gaunt figure of his Texan brother-in-law, as well as heard him snarling out his short sentences. "'I will let you know, Sir! I am as good a man now, Sir! as I ever was! I can do without my leg, Sir, and my arm, Sir! The Yankees are welcome to them, Sir! Damn them! My wife, Sir! doesn't need them either! My wife, Sir, at this moment is worth more than any hundred damn Yankees I ever came across, Sir! They didn't shoot off her leg, Sir, or her arm! And you needn't go offering her any of your damned sympathy either, Sir! She doesn't need it!" And I took his advice.

I didn't sympathize any more with any of them. You would never recognize Elizabeth. She goes stalking about in a pair of her husband's old cavalry boots and an old hat of his, and she ties her skirts up to her knees like the negro women used to do in the fields; and she wears a pistol stuck in her belt. In fact she does everything she can to make a man out of herself, except curse and smoke. And the more of a man she is, the better her husband likes it. The two are always together; Mother takes care of the children."

"How is your mother?"

Harry sat down and laughed at this memory also. "Mother is not changed a particle, not a shade. She goes stepping around in her old faded calico dress and sunbonnet, just exactly as she used to do at Princeton in that ugly old India shawl of hers and bird of Paradise bonnet. She is just as unbending, just as firm, just as sure of herself, and she keeps Heatherstone, that's the eldest boy, under her thumb just as she used to do me; makes him study of nights and tells him what great things she expects of him, exactly as she used to do with me. Not one of them will own to being hurt by the results of the war. They pooh, pooh, their losses. In fact, they live as if the Yankees were watching and listening to them all the time, and they will die before they gratify them with a regret. I found out," seeing that his audience was waiting in silence for more on the subject, "that Mother and Sister had about fifty dollars in gold."

"Fifty dollars in gold!" his aunt exclaimed in amazement as if it were a fortune.

"Yes, fifty dollars in gold."

"How did they manage to save so much?"

"They didn't save it," pausing to enhance his effect, "they made it.

"Made it!" ejaculated the aunt in still greater amazement. "How could they make money?"

"How could they make it?" For the first time his voice was grave. "Why, they were in some God-forsaken place in Texas where the children were hungry for food and cold for clothes, and they had to make money or beg."

"But what could they do?"

"They knit, they spun, they cooked," lowering his voice and speaking slower, "they took in washing and ironing and they planted a little cotton, only a few rows, for the knitting, you know, and at the end of the war they had a little pile of it stuffed into their mattresses. Of course it was as good as gold. And when Heatherstone returned to them he came in a buggy with an old broken-down army horse that the commissary department allowed him, as it was the only way he could travel. The cart and the mule he managed to pick up somewhere; I believe he gave one of his pistols for them."

"How many children have they?" asked his aunt.

"Five, they lost two. Heatherstone, the eldest, is a fine boy."

"You did not make up your mind to stay with them?" asked his uncle.

"The fact is, Uncle, when I went there, it was to stay with them and work on the old plantation; and when I saw Heatherstone, I was determined to do so, for I never felt so sorry for people in my life," looking at his uncle and then at his aunt, "as when I saw them

unloading themselves from their buggy and cart. I could have stayed willingly with them and worked like a negro for them the rest of my days. But they wouldn't hear of such a thing; grew indignant at the very idea of it. Heatherstone seemed to take it as a reflection on himself and Sister, and Mother waxed eloquent over my duty to become a great lawyer and chief justice of the state just as she used to do when we all had fortunes. They camped out that night, as they had done nearly every night of their journey from Texas, but by noon the next day they were having a shelter put up around one of the old chimneys. Heatherstone and Elizabeth had gone out about daylight and rooted up some of the old negroes somewhere, and found the lumber. They said they could put up a very comfortable cabin for the fifty dollars and began at once to talk about a garden, chickens and ten acres of cotton. I suppose Heatherstone, the boy, will do the plowing when they get a plow, and I have not the slightest doubt but that Mother and Elizabeth will help in the hoeing and of course all, down to the youngest, will take a hand in the picking."

In spite of his natural high spirits and his fondness for laughing at his people, his voice grew sad. "As they didn't seem to have thought of me in any of their plans, and in fact, so far as I could see, didn't need me or want me, I concluded that the thing for me to do was to come back to the city and see if I could not make a little money here. They will need ready money and that badly, long before Spring, if I am not much mistaken."

"Well," said his uncle reflectively, "I do not know

but what you are right. You selected the bar for your profession, studied for it and were admitted. I do not see any good reason why you should throw away all the time, work, and expense you gave to it. Your four years of soldiering ought not to make you a worse lawyer, on the contrary, it ought to make you a better one." He smoked a few shiffs from his pipe and concluded with: "And I have always thought, Harry, you ought to make a pretty good lawyer of yourself."

"I believe, myself," said the young fellow, rising, "that I could at least make a living for my mother and myself at it, if I had a fair chance. There is no telling, however, what the outcome of all this is going to be," he added, with rather a questioning look at his uncle.

"Oh!" was the answer, "I fancy, the country will soon settle down and go to work to repair the losses. That is what I am going to do," with a frank laugh.

"I had thought," the young fellow hesitated, glancing furtively at his aunt as he used to do in critical ventures with his uncle, "I had thought of trying something else . . . to make money a little quicker. Times are changed. . . ."

"But we are not."

"I don't know about that, Uncle."

"But I do know."

"I might get a clerkship somewhere."

"A clerkship!"

"Well, it would give me some money at once."

The mother hastily gathered her children together. "It is their bedtime," she explained with a cheerful voice, but trying to make her nephew see her warning shake of the head.

"He is no wiser about getting along with his uncle than he was before he went to the war," she said to herself as she left the gallery. But looking back from the room, she saw the two men walking together down the path to the gate, the elder one turning his head toward the younger one; and she knew, as well as if she heard the words, that some of the funds, brought by the herald of prosperity, was to be despatched at once, to the cabin built around the chimney on the ruined plantation.

"IT WAS A FAMOUS VICTORY"

THE bell of the little church roused Sunday betimes in St. Médard. No one, on that day at least, heard the trumpet at the barracks. A thin, clanging, jangling-voiced bell it was, and Cribiche rang it with no more sentiment than an overseer rings his bell on a plantation to call the negroes to their work. But to the ear that had been longing for a church bell for four years and had heard only the overseer's; to this ear, the bell of St. Médard, seemed in comparison with all other bells ever heard; even as the trumpet of an angel in comparison with the trumpet of the barracks.

From the earliest hour of the mass, one could hear the voices of those who were hurrying to get to the church and have their duty over and done for the day and for the week; gay pleasant voices, that made the pebbly Gascon French sound pretty. And if one peeped through the window, one could see the men, women, and children striding by in their clean Sunday clothes, hoofed, one might say in their Sunday shoes, for in sabots only do Gascon peasants walk lightly and at their ease.

For mass after mass the gay alarum jingled, until surely, only the dead of conscience as well as of ear could pretend to be deaf to it. Each ringing seemed to catch a different set of sinners or saints, the first netting the poorest and plainest, and each succeeding one ever more worthy game from a worldly point of view. The last one

for high mass landing the fine people in carriages, or those who walked only the shortest of distances, the ladies, in trailing dresses, in the most delicate of shoes, planters' families from the lower coast, and the rich demoiselles San Antonio. These were the parishioners to whom Père Philéas addressed the sermons that he gleaned, it must be confessed, from the other classes of his congregation. He was not a brilliant priest, as priests go, but he knew as well as any Dominican who ever came from Paris to preach the Lenten sermons at the Cathedral that in order that those who have ears should hear, one must preach the sins of the poor to the rich and the sins of the rich to the poor. And so it was that the hard-working, the dairy, and gardening folk who rose at dawn to get to church for the first mass furnished the spiritual exhortation for the leisurely class, who reluctantly left easy beds to catch, as they called it, the last mass.

"Ah, God! I cannot thank Thee as I would here, but when I get home where I can go to church with all my children, then will I thank and praise Thee. Oh! Then will I fill the church with my thanksgiving and praise to Thee!" As Sunday after Sunday rolled by on the lonely plantation, this had been the poor mother's vow to herself as she strove with her inadequate words to express what was in her heart toward the One who was leading her through such a valley as, surely, she thought, no woman with four small children had ever been brought through safely before. Not a Sunday passed on the plantation that, after hearing their catechism and verses and hymns she did not remind the children of what the Sundays were at home, where there were churches and Sunday-schools.

When the lessons were over, and she and the children would start for their Sunday morning walk, the little girls would still cling to her and beg: "Please, Mama, tell us some more about your Sundays at home," while the boys, of course, took no interest in them but were always trying to slip away on their own adventures. The Sunday walk was always the same, along the road by the Bayou to the woods. She, herself, was always afraid of the woods. Her terror was, that in some incomprehensible way, she would wander in it out of sight of the Bayou and thus lose her clue to the direction of the home; or that one of the children in their frolics would run away, out of sight and hearing, and get lost. But she cunningly concealed her fears for she never allowed the children to suspect that she was afraid of anything; one of her husband's theories being that women were as brave as men. She, therefore never went far into the woods; and she could always hold the children and their attention while she turned them homewards by telling them still more about anything she remembered, it made no difference what. She could tell an interesting story as well about one person as another and she could tell, not only her own stories but those her mother had told to her, which she had heard from her grandmother, stories that began, some of them, in the emigration of the Huguenots to this country, or the Revolutionary War, and all sorts of hair-breadth escapes of Continentals from Tories.

On the rare occasions, when the father was along, he would tell them hunting stories, for he had been a great hunter in his youth; and the walk with him as guide would go far into the woods to the *coulée,* a sluggish drain from the swamp whose glassy black water

held no end of turtles and deadly moccasins. Even the youngest of the children had been taught not to fear these last, however, but to kill them boldly with a blow on the back of the head. In the Autumn, they would walk to a grove of persimmon trees, where, if there had been frost the night before, the ground would be covered with ripe fruit, both the large, full round pink persimmons, shaded with lilac, and the deep red ones that when dried in the sun tasted like prunes—the kind, that as the father related, the Indians dried and pounded and made nice bread or cake of. In his youth, out of which he could draw as many wonderful stories as Mama out of hers, he used to go hunting with the Indians, and often spent weeks with them in their villages, as many young men of his day preferred doing instead of traveling to civilized centers. From the Indians he learned all sorts of curious forest lore: the habits of trees, the tracks of animals, medicinal herbs, and subtle ways of telling the points of the compass by the bark of the trees; all of which he taught the children.

In the Spring, the walk would be to the sandy spot on the Bayou's bank where the alligators laid their eggs. He always knew the very Sunday when the sand would be marked by their tracks, and following the tracks find the spot where the eggs had been laid and covered.

Always on coming back from their Sunday walk they would go the rounds of the quarters, stopping first invariably at the cabin of old Aunt Patsy, the most venerable negro on the plantation. Her cabin stood apart from the others and she lived by herself: a silent, morose old woman, but after the master and mistress the most respected person on the place. Often when the mistress

was surcharged with anxiety, she would go and talk with Aunt Patsy, and never came back without being eased, or without remarking, how Aunt Patsy seemed to know everything about life. On Sundays she was always found ready to receive her visitors sitting in her low white oak chair covered with deer skin. She wore a cap, the only negress on the place who did so, a broad ruffled white cotton cap, tied under her chin. Very black she was; thin and wrinkled and with front teeth that stood out like tusks. On account of her age, she was exempt from work, but she was always busy, nevertheless, spinning the finest and best knitting cotton and doing the fastest and prettiest knitting. She had no relations, had never borne a child, and her husband had been dead so long that he had become merely a tradition on the place. A boy had been assigned to the duty of cutting wood and fetching water for her, and this was her only connection with her fellow slaves. When she died, her funeral was made a great event. And afterwards the negroes and the white children following their superstitions (as white children never fail to do) in passing her cabin always looked to see if she might not be still sitting there "anyhow" as they said.

The other negroes in the quarters would be sitting in front of their cabins; the babies, washed and dressed, lying in their mothers' or fathers' arms, their bright alert eyes, glancing around and their little hands grabbing at the flies in the air. The other children, in their clean *cotonades,* with bare legs and feet well scrubbed, would be running around after the chickens—that is the happiest of them—the others would be wedged in the vise of a parent's knees, while their stubborn hair was being

carded, divided and wrapped into stiff wisps with white knitting cotton. Here and there, stretched out in the sun the half-grown boys would be lying asleep, worn out with the exhaustion of having nothing to do.

After the greetings there would be talk of the weather, and the crops, and gossip about the animals. Sometimes a group of men would be gathered on Jerry's gallery "passing the time of day," as they called it, in discussion generally about the cause of things—such as the changes of the seasons, the revolution of the sun or God's ways. And when the master was along, he would step in and join them and answer their questions and make explanations; until all the other negro men would drift in too; and their wives following would sit around on the edge of the gallery to enjoy the entertainment, commenting freely, and guffawing aloud at the good retorts, as each man put his oar into the conversation whenever he got a chance. Meanwhile the mistress and the little girls would continue their walk to the house and the little boys make off with their black followers at their heels upon some adventure, that seemed to be innocent, but always turned out to be mischievous——

All this train of reminiscence was put in motion as the car jolted and rumbled along on the way to church. Still, the memories of the plantation forming the background of thought in the city, as the memories of the city had formed the background of thought on the plantation! Mrs. Talbot's face brightened with pride as well as love, at the sight, at last, of her church. The sacred edifice, which during the week seemed to sink into the ground completely lost from sight in the busy

whirl of life, rose commandingly enough on Sunday when the shop windows were shut and barred and the merry-go-round of fashion-seekers turned off. Its only rival was the drinking shop on the corner. And blatant and brazen though this was on week days, it hung its head sadly enough in shame on Sundays, as if it knew then what it really was—not a drinking but a drunkard shop. How could it look otherwise with the fine old church casting its judgment day sentence upon it and with the stream of people passing under the granite portal, with that same judgment day in their minds?

With her children following her, the mother made her way quickly to her old pew, just as she had pictured to herself doing so often in the past. She could have gone to it blindfolded. A lady was in it who looked with haughty surprise at the intrusion and moved away to the end of the seat. She looked for the old books in the rack; they were no longer there. When the service began it recalled her to where she was; but over and over again she asked herself whether she were not still on the plantation, in the war and only dreaming she was in church, gazing at the window that as a child she had looked upon as a sign in the sky. . . .

But no, this was not her memory on the plantation! this was not what she saw there on Sundays, far far different from it! That was not her old minister's face and figure that ever since she could remember she had seen in the pulpit; whose voice had humanized the gospels and epistles to her. Looking around, she saw none of the starts of surprise and quick cordiality of eyes, that had made the charm of the plantation anticipation. She saw in the old places only drooping women, in mourning

or shabby clothes, and no men that she knew. When the service was over, there was no hurrying forward with outstretched hands of welcome. Instead of that, the imperious lady in the pew showed unmistakable signs of impatience at her lingering and brushed past her with scant courtesy. And then she saw, that the name on the pew had been changed, her father's and grandfather's name was no longer where it had been since the church was built. As in flight, she hurried out a side door and passed through the small churchyard which still, unlike the pew, held the name of her grandfather on a tablet. She did not linger to point it out to her children, and read the honorable inscription on it, as she had anticipated doing with pride on the plantation; but rushed out the gate to the car that took her away not so much from her past, as from the future of that past.

When the early Sunday dinner was over and a long afternoon lay before them, the family went out for the walk that always filled such afternoons on the plantation. The mistress, going first to give a direction to the servants, found Jerry and all his family sitting on their gallery, in their Sunday clothes, silent and dejected.

"Haven't you been out at all today, Jerry?" she asked.

"Yes, Mistress, I went out for a little while."

"We are going to walk on the levee to see the river, why don't you all go too and sit out there?"

"I have been there, Mistress."

"We've all done seen the river," added Matilda.

"But now you will see all the people passing."

"It's no use seeing people, Mistress, if you don't know them."

"Well, but talk to them and you will learn to know them."

Matilda shook her head gloomily.

"Isn't there any church somewhere tonight that you can go to?"

"I don't know, Mistress," answered Jerry indifferently.

"But you could ask some one."

"We don't know nobody to ask," Matilda retorted crossly.

"Oh! you may be sure there is a church somewhere hereabouts, that you can go to. Wherever there are darkies, there is a church, you know."

"Church ain't nothing, without you know the niggers in it."

The four girls sat around stolidly without a word.

"But Laura, Henrietta, Julia, and Maria would like to go out; take them to the levee."

"If it's good enough for Jerry and me here, it's good enough for them." Matilda looked at them with ill-temper.

They had evidently all been quarreling and there was nothing to do except leave them alone. But the Mistress's kind heart was smitten by their forlorn appearance.

"They are homesick for the plantation," she told her husband.

"And for some hard work," he answered. "I told Jerry he must find something to do. He is no more accustomed to idleness than I am. A good carpenter ought to be able to make good wages, and there can hardly be a better carpenter for plain work in the city. And he

must put the girls to work, they ought to make at least their food and clothing."

"If they are made to work, they will work. Dennis has had them hoeing regularly with the field gang." Dennis was the negro foreman who replaced the white overseer when he went to the war. "And as soon as they were large enough to balance a bucket of water on their heads they carried water to the field hands."

"Well, there is plenty of work for them in the city; they will have to be taught, of course, but there is no reason why they cannot learn," the husband said in his decided tone. "Julia is stupid but she is steady; Henrietta is bright, she will learn easily; but she will turn into a rascal. . . ."

"Oh! do you think so?" This was said in the tone of the past days when masters and mistresses took upon themselves the failures of character in a slave. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I? I have nothing to do about it. That's Jerry's affair now."

"But what can Jerry do unless you are behind him?"

"Jerry comes of good stock and has been well brought up and he ought to know what to do by himself."

"Yes, but Jerry was trained by a master; if Jerry were a master. . . ." The levee rising in front, a tall green rampart, interrupted them. They climbed the wooden steps laid against the steep side and on the top, stopped to look at the river, not yet as habituated to it, as were the other saunterers from the neighborhood, who, stretching their necks and laughing and talking to one another, noticed it no more than the public road inside the levee. The great yellow stream rolled majestically

along; awful in its portent of power and fatefulness. Down the center of its swift current ran a glittering way, shot into the brilliancy of polished jewels, by the sun's rays. Dim and vague, like a foreign land, the opposite bank lay across the vast width of water.

As usual, the father strode on ahead, the captain. His wife followed next, now walking fast to keep up with him, now slow so as not to leave the children behind; her head ever-turning to look ahead, and then to look behind her; her feet tripping and stumbling in her uneven path and attention. The little path made a subservient détour around a plateau shaded with trees, where the officers of the barracks lounging on benches, were smoking and playing with their dogs. Behind them, facing the road, stood the heavy-looking red brick Spanish buildings of the barracks, with its towers, from whose loopholes protruded the grim muzzles of cannon. Sentries paced in front, squads of soldiers were marching around inside, booted and spurred cavalrymen were galloping up and away from the gateway—at whose posts horses bridled and saddled were hitched in readiness for an alarm. The river, itself, was not more fatefully portentous in its aspect. But out of sight, it quickly went out of mind and the "nature," as Madame Joachim called the country, that succeeded, was in no wise akin to it in mood. In truth, it seemed as merry and convivial to the eye as the spirits of the holiday-makers, in the dusty road: the bands of boys returning from hunting or fishing frolics; negro men and women, in their gaudy Sunday finery and gaudy Sunday boisterousness; noisy Gascons with their noisy families packed in little rattling milk or vegetable carts; antique buggies and chaises,

with their shabby-looking horses or mules, filled with voluble French chatterers; and every now and then, shining new traps behind spanking teams driven by gay young officers who looked neither to the right nor left—greeting no one, greeted by no one. Sprawling on the river-side of the levee and hidden from view, parties of white and negro soldiers were playing cards or throwing dice, or lying outstretched on the grass asleep or drunk.

Built so as to face the river and dominate it by their elegance, as the barracks did by its fierceness, stately mansions of the *ancien régime* succeeded—memorials of a day when the city's suburb of the *élite* was expected to grow down stream; and specimens of the elegant architecture that is based on the future stability of wealth—massive brick and stucco structures surrounded with balconies, upheld by pillars sturdy enough to support the roof of a church; with ceremonious avenues shaded by magnolias or cedars leading up to great gardens whose flower beds were disposed around fountains or white statuettes. And after these, unrolling in the bright sunlight like a panorama to the promenaders on the levee, came the plantations, the old and famous plantations as they used to be reckoned, whose musical French and Spanish names bespoke the colonial prestige of their owners. Hedges of wild orange, yucca or banana screened the fences, but every now and then the thick foliage was pierced by little belvideres; from whence the soft voices of women and the laughter of children—sitting within, to enjoy the view and breezes of the river,—would fall like songs of birds from cages upon the road below. Or out on the levee, itself, the families

would be gathered in little pavilions, sitting in pleasant sociability, as the families of these plantations had been doing for generations, looking at the river and at the pleasant view also of their own possessions: mansion, quarters, sugar house, brick kiln, fields of sugar or corn, pastures studded with pecans, cherry trees, or oaks, smithies, warehouses,—some of the buildings and appurtenances as aged-looking and out-of-date as the great-grandmothers in their loose gowns, reclining in their rocking-chairs in the pavilions gazing with the pensiveness of old age at the swift and sure current of the river.

At one place the stream had undermined its bank and swallowed up a huge horseshoe of land, taking levee and road with it. A new levee, whose fresh earth crumbled under the feet, had been thrown up around the breach; and a new road run, curving boldly into the privacy of a garden, or the symmetrical furrows of a field. A half-mile beyond, the river seemed to drop its booty of soil seized above, and was forming a new bank; the *batture,* as it is called, could be seen shoaling up bare and glistening wet, far outside the levee.

"There!" the father stopped suddenly, and turning his back to the river, pointed with fine dramatic effect in the opposite direction, his face beaming with pleasure at the culmination of his carefully guarded surprise. "There it is! The field of the Battle of New Orleans! That is the monument!"

As he glanced down to see the effect, he could behold the glow from his face reflected in each little face looking up to him, as the glow of the sunset had been reflected in the surface of the river. And yet what could be more

commonplace to these children than a battlefield? What else had they heard of for years but of winning and losing battles? Each one of the little band was surely qualified to say "Whatever my ignorance about other things, I at least know war." But now, it was as if they knew it not. Their eyes were gleaming and their little hearts beating as at the sight and sound of martial glory too great for earth to bear—the martial glory of poetry and history, not of plain every-day life! Breathless, they ran down the levee after their father, looking, as he looked, nowhere but in front, where rose the tall shaft that commemorated the famous victory. Faster and faster he strode, and they after him, until they reached the steps of the monument and climbing up, could look over the land roundabout; seeing only a bush here, a tree there, a house in the distance and still farther away the line of the forest. A bare, ugly, desolate scene enough, but not so to the little band——

"There were the British headquarters! There Jackson's! Along there ran the ramparts! In that swamp were the Kentuckians! There, next the river, the Barratarians! Away over there, hidden by the woods, the little bayou through which the British army came from the lake to the river! Across that field advanced Pakenham! Over there he fell! Up the levee came Lambert! Out there on the river was the Carolina firing hot shot and shell! Down the road we have been walking ran the reinforcements from New Orleans!" The fine old story sped on and on. . . . As he talked the little boys stretched themselves, taller and taller, and looked before them with the swaggering insolence of Barratarians looking at the English, and the little girls' heads

rose higher and stiffer and they curled their lips disdainfully at the foe, as ladies do in triumph.

On the other side of the monument, stood Polly's friend of the car, the old gentleman who looked like General Lee, listening rather wistfully. . . .

"The British marched up to the line of death as if they were on dress parade," the father continued his historical lesson, "and they died in their ranks as they marched. When the smoke lifted, and when the Americans saw them lying in regular lines on the field,—the brave red uniforms, and the dashing Tartans of the Highlanders,—a great sigh went down the line, a sigh of regret and admiration. . . ."

Polly's sharp eyes, roving around, had detected the old gentleman. Running to him, she caught his hand and drew him forward. The movement was so frank and hearty, that neither he nor the parents could resist it and at once they entered into cordial acquaintanceship with one another.

He was so tall and erect of figure, so noble of face, so soldierly in his bearing, that the civilian clothes he wore were a poor disguise. One knew at once, rather than guessed, that he had been an officer and had worn the gray, and that in short, he was one of the ruined and defeated Southerners.

"My father," he said, as he came forward, "was one of the Kentuckians."

"Was he?" exclaimed the mother enthusiastically. "'A hunter of Kentucky.'" And with a smile and a toss of the head, she gave the refrain "'Oh, the hunters of Kentucky.' My grandfather sang the song at dessert on every anniversary of the battle. And my grand-

mother used to say that they were the handsomest men she ever saw," glancing involuntarily at the stranger, who in this regard was every inch a Kentuckian, "as they came marching down Royal Street, in their hunting shirts and coonskin caps with the tails hanging down behind."

"Sharpshooters every man of them," interjected her husband, "hitting a squirrel in the eye, on the top of the tallest tree." . . .

"She said," continued the wife, "that there were no men in the city to compare with them and all the young ladies fell in love with them and used to dream of them at night; rifles, hunting shirts and all. Oh, the women looked upon them as deliverers. You remember the motto of the British?" . . . She paused, and as no one answered went on: "My grandmother said the ladies all carried daggers in their belts, and as they sat together in each other's houses, scraping lint and making bandages, they would talk of what they would do in case of the British victory. And one day they became so excited that they sent a messenger to General Jackson, and he answered like the hero he was, 'The British will never enter the city except over my dead body.'" . . . And still no one took up the conversation, so she carried it a step farther: "My grandfather never approved of General Jackson's course after the battle, but she, my grandmother always defended him. She could never forgive my grandfather for not casting his vote for him for president, she vowed if she had had a hundred votes she would cast them all for him."

The stranger laughed heartily.

"After the battle, you know, the ladies all drove down

to the field in their carriages carrying their lint and bandages, and refreshments for the wounded, . . . and they brought back the wounded British officers with them and took them in their homes and nursed them. My grandmother had one, a young boy not over eighteen, and so fair that he looked like an angel, she said. He was a gentleman of good family. But all the British officers were gentlemen, of course; and the young ladies lost their hearts to them, as they had done before to the Kentuckians. For years afterwards, Grandmama's prisoner used to write to her."

"Would you have liked them as well, if they had whipped you?" the stranger asked with a twinkle in his eye.

"Whipped us! They never could have done that! We would have burned the city! We would have fought from house to house! We would have retired to our swamps! No! We never would have surrendered the city." And then as the absurdity of these old hereditary boastings came to her in the light of the present, she stopped short and laughed merrily, "that is the way we used to talk."

They walked back slowly to the levee and mounted to the path on top just as a large vessel slowly steamed upstream. The children read out the name on the stern. It was from Liverpool.

The sun was sinking on the opposite side of the river amid clouds of gorgeous splendor. The vague green bank came now into clear vision with its plantation buildings, its groves, and its people walking like ants upon its levee. The rippling current and every eddy along the bank shone in unison with the sky or, indeed, as if

another sun were burning under its depths. The great steamship passed into the circle of illumination and out of it, as the little group watched it from the levee.

"I should be ashamed to come here, if I was them, wouldn't you?" Polly's clear voice broke the solemn silence as she twitched the hand of the old gentleman, with free *camaraderie.*

"Ashamed? Why?"

"Because we whipped them so."

"Whipped them! Oh! You mean the British in the battle."

"Yes, we whipped them right here, where they have to pass by. I wouldn't like that, would you?"

"Perhaps they don't know it on the ship."

"Don't know it! I reckon everybody knows when they are whipped. I would hate to be whipped, wouldn't you?"

"I used to hate it when I was whipped."

"Oh! I don't mean that! I mean in battle. If I were a man I would never be whipped."

"What would you do if the other army were stronger."

"I don't care if it were stronger, I would whip it."

The path on top of the levee following the bending and curving banks produced the effect of a meandering sunset. Now it shone full opposite, now it glowed obliquely behind a distant forest, now the burning disk touched the ripples of the current straight ahead, and the British vessel seemed to be steering into it. Another turn and it had sunken halfway down behind the distant city, whose roofs, steeples, chimneys, and the masts of vessels, were transfigured into the semblance of a heavenly vision for a brief, a flitting moment. Further on the

bank turned them out of sight of it all,—and shadows began to creep over the water,—and when next they saw the West, the sun had disappeared, and all its brilliant splendor with it. In the faint rose flush of twilight beamed the evening star . . . far away from the little church of St. Médard came the tinkling bell of the Angelus . . . the evening gun fired at the barracks.

TOMMY COOK

OUT of the office, out of the library, down the stairs and out into the street again, Tommy Cook saw himself descending and his little star of fortune with him.

"Ah, God! In jest and mockery, I played the thing I felt."

If he had known the quotation, he could have used it aptly on himself, although, instead of a gladiator, he had been playing only the role of a lawyer.

Once more he sat at his little table in a corner of Mr. Talbot's law office copying documents and hunting up authorities. The men who came in and went out of it, talked as freely behind his back as if he were not there and took no notice of him except as of yore, to send him out on errands.

The masters of the State were back again. And although they were but little better than prisoners in it and although at any moment, and through any window, they could see reminders of their condition in the shape of passing squadrons of soldiery and gangs of freed slaves, arrogant and insolent; although the chief of their Confederacy was still in jail, and all their officers disfranchised; and although they had to confess their past offenses and ask pardon before their late opponents, (like God), would grant forgiveness of them; although their land was devastated, their property destroyed, and their business extinguished; although their ranks showed

black gaps where once stood well loved companions, sturdy men and fellow props of the community; and although they, themselves, many of them were maimed of limb, and all of them maimed of members of their family;—they talked as if they meant still to be masters of the State.

How short a time the war had lasted! It seemed to Tommy Cook but a season ago, hardly long enough for the wearing out of the fine new uniforms they were dressed in, since these gentlemen had departed with their commands, breathing glory and State rights, taking their negro valets along with them to wake them up in the morning, and bring them their coffee, and put the gold buttons in their fine linen shirts. They were dressed shabbily enough now! Not as well as Tommy Cook himself; but as he observed, they did not seem to know it any more than the one-armed and one-legged knew their condition.

They will rise up, he predicted, drawing his figure from the only literature he knew—the adventures of the buccaneers of the Gulf—"they will rise up the first chance they get and seize their ship again and make every one of those on deck now walk the plank." In his experience, the recapture of their ship had never been a difficult feat for pirates. He had done it with them many and many a time in imagination. All that they did was to wait until their captors got to carousing over the spoils and relaxing into the easy carelessness of the triumphant. By the time the right moment of weakness came to them, the dissensions and wounds of the captives were generally healed, and it was only a question of knocking down the first man, seizing his arms, killing the second, and so

on—until the former carousers were in the hold of the vessel or in the hold of the sea; for unless they could make partners of their prisoners, wise pirates, as all amateurs of the black flag know, never failed to make fish food of them. And so it happened in truth. The returned Confederates, who had neither harps left nor willows to hang them on, were no sooner in the safe possession of their conquerors than they began to plot for their own political deliverance, and that of their State. They had found her on their return, under the ægis of a new constitution—a very different one from that they had amended by the adoption of the ordinance of secession, when they took the State with them out of the Union. A contrite and repentant constitution the new one was; that abjured secession and forswore the Confederacy; that praised God for the Union and sang hallelujah to it in every preamble of every resolution; that tested by an iron-clad oath as it was called—so impregnable was it against the Confederates—every member, every officer, every hireling in its pay; that in short, as far as a constitution could effect it, made the State as obedient to the hand that wielded it, as the commandant General's own sword. It could hardly be otherwise; as it was the General who had ordered the election, chosen the governor, fixed the election laws and devised the constitution to be adopted; who had indeed, in Tommy Cook's language, created the new government as much as God had created Adam and Eve.

But when the war ended, and the disbanded soldiers were coming back with amnesties for the past in their pockets and only an oath for future loyalty to the Union, as defined by the results of the war, on their consciences

—then was to be seen in all its crudity by the military commander the impossibility of making constitutions for absent citizens, or after bringing a horse to the water, of making him drink as anyone else but he himself wished. It was not the military commander, however, who was responsible for this ignorance about horses; it was the President who knew of no better way of bringing the conquered sisters back into the newly united State than by summoning the people of them to resume their civic duties; and by an election confirm all that had been done for their national regeneration.

Tommy Cook was too astute a politician not to foresee what would ensue.

What the Gulf and its pirates were to Tommy Cook, constitutional law was to the men who talked so freely behind his back in the office. They knew every device, piratical or otherwise, that politicians were wont to practise upon opponents; and clumsy pirates indeed, so they jeered, were the ones who had made the constitution they found established on their return.

The war that had dispossessed them of so much had left all their old boldness intact and their wits as keen as ever. That so long as war does this it is no good as war was an obvious truth to Tommy Cook. It was no hard matter for such men to get hold of the arsenal of the ship, that is the legislature of the State; and it was not long before they were throwing overboard their late captors, with all their sanctimonious adjurations, prayers and preambles; stripping the penitential shift from the state and kicking the test oath out of the way; paying in their proceedings as little regard to the commanding General as he had done to them in his proceedings. And

Louisiana, (a State is in truth all things to all men) so lately cowering and whimpering at the foot of the conqueror, assumed the haughty air of one of her own duelists worsted on the field of honor, paying as a debt of honor, merely, the terms imposed upon her by her defeat, namely—passing the required legislative acts; abolishing slavery; repudiating the Confederate debt; and swearing allegiance to the constitution of the United States as interpreted by the victorious side. But as no one underpays, so no one overpays a debt of honor, and beyond the actual terms of surrender, the State did not propose to go.

And now masters of their craft, the whilom captives, like thrifty pirates, began to look around them and steer their course in search of new fortunes wherewith to repair their past discomfitures and losses. And never, in Tommy Cook's opinion, never in history of pirate or memory of lawyer, had such prizes, in the shape of cases, sailed the sea of litigation. Peace had lifted the stay law that for four years had arrested judicial proceedings all over the country; and the pent-up accumulation of business was sweeping through the old legal channels like the Mississippi in an overflow through its outlets; carrying with it, like the same turbid waters of the Mississippi in an overflow, the *disjecta membra* of the wreckage of every form of human property, every variety of legal dispute—claims of neutrals for damages for property destroyed, for seizure of cotton whose value had risen from five cents to a dollar a pound, a four years' harvest of successions to be opened, rights of aliens to deposits confiscated in banks, of minors clamoring for justice against martial defraudment; old debts to be

collected or resisted, interventions of foreign creditors or owners to be adjudicated, old accounts which for generations had been dragging their ball and chain of debt and interest between plantation and counting house to be closed, and new ones opened; new mortgages on the land and its profits, new contracts to be made between the now unshackled labor and the now shackled capital. Hardly a man, woman, or child walked the streets but was a party in some lawsuit or other. And from the results of the war, its sedimentary deposit as it were, seeds of future lawsuits and financial complications were already germinating; seeds strange and foreign to State and city, like the sproutings of plants not indigenous, but whose seeds had been brought down by the Mississippi from another soil and climate.

Every lawyer, therefore, in fancied political security went to work hunting up clients and cases. The many who had no offices or libraries crowded the offices and used the libraries of the few who had been lucky enough to save them. From their dusty hiding places, there was a taking and shaking out of each one's old business some pieces of the time-worn and justice-scarred veterans of litigation that had followed the steps of the State from the beginning of her history; relics of other wars and other dominations—disputed titles and boundary lines; contested marriages and questionable filiations that had been handed down from generation to generation in all their foul-smelling scandal, the *el dorado* of all young lawyers and *limbo* of old ones; the gigantic land claims involving, as the Riparian case, vast interests and fees that meant permanent wealth; all were being gotten ready

to be taken into court with their monstrous baggage train of papers behind them.

Tommy Cook's portion of it, as he saw without a doubt in his mind, would be what it had been in the past —to carry law books to court or briefs to the printer, copying documents and hunting up authorities—the portion of a scullion in the ship. "What he had done for his patron," he might have reflected, "others, more wisely perhaps, had done for themselves;" and when the absent patron returned from the war, he might have found what Mr. Talbot had found "*in re* McKenzie," as Tommy Cook put it, that is a breach of trust.

Sometimes a client of his would come mounting the stairs boldly, and open the door without knocking and enter the room, as clients did with him; but at the sight of the masterful gentlemen talking so eloquently within, a quick retreat would be beaten; and Tommy after a little while would rise and follow him into the street and find him waiting at a corner, with some piece of law business hidden, as it were, under his coat; and they would hurry to some barroom to hold a quick consultation, and Tommy would return with the piece of business hidden under his coat, and sit again at his table in the corner, more reflective than ever.

There was indeed as much work ahead of the lawyers at the opening of peace as there had been fighting at the opening of war; and they were as keen for work now as they were for fighting then. But, unfortunately, they underrated the resources and abilities of their opponents in peace as much as they had underrated them in war, as much indeed as the latter underrated the resources and abilities of the Confederates in political humiliation.

What was the loss of a State to the masters of Congress; the loss of a vessel to those who have a fleet at their back? Hardly had the late occupants of the hold of their ship time to clean their conquered deck, and cast their eyes about them, as had been said, "in search of future fortune," when from every quarter of the horizon, they saw the ships of their late foes; every State of the Union bearing down upon them as one ship. The contest was short, and decisive. This time, not only was their State taken from them but their Statehood also; and the terms of the first surrender paled into insipidity before what was now imposed. And then, those sneering adepts of constitutional law, assembling daily in Mr. Talbot's office, saw a constitutional ingenuity and dexterity displayed by their despised opponents, that they in their arrogant ignorance never wotted of. Indians, so they said, never used their tomahawks with more refined skill against their bound prisoners—grazing, slicing, drawing blood, striking as near as they could without taking the life that afforded the pleasure of torture—than did Congressmen use the keen blades of their wits against the constitution of their country; until that "sacred Ark of the Covenant"—as Southerners venerated it—maimed, lopped, and mutilated, was turned to their astonished eyes, into an armed citadel against them; pierced with rifle holes, for the firing of pains and penalties at them. And now the whips of serpents became whips of scorpions on the backs of the Southerners.

Louisiana was made once more a military department; a Union General was once more put in command; all elective offices were declared vacant; negroes were given the right of suffrage; the Confederates were disfran-

chised and another election ordered; and the test oath like love in the fable put out of the door to return at the window—literally flew to Washington, and came back with all the power of the Federal government behind it, so increased in venom and force, that in good truth, it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for those whom it was intended to keep out of power to get in. Louisiana had no longer the dignity of even a white penitent, she was legislated out of her complexion and became a black State.

The wail of Jeremiah was heard in the land: "Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our house to aliens. We are orphans and fatherless . . . our necks are under persecution; we labor and have no rest; servants have rule over us. . . ."

"But there is a woe," responded the lawyers, "that Jeremiah knew not—the woe peculiarly oppressive, that comes from the degradation of the bar—the prostitution of our courts of justice to political greed. Degrade our profession, and Society is turned adrift."

Disqualified from Federal offices, disbarred from practice in the Federal courts, their own State offices and courts taken possession of and fixed in the hands of the political party that was to be maintained in perpetuity by the votes of the newly enfranchised negroes—the old masters of the State were reduced to political slavery under their former slaves, and they, the great men of the bar as they considered themselves to be, were to stand powerless in their humiliation and impoverishment and see strangers, aliens, renegades, any tyro of the law from among the camp followers or from the army over them, happy in their iron-clad qualification—draw to

land the great lawsuits and glittering fees, rushing by on the golden tide. Or as Tommy Cook saw it, as if chained to the masts, the captive pirates should see Spanish galleons, laden with the treasure of Mexico, swooped down upon and carried off by their captor; while they, who could have done it so well, so much better, in fact, were not able to move a hand in the business.

Pirates themselves could not have expressed their resentment over their luckless situation in language more suitable to their sentiments than did the lawyers of the State whenever or wherever they met with one another: on the street corners, in the barber shops or in their own offices. For lawyers, it was observed at the time, had learned to curse as well as to fight in the war. "If ever they get possession of the ship again," said Tommy Cook in his thoughts, "they will know how to keep it."

Those who had died on the field or in prison could not come back to attend these meetings, of course—the war had accomplished that much, at least—but "only their bodies were missing," as Tommy Cook put it to himself, "their voices were living if their bodies were not." For as it seemed to him, no counsel they could have given, no curse they could have uttered, not a bitter cry they could have made, was missing from the discussions he heard. From the time that he, a little street ragamuffin, had been able to stand on the outskirts of the crowd at a political meeting, Tommy Cook had heard much about the "voice of the Country," and had been warned over and over again that what he heard was "the voice of the Country." But listen as he might, he had heard the voice of only this or that politician. The

dead had often voted on political questions, as no one knew better than he, but the dead had never spoken, to his knowledge, for or against Whig or Democrat, State or National banks; for or against removing the capital from the city to the country; for or against any of the great, stirring questions of that day—as they were speaking now from battlefields and prison cemeteries on their constitutional rights.

"Whatever their political differences in the past," mused Tommy Cook, "the dead are all one side now, and they will all vote, and there will be no trouble about their ballots, there will be found no one bold enough to challenge them or cry fraud. So long as voting is allowed in this land, these dead will vote."——

"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided and that is the lamp of experience."

"No! Not that way! Loud and clear! Pronounce your words distinctly!"

"I have but one . . ."

"Hold your head up! Throw your shoulders back, plant your feet firmly, look straight ahead! Yes, that's the way!"

"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided and that is . . ."

"How often have I told you to keep your fingers still!"

. . . "the lamp of experience, I know no way of judging the future but by the past. . . ."

Such was the way the afternoons were passed in St. Médard after the stormy forenoons in the city; the father with unwearied persistence showing his sons how to stand and speak like great orators. That a man must

be a good speaker was his educational fiat about boys to correspond with the one that has been explained about girls. An awkward, embarrassed man—one who mispronounced words, who did not stand well on his feet, throw his head back and look you fearlessly in the face as if he were not afraid of anything the world could produce against him, who sniffled and stammered—this in the boys' mind was the awful counterpart to the stupid ungraceful lady in the little girls' minds.

The little girls followed the speech-making with intense interest, straightening their shoulders, lifting their heads, and forming the words with their lips. They could have done the "lamp of experience" as well or better than the boys; or any of the great speeches they had learned by heart, as they sat by their mother, employed in the feminine accomplishment of sewing.

"Let us not deceive ourselves."

"Say that over again," came the quick, stern command. "Let us not deceive ourselves." . . .

"They tell us, Sir, that we are weak." . . .

"Don't drawl it out in that sing-song way!" The boys and the little girls all jumped at the loud sudden admonition.

"Besides, Sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God . . ." First one boy and then the other made the usual failure over this sentence. . . .

"Gentlemen may cry 'Peace! Peace!' but there is no peace." . . .

"Say it again, this way." . . .

"Forbid it, Almighty God." . . .

"That's it! Now you have the idea!"

THE INSTITUT MIMI

COMPARED with the Ursuline convent, that is if earthly things can be compared to heavenly ones, Mademoiselle Mimi's school might have been called a small, a very small one. But she did not conduct it as such: she conducted it as if it were the great St. Denis of New Orleans, whose pattern, as its prospectus explained, was the great St. Denis of Paris.

Mademoiselle Mimi hardly could do otherwise, as she herself had been educated at the St. Denis of New Orleans and knew no other school; and as she said, she could follow only those examples that the good God had given her. Therefore, her scholars—ten or twenty, four or six, as the number might be—were called to order by the ringing of a bell at five minutes before nine in the morning, when all went down on their knees, crossed themselves, and recited the *Pater*.

The *Salle d'étude,* as it was called, was the dining room; the forms were its chairs. The writing was done on the dining table in the center of which all the copy books were arranged in neat piles. Mademoiselle Mimi had no plantform but she sat as though she were on one, behind a little *papier maché* table that bore a *papier maché* desk inlaid with mother of pearl (the old desk of her mother). And it must be confessed that the bell whose ringing ordered the hours of the school was nothing better than a tiny porcelain trifle, shaped like a

lily with a gilt pistil for clapper and a gilt stem for handle—a lamentable falling back indeed from the St. Denis standard.

The desk was by the window, and the classes stood before it to recite. When the scholars stood properly, it was credited to their account of good marks, as "*maintien*"; when improperly, it was marked against them. In the St. Denis system, there was no doubt as to whether one knew one's lesson or not. One was given so many lines to learn by heart. If one could repeat the portion without a mistake, one knew it; if not, not. The system was as clear as the sun to the children, and exactly as one repeated the lesson one was marked in Mademoiselle Mimi's account-book which was kept as if it were to be produced in evidence on the last day. A "P," in red ink meant *Perfect,* the value of twelve good marks; every word missed took one mark from the possible twelve and when the whole credit was exhausted, one went into insolvency with a naught, or even a cross; a bad mark against one. At the end of the month, bankrupts in good marks were put at the foot of the class capitalists at the head; very much, so Mademoiselle Mimi might say, as God does in his school in the world. When one could not repeat the lesson, one was held not to have studied it.

"But, Mademoiselle Mimi, I have studied it; I assure you I have studied it!" one would cry.

"Ah! my child, if you had studied it, you would know it," was the just answer.

When one did not study at all, was in fact lazy and stupid, one received the fool's cap and was stood in the corner; and when one pretended not to mind this and

played the impertinent "*faisait l'impertinent*" in school language, by making grimaces and signs to the other scholars, then old Aglone was called in from the kitchen to pin a dish-cloth to one's tail-coat or frock. Ah! this hurt! This cut the pride and brought tears to the dryest-eyed masculine or feminine! The punishment did not belong to the original St. Denis system—it was an addition, or rather an innovation of Mademoiselle Mimi's—but it was one whose efficacy she knew by experience, for it was, from time immemorial, the punishment of cooks upon children who came into their kitchen and played the impertinent there.

Heu! what child would enter, even under compulsion, upon an education if the true size of the undertaking was revealed to it from the first? If for instance, not merely Pelion was piled upon Ossa, but all the mountains of the world were piled, one upon the other, and the small toddler was conducted to the base and was told: "Now climb, my child, climb! It is true you will never get to the top, but, no matter, climb away, and keep on climbing." Is it not somewhat as if the mouse were told to engender the mountain?

But fortunately, the approaches to education are so cunningly concealed, so insidiously presented, that to the child, it seems only a question of a slate or a primer, today; the multiplication table, tomorrow; and before one knows it, the years gliding by like a snake in the grass, one is at the terrible junction, the Caudine forks of grammar. It was at this point of the height above them that Cicely and Polly were graded by Mademoiselle Mimi, and their first steps in the ascension were taken in learning to prepare their copy books—a most important

step, this, to Mademoiselle Mimi, and one that meant influence upon the rest of their life. They were to take their quire of fool's cap—white or blue, the color was not important—to fold it leaf by leaf, press it down with Mademoiselle Mimi's pearl ruler (that went with the desk), cut it with her mother of pearl knife, and arrange the tops of the leaves into one "*cahier*," the bottoms into another. Mademoiselle Mimi, herself, sewed the leaves together, providing thread, needle, and thimble, every day for the purpose; as Aglone provided dish-cloths for her more sinister function. Mademoiselle Mimi, then, with a tasteful combination of fine and coarse pens and red and black ink, wrote the titles: "*Cahier de Verbes*," or "*D'Analyse*," or "*Synonymes*," or "*Composition*," or "*Règles*," with date and name and flourishes between; for she had as pretty a talent for ornamental penmanship as any daughter of the Convent—the fountain source in the community of this accomplishment. To impress her scholars with the importance of the *cahier* in education, to make an object lesson of it, though she was in the plains of ignorance as regards any such educational term, Mademoiselle Mimi would take her little candidates to the small bookcase *secrétaire* in her bedroom, and opening the cabinet underneath, show them the *cahiers* of her school days. Every one was there; not one was missing; from her first inchoate pot hooks and hangers to the dawn of the ornamental finishing aforementioned; showing the entire course from the first verb to the last composition on "Spring," "Birds," "Love of Parents," or "Duty to One's Neighbors," etc., etc. And there too, were her school books—all neatly covered with calico, as she exacted that those

of her scholars should be,—class after class of books, for she had climbed to the topmost pinnacle of the St. Denis mountain.

It was as if a bank president should open his safe and show to an office boy his stored gold. This was her capital, her stock in trade. She taught her first books to her first scholars as she would be glad to teach her last ones to a graduate, should she ever have one.

"I will teach all that I have learned myself," she would frankly declare to her patrons. "I do not promise more, for I cannot do more."

Every Friday she read out the total of each one's good and bad marks for the week. On the last Friday of the month, she collected and redistributed her medals, hung on fresh ribbons; the medals too being left from her own school days. And the same rule held sway in her institution as in St. Denis, and perhaps in the parental institution in Paris: the same scholar, the cleverest one, always obtained the medal, month after month; and the lazy, stupid ones,—never, no matter how much more glorious the achievement would have been for them.

Every day, a verb, a sum in arithmetic, a French and an English dictation, a paragraph of grammar, French and English; so climbed they at the Institut Mimi. *Histoire Sainte, Histoire Générale,* every other day. Geography, once a week. Friday, recitation of fables and poetry, writing of letters, compositions and "Compliments," in their season.

Compléments. That was the keynote of the school from every September to January: greetings to the parents on New Year's day. Those who could not write had to learn theirs by heart: *"Mon cher Papa," "Ma*

chère Maman, voici le jour de l'an," . . . with the proper bow or courtesy. Those who could write, prepared their surprises on notepaper, scolloped along the edge, with a little pink rose stamped at the top. Instead of four, six months of Fridays would not have been too much preparation, so difficult are the bows and courtesies, the capitals and spelling of these compliments. It is well that the parents are invariably delighted and surprised with such greetings, otherwise, the time and trouble and the tears shed over them would not have been worth while.

At twelve o'clock came recreation and lunch; at three, prayer again, and the last farewell tinkle of the porcelain bell.

Monsieur Pinseau, or "Papa Pinseau," as the children called him, sitting, if it were cold, in the next room—if it were warm, on the gallery—could overhear it all. Sometimes, he had the French paper *L'Abeille* to read, sometimes an American paper. Mademoiselle Mimi always provided him with the one or the other. She could see, however, that they interested him but little. He would stop any time on a European despatch if Belle put her head on his knee; and he would turn from the sheet a half dozen times in the morning at the twitching of a leaf outside the window, or to look for the two dear little heads of his friends, the pair of lizards that dwelt in the vines there. By raising his eyes, he could see, on the low whitewashed walls, the portraits of his mother and father; she, serious and dignified in a turban and muslin kerchief, he, sedate and shrewd, in a high stock and black *toupet.* The portraits of the parents of his wife hung in his daughter's room. Strange to say, the mother of that rigid saint was painted

in the costume of the frivolous world, not *décolletée* merely, but *décorsétée* also, and her father showed in his face no sentiment for the ascetic at all.

Sometimes, while the old gentleman was sunken in reflection, perhaps on this very theme, past distraction by Belle or the lizards or vague thoughts about his flowers, there would come a little touch upon his elbow and a timid voice to his ear: "*Monsieur Pinseau, Mademoiselle Mimi vous fait dire comme ça . . .*" and he, too, would have to put his hand to the climbing. Because, if the day was ugly (for every now and then there does come an ugly day in New Orleans when the sky is as dark and the rain as pitilessly monotonous as anywhere else) Mademoiselle Mimi would say to herself: "Poor Papa, on such a day as this, what sad thoughts he must have!" and she would call up a little scholar and send her to Papa Pinseau to ask him to hear her fable. And if the day were fine, the sky blue, the sun radiant, the earth gay, Mademoiselle Mimi would think: "Poor Papa, how sad he must be on such a beautiful day as this." And she would send some little scholar with her reading lesson from *Télémaque*. The reading lesson was always from *Télémaque* and the poetry from *La Fontaine's* fables; for one could not ascend any educational height whatever without them in Mademoiselle Mimi's opinion.

"Holy, blessed Virgin!" old Aglone would mutter to herself in the kitchen, "look at that; and you know how he used to hate children!"

The little girls (little girls have a keener sense of humor than little boys), when they would come in "*La Cigale et la Fourmi*" to the conversation:

" Que faisiez vous au temps chaud?
" Nuit et jour a tout venant,
" Je chantais, ne vous déplaise
" Vous chantiez? J'en suis fort aise,
" Eh bien, dansez maintenant!"

When they came to that they would throw back their heads and laugh, showing all their little white teeth; it was always so new and funny to them. But poor Papa Pinseau, he did not laugh. That fable was no longer funny to him.——

The children who had no piano, who, plainly speaking, were too poor to have one, practised on Mademoiselle Mimi's instrument after school hours; and those who lived near enough went in addition on Saturdays, when Mademoiselle Mimi was herself practising at the church or giving lessons to the Demoiselles San Antonio.

To go on Saturday was equivalent to having a lesson from Papa Pinseau who, of course, was always at home, and could no more refrain from meddling with the music than with the cooking in his daughter's absence. And when Mademoiselle Mimi would come through the gate after her morning tasks and would pause a minute to listen to the practising, as music teachers do mechanically even when walking in the street by strange houses, she would hear the scales and five finger exercises being played with as much sentiment of touch, as if they were a *" divertissement."*

And although he knew, naturally, no more about the technique of fingering than of pots and pans, if she glanced through the shutters of the window as likely as not, she saw the picture of an old gentleman bending over

the pianist, showing her exactly how the wrist should be raised and the little pink palm turned to the best advantage of the musician—if not of the music—and how the fingers may be used to the least detriment of the finger-nails which, on ladies, he would say, should be long, oval, and perfectly transparent; as if he were saying her soul should be perfectly pure.

"What is not done gracefully, Mademoiselle, it is not worth while for ladies to do at all."

Mademoiselle Mimi did not need to listen to hear these words any more than she needed to listen to hear the church bell.

"Eh, Papa!' she would say to him sometimes in her dismay. "The scales and the five-finger exercises; they are not given to us to make us more attractive, any more than the Ten Commandments are." Sometimes when the New Year's compliments were being prepared, she would be forced by other occupations to confide the rehearsal of them to him, for when the compliments are once started in motion they must be recited or copied every day with the regularity of one's prayer. It is really only their importance that constituted their difficulty; but it is strange, how in copying or reciting them the embarrassment becomes more and more extreme with the approach of the great day they are to honor; how one trips over the most familiar words, and stumbles over the shortest sentences; and how on the very last day one is just as apt to make the same fault that one started with on the first. And over these failures, what bitter tears can be shed! What depths of anguish sounded by boys and girls alike, neither sex having any advantage over the other in the endurance of shame!

Fortunate it was for the little girls at least, that there was a Papa Pinseau to replace Mademoiselle Mimi, on her Saturday morning absences which may have been prolonged not involuntarily; for if she prided herself on teaching only what she had learned, how could she teach the little girls to step forward and courtesy and smile and look the proper way—not to speak of the little boys—she who had been taught dancing by a pietist, recommended by her mother's confessor, a lady whose only grace was her piety.

With Papa Pinseau it was different! He knew exactly how the little ones should walk up to the expectant, surprised parent,—the chief attraction of the compliment to the little ones was the perfect surprise they caused year after year,—how they should courtesy, how lift the hand—palm outward, and then as a climax, the eyes. When he had a good subject, he produced charming results, results entirely beyond the power, because entirely beyond the character, of his daughter.

The little boys ran off from their rehearsals as soon as possible; but the little girls—Ah! how wise was Mr. Talbot in his judgment—would hang around him as if fascinated; seeing which, he would fascinate them yet more, just as he used to do with those other little girls, the young ladies of his day. Everything he did pleased them, anything he said amused them. When Mademoiselle, as a reward for good behavior, would offer to tell a story of her scholars' own choosing, the little girls would cry out unanimously: "Ask Papa Pinseau to tell us about when he was little, and how he went to dancing-school!"

His dancing school was a kind of fairyland to them,

for as they understood it, the pretty manners of the ladies and gentlemen of his day came from the pretty manners taught in the dancing-school by an old gentleman who was a French nobleman, an *émigré,* who had been noted for his dancing at the court of Marie Antoinette. (The little girls would shake their heads in solemn awe at this and repeat " the court of Marie Antoinette.") He gave his lessons in an old court dress with silk stockings and morocco pumps. Another old nobleman played the violin for him. They lived together in a little room on Toulouse Street, and their *Salle de danse* was in Royal Street, over a confectionery. All the little boys and girls of good family went to him. The old dancing-master was very particular about the parentage and the feet of his scholars. The little girls must have their slippers made by an old woman on Chartres Street, the boys, by the famous Larose, himself. . . . .

When he was a young man, Monsieur Pinseau was noted for his witty talent of mimicry, and there was nothing he did better or more delightfully than the old dancing-master and the violinist, the little boys in their pumps and wide trousers, and the little girls, long pantalettes and all. Poor Papa Pinseau! his feet were gouty and heavy enough now and he wore carpet slippers, bought at the cheapest shop at the Louisa Street market. . . . When the old dancing-master died (now the story became thrilling to the little girls) and his obituary notices were posted on the corners of the streets, so many high-sounding names appeared in it (the confectioner did this) that the whole city became confused and embarrassed over it, and everybody insisted upon going to the funeral at the Cathedral. The little Pinseau was

taken by his nurse and made to look upon the old dancing-master in his coffin (there is nothing a nurse likes better than such surreptitious enjoyment of forbidden fruit), and he was all surprised to find him, in spite of his great names, still the same little, yellow-wrinkled tyrant of a dancing-master, dressed in the same old knee breeches and darned stockings and pumps with silver buckles. The little boys of the dancing-school followed the hearse dressed as if for their dancing lesson, each one carrying a bouquet (always a sigh of regret followed this termination of the tale).

It was the old Marquis who taught the ladies of New Orleans how much prettier it was to dance with their eyes cast down. The ex-ballet-dancer who succeeded him could teach only like a ballet-dancer, and the ladies of New Orleans only then began to throw their heads back in dancing and show their eyes as they did their feet; (so ran the warning moral of the tale—at which the little girls would cast down their heads and eyes at once).

Mr. Talbot knew nothing, and even less than nothing, of all this. A point of variance had developed between him and Mademoiselle Mimi. After careful examination, he had rejected the histories she taught, although they were written by learned priests, were recommended by Monseigneur the Archbishop, and were, therefore, taught in all schools of the State where religion had any authority. This time he did not intrust any messages to his wife, but told Mademoiselle Mimi, himself, what he had to say about her histories; and she,—it was all she could do,—promised to teach Protestant histories if he desired.

"Protestant histories, Madam! History is history. There is no such thing as Roman Catholic history or Protestant history! Any more than there is Roman Catholic arithmetic or Protestant arithmetic, *et tutti quanto* . . ."

She listened to him attentively and seemed to be convinced, but the truth was, being a woman, she disliked lectures and followed his words only sufficiently to know when to place what she had made up her mind, at once, to say to him: "Far from not wanting to act according to your desires, I, on the contrary, shall be only too happy to follow your views on the subject. I beg you to select the histories yourself, that you should like your daughters taught, and I shall teach them. Indeed I consider it a great privilege to have a gentleman of your education to direct me," etc., etc.

When she returned home, however, manifold difficulties presented themselves in the way of her fulfilling her promise. She had scruples of conscience on the subject, for to be on the good side of the priests and the sisters at the convent, omnipotent secular as well as clerical authorities in the parish, she had asked and followed their advice about text-books and they, somewhat like the American gentleman, were most firm in their ideas about history.

"In truth," she confided to her father, "I must, it seems, teach two histories on the same subject. But the very beginning of all histories for small children impresses the belief that there is but one history, and that the one taught is the right one! And we are especially urged to warn them against the other kind,—the false histories which poison the mind and corrupt the truth.

How can I in one class teach that Luther was a monster, sent by the devil, a false priest; and in another that he was . . . what I will not repeat—all that Mr. Talbot believes about him; to one child, that it was God who gained the battle of Tolbiac, and to another that it wasn't? He objects to that particularly; he cited the battle of Tolbiac himself. Oh, about miracles he was most eloquent. He says that he does not want his children taught that there are such things as miracles in history. But if miracles have happened, what are we going to do about them? Deny them? Ah! It was to the very people that denied them that the miracles came; the pagans, the blasphemers. How could they ever have been converted without miracles? It may be a difficulty for a man to believe them, but," with a covert reference to her father's indifference to religion, "for a woman, I assure you nothing seems so natural as a miracle."

Fortunately, Papa Pinseau had no such scruples, having very little religion. Instead of seeing *one* right side in every historical question in which he had figured—that is in every political question—he had seen as many right sides as it was as profitable to as many men to adopt. The right side was the side that got most votes in the ballot-box, that was all—and the men in one campaign would vote for one right side, and in the next for another. Constancy and consistency he had found to be as rare in history as in love. So he was well qualified to become Professor of American History, as the children called history written in English, in the Institut Mimi. He conducted his class of two with, at least, irreproachable tact and grace; and as difficult situations had always

been infinitely attractive to him, he did not shun, as Mademoiselle would have done, naïve questions when the lesson was over.

"In history, the great men are the good men, eh, Monsieur Pinseau?"

"And the beautiful women are the good women, eh, Monsieur Pinseau?"

"And when a man is good, he is always great, eh, Monsieur Pinseau?"

"Unless he is a great fool," would answer Monsieur Pinseau.

"And if a man is good, his enemies have to be bad, eh, Monsieur Pinseau?"

"Oh, yes, the enemies of good people are always the bad people," he would answer placidly.

CRIBICHE

CRIBICHE, it must be explained, was a gift of God to the neighborhood, as his baptismal name Theodore implied. Both metaphorically and in sober fact, his forlorn existence had been laid at the door of every possible parent in the parish, but the metaphorical meaning had prevented his being accepted anywhere out of charity. Truly when a parent abandons a child, it is abandoned indeed! After urging its adoption into every Gascon cabin thereabouts—for the child was like a drop of the very essence of Gascony—the priest thought of taking it to an orphan asylum. But he was sensitive to the fine application of God's law, in the parish of St. Médard if not in the world. The child had been left not on the steps of the church, it is true, but in the great ditch in front that drained it. Fortunately, the ditch was dry and there was no rain that night or it might have been drained away with other seepage of the soil. When the priest saw this degrading contempt of the babe—for it could have been left on the steps of the church—and saw that no one would take it in, but, on the contrary, spurned it as an aspersion of dishonor, he reflected upon the occurrence and upon the world into which, without volition of its own, the baby had been brought. Whenever Père Philéas reflected upon any of the passing events, even of the insignificant life about him, he always ended by a chronic malady of his, namely: a distortion of vision—

his eyes seeing, not what actually lay before them, but something else that existed only in his own mind; as we have seen him turn from the simple, ordinary event of strangers moving into the neighborhood to fine-spun theories about God's intentions. Now seeing, as he thought, that God meant something by sending the baby to St. Médard, he gave it the name of Theodore, and although the next inference might have been the nearest orphan asylum, he took charge of it himself. That is, he gave it in charge to the old negress Zizi, who, for a trifle of money and the salvation of her soul, attended to his daily domestic wants. She lived, conveniently, in a far corner of his garden. The charge of a baby is nothing to an old negress. A fine lady would be put to more trouble in selecting lace for a handkerchief than she in assuming the responsibility of a day-old baby. But babies thrive with old negresses, and give them less trouble than they do to fine ladies. Babies, mules, and negroes seem made for one another. Though why this should be so, only the Creator who made them and who knows all things, knows. It may be because, in some things, perhaps in most, babies and mules are alike.

A healthy baby asks only time and opportunity. This Cribiche received amply. Unfortunately, his having been found in the gutter, though it procured him the name of Theodore from the priest, affixed to him also that of Cribiche, the Creole for *écrevisse,* crayfish. Only God and the priest knew him by any other appellation. He grew with time and profited by his opportunities. But if ever the proverb "the nearer the church the farther from God" was verified in this world, it was in this case. Cribiche was as precocious in naughti-

ness as any little negro of the same age. And that is saying a great deal. How quickly time flies! The gift to the parish became ten years old before Père Philéas had recovered from his surprise at his walking and talking; and even then he was stretching his tethers, alas! not toward goodness.

Père Philéas's "Imitation" had warned him, how many times the well-thumbed page alone could tell, "Withstand the beginnings, the remedy is applied too late when the evil has grown strong through delay." But when are the beginnings of evil in an infant? That the "Imitation" did not indicate. When the priest was ready to apply the remedy, it was already too late! Indeed, to the simple soul it seemed that even the baptism had been too late; that evil had entered the child in the very ditch of his nativity.

Laziness and lying were the temptations to be resisted. Cribiche, however, resisted not them but their opposites. So Joachim was forced to flay his body for him while the priest wrought to cure his soul. But to cure a soul one must catch it; and as well try to catch a bird in a tree when it has gotten away from you. And Cribiche's lessons, and his catechism were, respectfully be it spoken, salt on the tail. As for communion and confirmation he remained in such a state of nature that one could only pray for a miracle to accomplish his salvation.

Thus while other children climbed and learned at the *Institut Mimi,* Cribiche roamed at his own free will in the pleasant valley of ignorance. When Père Philéas would send him to school, that is, take him by the arm and push him inside Mademoiselle Mimi's gate, he had better have said: "Cribiche, my son, my good little son, go not to

school to Mademoiselle Mimi, go, on the contrary, and spend the day fishing for perch in the old Mexican Gulf canal. Or go to that little Bayou back of the battle-ground, that thou knowest of, and fish there in the shade of the oak trees. Or if thou canst beg, borrow, or steal a gun along that same Bayou, thou wilt find ducks, or in any magnolia tree, "*Grassées*," eating the magnolia berry to flavor their delicate flesh expressly for the epicure. Or maybe, you feel like gathering oranges for the traders who are now buying them and you can work for them all day long contentedly, and come home with a dozen for pay. Or go if you will and pick up pecans for the Sisters at the convent; they are rich and therefore must make more money still by selling their pecans and they will willingly give you your pockets and hands full, for your day's work, and perhaps hang a scapulary on your dirty neck, instead of having you flogged by their gate-keeper and sent to school. Or the *Roulaison* (sugar grinding) has begun on the coast, and any planter down there will welcome you to put cane on the carrier all day, for the slight payment of letting you eat as much 'caramel' and '*Cuite*' (candied sugar of the cane juice) as you want. . . ."

Père Philéas had better have told Cribiche to do all this and saved him from the sin of disobedience. For it was what Cribiche would do without fail, slipping out of the school-gate, just as soon as the priest's back was turned; unless the fancy took him to lie on a grassy spot on the Levee and watch the ships go by; or hide in the corner of some Gascon café, the best resort of all on a rainy day, and listen to the talk going on there. Desire of learning was not in him—as the priest said

sadly, nor shame of ignorance. When Cribiche sought Papa Pinseau's society, it was not alas! to improve his accent or diction in French, nor for La Fontaine nor the adventures of Télémaque; but to recount his own adventures in hunting and fishing. And if Belle, who lay sleepy and bored through all the wit and wisdom of classic French morality, if she lifted her head at these recitals and listened, and to Cribiche's "pam, pam," as he aimed and shot off his imaginary gun, barked eager exclamations and ran excitedly around the room nosing under chairs and sofas—to lie at her master's feet afterwards, whining from sheer longing—what must the other old hunter have felt? He, indeed, would be the last authority on earth to urge book learning upon Cribiche. The question is, would Cribiche have studied ever had not the misfortunes of war been inflicted upon Mr. Talbot?

As the sage La Fontaine says:

> *" . . . on rencontre sa destinée,*
> *Souvent par les chemins qu'on prend pour l'éviter."*

There is an island on the coast below St. Médard called St. Malo. It is peopled by Malays, who do naught else under God's heaven, as the saying of the parish goes, but fish; and, the evil-minded say, play the pirate when chance offers that luck to them. Free as the winds and waves about them; children of the elements and untamed as they. And there is another place, not far from St. Médard, the *Terre aux Boeufs,* the home of the Isleños, or "Islingues," as they call themselves; a narrow strip of land encircled by a Bayou, which itself is surrounded

by trembling prairies that separate it from the Gulf of Mexico. These people are also Spanish, brought here by their government a century before as colonists from the Canary Islands, as the Malays were from the Philippines. But only the historians know this. The people themselves know only that they are Isleños and can live to themselves without hindrance on their Island in Louisiana; the men hunting and fishing all the week and the women sitting in front of their *palmetto* thatched huts, on the bank of the Bayou, waiting for their men to come back at night. No schools, no churches there—only game and fish; and nothing to do but get these and put them on little ox carts and drive to the nearest shop to buy—when they needed them—powder, shot, coffee, flour, or clothing.

Either of these was the road that Cribiche's thoughts usually took to avoid his destiny. They would set out at sight of his primer towards the Malays or Islingues, and instead of seeing his page or slate, he saw—with the faculty of children to see not what is, but what they wish—he saw the low-lying sky of the Gulf, the foaming waves leaping over the snapper banks, or farther out beyond the sight of land, the blue depths where the silvery *pampano* is found; or, if the season were Autumn and the hour twilight, he saw the reeds of a Bayou in the trembling prairie, and the flocks of homing ducks, flying within range of an ambush. And bang! bang! he would grow as wild under the imagination as under the reality of it.

"But, my son, why do you jump and start that way?" the good priest would ask. "To learn a lesson, one must be calm and patient." When Père Philéas could

get hold of his charge at night, he would bring him into his room and seat him at his table with books and slate. But always, there came an interruption; no one in St. Médard appeared to have time to consult a priest except at night, and the sick always put off sending for him for the consolations of the church until the night too; during the day they seemed to have more confidence in themselves. When thus summoned, the good man could not forbear sighing as he arose.

"My son," he would say to Cribiche, laying his great hand kindly on the boy's shoulder, "you see how it is . . . I cannot do my duty to you, on account of my duty to some one else. . . . You, therefore, must do my duty to yourself, for me. Make yourself study as I would make you study, repeat your lessons to yourself as you would repeat them to me. Be a good boy; when you hear the trumpet go to bed and be sure to say your prayers. As for me, I am going back into the swamp and I may not return before day, the way is dark and difficult. Be careful to put out the light."

When the trumpet sounded, where was Cribiche? He was, briefly, everywhere that he should not have been, he was nowhere that he should have been.

As some good folk enjoy their wealth more when contemplating the poverty of others and sleep better of a cold rainy night, by contrasting their good, warm bed with the wretched lot of the homeless and shelterless, so Cribiche also whetted his enjoyment of freedom.

But the good, after all, suffer needlessly from their imagination of the badness of the bad. Many a night, when the poor priest in a panic at the wickedness of the devil was worrying his soul over the whereabouts of the

boy, going even to the length of throwing himself on his knees before the Holy Virgin and praying that she, seeing the helplessness of the boy's only earthly guardian, would cast a look after him herself, as after one who had no earthly father or mother to do so, or only such as suspicion gave—at that very moment Cribiche would be probably no farther away than Joachim's window, nor more evilly employed than peeping at him and his fat wife, sitting together, gossiping, while the grim cat-o'-nine tails, that Joachim as a retired sailor preferred to other instruments of punishment, was hanging innocently on the wall. Or he would be standing and feasting his eyes on the sentry at the barracks who was ever pacing to and fro, to and fro, not daring to stop or laugh and talk or run away for fear of the guardhouse. But best of all, he enjoyed slipping upon the gallery of the Americans and all unsuspected, looking down—even as Lazarus may have looked down upon hell—upon the torments he, himself, was so well out of; at boys of his own age and spirit undergoing their purgatory, night after night. There they sat around the dining-room table with their books, illuminated by an oil lamp, studying under no Père Philéas, always hoping for the best; but under the real eye of a real father, always prepared for the worst; who ran up his black flag every night, so to speak, and gave no quarter to sleepiness, laziness, or shirking. There were no messages there calling him away. Hour after hour the pale, serious, scholarly man sat unmoved, book in hand, waiting for the balky lessons to be learned and recited to his satisfaction. Light after light in the house would go out, but that lamp burned on even if necessary until midnight; until, if the fancy

be permitted, the slow intelligence of the boys caught light from it.

Never did the salt waves and winds of the Gulf seem so near to Cribiche; never did fish bite better in the Bayou or ducks fly down in thicker flocks upon the trembling prairie across the red disk of the setting sun; never did guns pop so briskly as when he looked in upon that scene; never was the life of Malay or Islingue more tempting, never was his vagrancy more precious to him.

Was it destiny, or the Virgin Mary, that made Mr. Talbot open the door suddenly one night and catch Cribiche there, and, as he tried to escape, pull him into the room dirty, barefooted, barelegged, open-shirted as he was? What did Cribiche think was going to happen to him? What did he expect? He was audacious, but not impudent, and he looked miserable enough in his confusion as the grip upon his shoulder pushed him into a chair, and a book was shoved before him: "We are all studying here, Cribiche, you must study too."

We might well ask again with Père Philéas: Was it not the Virgin Mary who did thus act the part of the wisest and tenderest of mothers in giving the vagabond over to such a master, without doubt, the most elegant scholar in St. Médard?—and more; the sole one, before whose eyes the boy trembled. It is not always the most serious who are the least attractive to children; the most severe who are the least respected; the most feared who are the least loved. Cribiche in his heart was more afraid of the tall, pale American gentleman than he was of God, whose fear Père Philéas had been preaching to him all his life.

Just as, when commanded to arise, the dead man did arise, so Cribiche, when commanded to study, did study . . . that night and every night afterward.

Who else but she, the Virgin Mary, could have done it?

JERRY

In the program for the future, it had been agreed between Jerry and his master that the two eldest girls should be hired out as servants as soon as possible and that Jerry should seek employment in his trade of carpenter. This, with Matilda's wages as cook and with their home provided, would insure not only comfort to the freed slaves but enable them to save something to meet the "emergencies," as they might be called, of their freedom: the illnesses, deaths, and disabling accidents that had been hitherto the master's portion.

As he had planned for his own life so Mr. Talbot planned for the negro's and did nothing by halves. He carefully explained to the negro that the principles that formed the basis of his dealings with other men and other men's dealings with him were the same. truth, honesty, hard work, courage, patience, that he, Jerry, had possessed as a slave; and that all he had to do now to fulfil his duty to God and man was to continue living in the future as he had done in the past. A good slave was bound to make a good free man. His children were of an age to help him, which was a great advantage; Matilda was an honest, industrious woman; his trade was one in which he was sure to find employment. The master said he had never seen a good carpenter who was not well to do. Jerry listened as he always did to his master, devoutly raising his large intelligent eyes to

him from time to time; his great hard hands lying heavily on his knees like hands of bronze. His thick, grizzled wool stood out in even height all over his head, increasing its size with fine effect; a short grizzled beard covered the lower part of his face; leaving his large lips bare. His expression was of perfect truth and honesty.

"I'll do my best, Master; I'll do my best," was the answer he made from time to time.

"You must not only do *your* best; you must see that your family does its best, too," with a slight laugh. "You know you are your own overseer and master now."

The negro did not smile at this. He had a face that seldom smiled; a serious, plodding face.

"It will seem strange at first being in the city; but you must not think about the city: your work will be the same in the city that it was in the country. Keep to your work and keep to yourself. The city is full of strange negroes who are up to all kinds of mischief; keep away from them. A lazy negro is a bad negro, as you know yourself. When you see a crowd of lazy negroes, herding together like sheep as they are doing in that old warehouse on the Levee, you may be sure they are doing no good to themselves or to any one else. Keep away from them and keep Matilda and your girls away from them. I cannot do anything to help you in this, you must do it all yourself."

"I'll do my best, Master."

"I'll give you a recommendation—that is a paper telling who you are and what you can do; guaranteeing you as the good, honest, industrious man you have proved yourself to be. Your character and your capability as a workman are your stock in trade; and I can tell you

many a white man has made a fortune starting with less of that than you have. Show your paper when you ask for work. As I pass in the cars, I see some piled-up lumber on the Levee; there must be a lumber-yard there or a sawmill; I should think you could find work there. And show your recommendation when you apply for work for Henrietta and Julia. People naturally think that a good man has good daughters. Go over there to the barracks, perhaps some of the officers' families need servants. Take any wages they offer. Henrietta and Julia do not know much about housework but they can learn. You had better explain, Jerry, that they have never worked much about a house, and though they look rough and awkward, they will soon learn. You take them yourself, and hire them out and collect their wages —as they are both under age—just as I would have done once, if I were hiring you out."

"Yes, Master, I'll do my best."

The next morning the father and the two daughters, dressed in their best clothes as if they were going to church, started out on their momentous errand. Jerry had his recommendation in his pocket; but he carried it so well written on his face, that the paper could have been demanded only by a person very ignorant of negro physiognomy. It was not difficult to find situations for the strong, good-looking girls, ignorant and awkward as they were. Although the city was swarming with the disbanded negroes from ruined plantations and homes all over the State, wages were high; servants hard to get, and harder to hold. From the utmost luxuriance and extravagance of retinue, households had fallen to the barest necessities. Freedom from slavery meant free-

dom from work or it meant nothing to the negroes. Here and there an old man or woman would be seen toiling stolidly along in the old routine, although the door of their prison stood open before them. Inured to chains, perhaps more at their ease with them than without (even if the chains were forged of sentiment and affection as some of them seem to have been), they still remained in servitude when servitude grew harder and harder under the changed conditions—when, in truth, it became a slavery such as no former state of slavery could be compared with. But these were all old negroes. The young were foot loose. There was nothing to bind them or to constrain them, neither past, present, nor future. They drank to their heart's content from the cup of their new liberty and gave themselves up to the delights of its intoxication. There was no master, overseer, or driver for them now by day; no patrol to demand passes of them by night. By night and by day they could go now where they pleased, as well as do as they pleased. No one now could force them to work, or keep them at work if they wished to quit. They could leave the baby crying in the cradle, the dinner cooking on the stove, the clothes in the washtub—nobody could prevent, nobody could punish them. That was the best of all, they were free henceforth from punishment! They even could be impudent with impunity now to the whites; to those sacred whites against whom to raise a hand was once a capital crime for a slave. They could have white people arrested now and taken before any provost marshal. And if the whites were not "loyal," as it was called, to the conquerors in the war, the negroes, merely because they were negroes—and so loyal—could

gain any case against them, would in fact be believed before them. They could now curse white men, aye and even white women, to their faces, and if they were Southern white men and women be only laughed at for their insolence by the people in power. The negro soldiers could shove them out of their way in the cars, push and jostle, soldiering them as one may say, with their white officers standing by, indifferent, if not smiling at them. They, the negroes, had been freed and exalted—so their preachers preached to them—their owners conquered and abased. They, the negroes, were the victors; to them belonged the spoils and they were ready to claim them. Social equality was granted them; wherever a white man went a black man could go. Whatever a white man did a black man could do. There was nothing now but political equality to obtain, which, on account of their numbers and the disfranchisement of the whites, meant political superiority. And white men, from the victorious side's political party that had brought on and gained the war, were even now forming parties in the State, to gain this last triumph for them, and with it their vote.

There were old ladies still living in the city who, sitting in their quiet rooms, said that they knew all about revolutions: their mothers had related to them what had taken place in the French revolution. Whatever happened, these old ladies shook their heads and predicted something worse. They counseled prudence, submission, for they felt the cut of the guillotine still in their blood. There were other old ladies, too, who said they knew all about it: their mothers had fled from the insurrection of the slaves in Santo Domingo, and whatever happened they also predicted something worse, for they

felt still in their blood what they could never relate to their children; what they only could describe as "God alone knew what followed" . . .

Jerry hired out both his daughters into service in the barracks and secured work for himself as carpenter.

At night, when the lessons were going on in the master's house, the negroes would be gathered around the flickering light of the fire on their hearthstone and they would turn together, as it were, the page of the day's experience. Not the pages filled with Latin declensions and Greek verbs, that puzzled and saddened the little minds over the way, but mirth-provoking pages to the negroes—for at first they experienced nothing but what they could laugh at; and they laughed at everything that differed from their plantation standard. And more than anything else, they laughed at their own race: "A city nigger was no nigger at all."

Sometimes the master, coming in to give an order, seeing them thus laughing, talking, and dozing together before their fire, would say wearily to himself: "*They* are as happy as ever they were."

But the two elder girls grew more and more like the city niggers that they at first despised and mocked; less like the country niggers they had been so proud to call themselves. Little by little they discarded their plantation garb: the *cotonnade* gown, heavy rawhide shoes, and headkerchiefs; and little by little assumed hats, calico dresses, and high heel boots. In three months they had traversed the stage from the one costume to the other. To their father these were dubious signs, but to Matilda they were glad tidings. She craved not for herself to go into the Canaan, the Land of Promise, that

she heard was lying before all negroes for them to go in and take possession of. She counted upon remaining upon this side of Jordan with Jerry and her white people, in the *cotonnade* gown, headkerchief, and rawhide shoes of the days of her slavery. But she laughed ecstatically to herself over her work when she thought of her daughters in their new finery, as she would have laughed had she heard they wore the robes of salvation, the mystical finery of a negro's dreams during slavery. Salvation: That was the negro's hope in slavery—to save their souls and go to God. And as they were slaves, and black, and sinners as well, they indulged, not hopes, but certainties of salvation. The freed negroes soon learned not to worry themselves about salvation. What could heaven give above what they had been given and what was promised them?

The girls soon lost their places, but Jerry found others for them; and all went well as before except that they came home only once a week instead of every night. They lost the second places before their month ended, and Jerry found situations for the third time. . . .

After that he lost track of their engagements. They went in and out of their places without reference to him. They told their mother what they chose and she believed what they told her.

One day it came to Jerry, while he was planing a plank, to throw down his tool and go and see what his daughters were doing. He went off as he was, in his apron and shirt sleeves.

When he came home after dark Matilda saw that something had happened to him. He came in and sat down and held his head in his two hands and would not

speak; as she had seen a negro man do on the plantation when he came home alone from a frolic that he had gone to with a companion. He said his mate had fallen out of the pirogue and drowned; but the plantation always thought he had thrown him out of the pirogue and drowned him. Matilda could think only of this, as she closed the doors and windows. But Jerry was worn out with hunger, fatigue, and sorrow; that was all. When she won him to talk to her, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and she knew he had not killed anyone.

He told her how it came to him, when he was working and not thinking of his girls at all, to go and hunt them up. A kind of voice came to him. He threw down his plane, left his work and went, as he was. That was all he knew at first. He walked and walked from place to place, until he got on their traces, and then he tracked them to where they were. They were not in any place . . . they had not been in a place for a month . . . they were at the "Settlement," with the negroes there, both of them. They had lied when they said they were working. They were not working . . . they were living with the negroes there—living like they lived . . . They had lied to Matilda and to him. . . .

"Did you see them?" she asked.

He had seen them; he had talked to them and he told Matilda what he had said to them, and what they had said to him, how they had answered him . . .

When Matilda heard what they said and how they said it her fury stopped her mouth for an instant. Then when she began to talk she was beside herself with passion. She swore she would go to the "Settlement"; she would drag those "nigger girls" out; she would cut

their vitals in two; she would stamp the life out of them; she would . . . All the old hideous plantation threats of an African's fury rolled from her hot tongue.

Jerry shook his head, saying nothing. But when, having talked herself to the point of action, she seized a knife and made a rush for the door, he caught her and held her. She now turned in her frenzy upon him; forgetting everything else. She fought him like a wild animal, tried to use her knife on him. Thin, supple, lithe as an eel, she was a match for him unless he used his full strength upon her. Again and again she almost got through the door. She had reached it, opened it, and was fighting in the crack of it, when at last Jerry, getting between her and the door, gave her a push that sent her to the other side of the room, where she fell against the bed.

"Go and call Master," he ordered his youngest girl Maria, who was cowering in a corner.

The master came and the mistress behind him. They had heard only Matilda's garbled accounts of the girls, and thought them still at work. Now they heard the truth as Jerry gave it. Wherever he went, tracking them from one place to the other, from their first situation in an officer's family in the barracks to their last one, he had found but one account of them—that they were lazy, impudent, and thievish. From her last place Henrietta had stolen a dress, and her employers were looking for her to have her arrested. He went finally to the "Settlement," and there found them. They told him they were not going to work any more; that they could make as much money as they wanted without working and that they were free, anyhow, to do as they pleased. When

Jerry ordered them to come along with him they were impudent to him; they " sassed " him. When he threatened to whip them they laughed at him and gave him " the dare " to do it . . . they looked him straight in the face and dared him to touch them.

Matilda broke out again with her threats. Her master ordered her to be silent. He questioned her; she gave reluctant, surly but respectful answers.

" What do you want to do about it, Jerry? " he asked, turning to him.

" I want to fetch them back and punish them. Such conduct ought to be punished, Master, you know it ought to be punished."

" But you have tried that. They won't come back. How do you propose to make them come back? "

" If I find them," screamed Matilda, " so help me God, but I'll fetch 'em back! Let me once lay eyes on them, I'll . . ."

" And if you bring them back," the calm voice of her Master interrupted her, " how long do you think you will keep them here? "

" I'll keep 'em! Just let me get 'em here, I'll keep 'em! " and she began her threats again.

" Do as you please, Jerry," the master turned to him; " but," shaking his head, " I can tell you, it is too late now."

" But I must have my children back, Master," and Matilda began to cry. " I must have them back! "

" Don't cry, Mammy! don't cry! " called out the little girls, impulsively from the door where they were peeping in.

Their father sternly ordered them away.

"Master," said Jerry, "I can't let my children stay with thieves and rascals."

"Have you searched their things?"

"No, Sir."

"Go at once and search them."

"They ain't got no things to search, Master," whimpered Matilda. "They took all their things away with them."

She opened the pine chest in which they had brought their clothes from the plantation.

"Look in their bed. Look under the mattress." This was the traditional hiding-place of the negroes.

Jerry went into the next room with a light. They heard him turn the mattress up and give an exclamation. "Master, come here!" he called.

The turned-up mattress showed a slit and bulging moss. Jerry held in his hand a spool of thread, a handkerchief, a ribbon. He tore out more moss; a towel, a pair of scissors, a pair of stockings came out with it.

Matilda started forward, as mother and negro, to stay Jerry from further revelations.

"Matilda," asked her Master, "how much did you know of this?"

"Master! I'm no thief, you know I'm no thief! before God . . ."

"That's enough! Jerry, try to return what you can of these things. I suspect some of them came from the barracks. And go to that woman and pay for the dress. If you haven't the money, come to me and get it. And let Julia and Henrietta know that if I catch them about here, I will have them arrested and sent to jail."

Then the master and his wife left the room. Going

across the yard, he said to her: "Jerry is honest, but Matilda knew they were stealing."

The negroes were never the same afterward. Matilda grew sulky and quarrelsome, Jerry silent and morose. Both suffered for the want of their children. On the plantation, during slavery, if Jerry had caught his daughters stealing, he would have whipped them and that would have ended the matter. He would have whipped them if they had been impudent or disrespectful to him. If they had refused to work they would have answered to the overseer. If Matilda had caught them acting badly, she would have whipped them. They had stolen, they had acted badly, they had been impudent and lazy, and they had received no punishment. Even the master did not talk of punishing them but of having them arrested and sent to jail. Jerry tried to study it out.

He plodded along in his work. He made good wages and brought them home and locked them in his chest. When Spring came he would go into the garden of an afternoon and work with his master and the two boys planting vegetables; peas, beans, okra, beets. . . . At night there was no more talking around the hearth. Matilda sat in the kitchen, smoking her pipe. He sat to himself, smoking his pipe and "studying" as he called it.

Out of his studying in the past had come great things for the plantation. He seemed to carry everything in his mind that he had ever seen, but he had to "study" to get anything out of it. His master used to go to him as to a book of reference. When the time came on the plantation that the people there had to weave their own cloth or go without clothing, his master said to

him: "Jerry, do you remember that old loom that Aunt Patsy used to weave on? I can see her now," and he made the motion of flinging the shuttle and working the beam. "I can see the whole thing so distinctly that I believe we could make a loom together, you and I; you were playing around her as much as I in the old time."

Jerry answered in his cautious way: "I will study it out, Master, and see." He studied it out, knife in hand, whittling from soft cypress a little piece here, a little piece there; fitting them together; looking at them; pulling them apart; whittling again; fitting again; until he showed, at last, his model to his master, and then from it made a loom. How to warp the yarn—he studied that out too; and from experiment to experiment, failure after failure, he succeeded in creating from memory both loom and weaving, and all the cloth that was needed on the plantation was made there. He had studied out how to cure and smoke beef, how to dress leather, how to make shoes . . . He had even pieced together long hymns, from the fragments carried in his memory from childhood; hymns that all the negroes remembered but, as they said, could not recall. Anything that had taken place on the plantation since he had been there, give him time to study about, and he could report with perfect accuracy: the number of staves cut at such a time, the bushels of corn raised in such a field, where each certain mule had been bought and the long lists of the different shipments of sugar. He had even studied out how to pull teeth and to bleed people.

His great useful hands lay idle at his side; they could not whittle out the thoughts that lay in his head now,

could not help him in studying out what was before him this time.

He would come to his master of an evening as he was sitting on the gallery, to put some of his questions to him.

"Master, what is it keeps white folks straight? They ain't got no overseer to whip them."

"They get their straightening when they are children if they have sensible parents," his master had answered, laughing. "I know what kept me straight and so do you."

"What keeps you straight now, Master?" he asked seriously.

"Myself," answered his master confidently.

"Master, why can't niggers keep themselves straight, without whipping, like white folks do?"

"The good ones do. You kept straight, you have never been whipped since you were a boy."

Jerry shook his head. "Master, if I had got my deserts, I would have been whipped many a time since I was a man."

The master laughed at his frankness and responded with the same: "So should I, Jerry, to tell you the truth."

"Master," persisted the negro, not to be put off: "If white folks needed whipping to keep them straight they would get the whipping if they had to whip one another for it—they would get it. But niggers ain't that way. Niggers won't keep each other straight, like white folks do. The white folks kept the niggers straight, the niggers don't do it for themselves. Master," looking him in the face, "how long would the niggers on the plantation have kept straight if you hadn't been there or the

overseer? That plantation wouldn't have been a fit place for even niggers to live in, if the niggers had had to look out for the straightness of it, themselves. You know that, Master."

His master nodded his head and smoked in silence.

"But, Master, what puzzles me and what I can't study out, no matter how hard I try; if God wanted us niggers to be like white folks, why didn't he make us like white folks? He wants us to have white folks' natures, but he gives us nigger natures. If we go according to our natures, we are bad. We've got to go according to white folks' natures to be good, and when white folks are bad they go according to nigger natures."

As his master did not reply, perhaps for the best of reasons, Jerry continued:

"Master, over there, where we all come from, from . . . Africa . . . (even the best of negroes hate to pronounce the name) what sort of folks is the niggers there? They ain't got no white folks there. Well, what sort of niggers is they there?" He paused for an answer, which did not come. "I asked Marse Billy one day, and he told me they were savages. They go naked, they eat one another. And how we come here is: those niggers over there caught us like chickens and traded us off for rum, or for anything the traders gave them . . . That's how the white folks got us and brought us over here into slavery. Isn't that so, Master?"

"That's about it, Jerry."

"Master, did you ever hear of white folks selling their folks to niggers for slaves?"

"Oh! in old times, Jerry, there were all kinds of slavery. Don't you remember about the children of Israel and the Egyptians?"

Jerry shook his head dubiously.

"Well, now, Jerry," his master with cheerful voice questioned him in his turn: "how do you account for it that the negroes are so religious if they do not want to be good? You were all of you always singing hymns and praying and preaching and having revivals down in the quarters. It seemed to me then you were always wanting to be the best people on earth."

"It's the sinners that need praying for, Master, not the good," he answered with simplicity, and, rising from the step on which he had been seated he added—and now there was not a tinge of doubt in his voice, or misgiving in his mind—"God will forgive sinners; He says that, if they repent . . . if they repent. That's what makes us repent. Even the greatest white gentleman cannot go to Heaven unless he repents, you know that, Master; but the vilest sinner can, no matter what the color of his skin is. Old master taught us that; and he was right."

And lifting his head as if with reinforced strength and dignity, he walked back to his gallery.

What he had studied out, when the first talk of freedom turned his thoughts toward the great subject, had been thrown into confusion by the conduct of his daughters and the talk of the negroes about him. One of the answers he had received oftenest from his girls to his expostulations was: "I'm a nigger and I'm going to live like a nigger and I'm as good as white folks anyhow." The people at the Settlement repeated it, as they

stood around jeering at him. His fellow workmen at the carpenter shop said the same thing. The black soldiers that he met in the cars said the same thing. Matilda would not mention the absent girls to him and when he talked about them she would not blame them. She, too, was beginning to think that there was a white wrong and a black wrong; a different code of morality for a different skin.

Jerry, in his trouble, would recur again and again to his old master, the father of the present one, a rigid Presbyterian, who enforced repentance and salvation upon his slaves with far more severity than he enforced work. "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy." There was no distinction allowed by him for color in that command and sinners found small mercy at his hands when delinquencies, like those of Jerry's daughters, came under his jurisdiction. And his slaves when they were submitting to chastisement were made to know that their master believed it was a question of their souls, of their salvation from eternal damnation.

Now, they could damn their souls as they pleased, there was no one to interfere or hinder. On the old plantation, besides being punished, they would have been prevented or hindered. They would have had no chance to be bad even if they had wanted to. And as they lived in the fear of their strict stern master, so he lived, as they knew, in the fear of God.

Looking up to the stars, which as he thought lighted the Heaven where the old gentleman had gone: "Old Master," whispered Jerry plaintively, "I wish you were here to look after your niggers. God don't look after your niggers as you used to."

At last, one dismal, one painful morning, when he came to make the fire in the house, he rapped at the chamber door of his master and mistress, and standing in the cold gray gloom he told them (the words sounding familiar from old association) that Matilda had run away, not from them, but from him; run away during the night while he slept, taking Maria with her; "run away, like a runaway nigger," he repeated in his humiliation.

In the blank emptiness and silence that succeeded to his family life he held on to his work and to his household tasks; to the fidelity to duty in which he had been raised; to the future that his master had planned for him, and that he knew God approved of. But he could not forget his wife and his children, although they could forget him.

He sat up evenings alone in his room, where at first they had been so happy laughing over the ways of "city niggers," wrestling with his nature, as he would have called the struggle, striving for the other nature, according to which negroes had to live to be good. He would hurry through the path to his work and back; never looking about him, never stopping, as if afraid he might see or meet some of them.

In vain! When Spring came, fresh, as it were to him, from the plantation, bringing the merry voices and laughter of the quarters, the cackling of chickens, barking of dogs, the brisk jingling of the harness of the mules as they trotted out to the field with their noisy riders sitting sideways upon their bare backs . . . above it all he heard the voice of Matilda calling to the girls, and the voices of the girls stepping out with their water-

buckets balanced on their heads; little Maria sitting in her little chair that he had made for her. . . .

In vain! In vain! One morning—as bright a morning as Spring could bring—he threw down his tools as he had done once before, and started off almost running, hardly knowing what he was doing; but his feet brought him straight to where his mistress sat alone with her sewing. He told her—and as he talked his solid-looking tears rolled over his thick beard down to his blue shirt—he told her he had to go to them—to Matilda, and to his girls.

Her good, faithful Jerry! Her friend and servant who had stood by her during the war . . . many a time her only help! He alone of all the plantation knew the hard path she had been set to walk in, and how at times she shrank back in fear, how her feet trembled, and how her heart grew faint. She did not have to tell him. He knew, and she knew that he knew it all. She did not have to tell him. . . . Her tears ran too, straight from her heart to her eyes. Ah! That dreadful future! worse; worse than the war! This had not been in the plan; no more sorrow had been there, no more partings.

She told him he was right to go, for she knew that was what he yearned to hear; she told him to go to his wife and his daughters, that God would not abandon him—He saw it all; He would be over him wherever he was, at the Settlement or with his white people. . . . And they would all meet together some day, and be together and never, never part. So she talked as she used to do to the dying on the plantation, and it soothed him as it had always soothed them; and it soothed her too.

He had almost gone, when he returned, picked up her

dress, and hid his face in it, sobbing: "Master, Mistress, Master, Mistress."

Later in the day he might have been seen, with his small bundle of clothes over his shoulder, walking up the road to the Settlement.

THE SAN ANTONIOS

EVERYBODY in St. Médard knew that the San Antonios had begun their life, that is, of course, their wealth, in a barroom on the river front. But Madame Joachim remembered them even before that, when they kept an oyster-stand on the Levee itself and opened oysters and sold drinks to anybody who came along—dagoes, roustabouts, negroes—for it was at that time Joachim, himself, was running an oyster-lugger between Barrataria and the city and gaining the appearance that made people think of a pirate whenever they saw him. The oyster-stand grew into a shop, and the shop into a saloon, where fine fresh Barrataria oysters were sold, the best sharpener of the appetite for drink, as drink is the best sharpener of the appetite for oysters.

After this the classic road to Avernus was not more easy than Tony's to fortune. At that time, Antonia, Maria, and Lisida were crawling around in the mud of the gutter in front of the saloon, "and that," said Madame Joachim, "was the beginning of the Demoiselles San Antonio."

The saloon-keeper cannot but grow rich, provided, of course, that he be as sober as his clients are drink-loving. His investment seems to return the surest of earth's profits. But as in other trades and with other staples, the demand must be fostered, the customer encouraged, the consumption stimulated. The weak beginner, the

timid irresolute one in constant strife with his temptation, he to whom not having the price of a drink means the doing without, he must be tided over his failures of weakness, as cotton and sugar planters at times have to be tided over their failures of strength by their bankers. He has to be helped patiently along with credit until he is trained into a reliable client . . . until the week's earnings, the watch from the pocket, the wedding ring from the finger, the silver from the table, the market money from the wife, the hoard of a saving mother, the loans extorted by lying from friends, the purloinings from the till,—until the barkeeper sees it all coming in a safe and sure flow across the bar; until the once-timid speculator in intoxication at last ceases his struggle with his passion and comes to know no other will but its will; to have no other hope but to prolong its pleasure; until every drink taken becomes one more turn of the key winding up the automaton into the regular motion of so many steps away from the saloon, so many steps back; until Sobriety is the one dread left in the drunkard's mind; to keep it away his one preoccupation.

Sobriety, however, does come to him from time to time. Any one can see the conscience-driven wretch, in some early hour of the morning, shivering in the hottest Summer, outside the door of the saloon. It is the only way remorse ever does come to the drinking shop. Then the bar-keeper gives more credit, unless he is a poor barkeeper indeed. In this way he is necessarily a money-lender also, turning the cash from selling drinks into loans for buying them, adding golden links of interest to each end. The process is an endless chain; endless as the weakness and the cunning of man. And not in this

way alone was money cast upon the waters to come back in its own good or evil time. It was known that Tony, after shaving the pockets of the poor man, shaved the notes of the rich; that when money was needed desperately, more than life—more than honor as sometimes happens—when money has to be procured, at no matter what cost, and the transaction covered up like murder, Tony was known vaguely to be the man for the deed; and stocks and bonds, title deeds and mortgages, family secrets and political influence, flowed into his coffers from this source. No one knew how much money he had, only that he always had it to lend.

"God knows," said Madame Joachim, "how the children got into the Ursuline convent."

But this was hardly so difficult a piece of knowledge as to warrant an appeal to the Supreme Authority. Any one who has seen the lugger landing and its drinking-shops and drinking-shoppers, and the gutters that serve as drains thereto; and seen at the same time, as one must see, the old Cathedral, hard by,—might, without divine omniscience, draw the inference necessary to connect little girls playing in the gutter with the pure retreat of the Ursuline convent. Particularly when, by one of those facts incomprehensible to logic-loving humanity, the little girls, who for very virtue's sake should have been ugly and repulsive, were on the contrary pretty and attractive—too pretty and attractive, despite their degrading condition, to escape the apostolic successors of those shrewd eyes that once before had discerned, *non Angli, sed Angeli,* in white faces and nude bodies.

And the same eyes were shrewd enough perhaps to

detect that no one has more money to spend on children or the church than the rich bar-keeper, if he can be brought to do so. At any rate Maria, Antonia, and Lisida were taken from the gutter and sent to the convent, and once in charge of the sisters their parents showed little concern for them. So completely, indeed, did they become children of St. Ursula, so well were they dedicated in advance to her service, that in the expectations of the wise in such matters there was no more probability of their ever leaving the convent for the world than for children reared by the devil leaving the world for the convent.

One child had died—a boy. Around him clung whatever of parental love Tony and his wife could feel. All that they did not know of the universe, all that they in their ignorance could not know, would have been easier for them to understand than the fact that the boy they wanted died, and that the girls they did not want lived. No priest or church, assuredly, would ever have gotten their boy from them. When he died their affections, like vines whose trestles have been destroyed, crept henceforward upon the ground.

Such people do not read newspapers. In fact the wife could not read. National questions were as much above their interest as the stars, which they never looked at. The fish in the deep sea were not more passive under the agitations of the storm overhead than the San Antonios to the muttered threats, finally breaking out, of the war between the North and the South. But, like the fish, in the absence of finer knowledge, they guided themselves by instinct. And although Tony knew only that in a fight the stronger beats the weaker,

this was an immense superiority of knowledge over that possessed by the majority of the community in which he lived. When war was declared he said no more about it than the oyster in his hands; but he ceased to make personal loans, and turned his securities into gold. He bought Confederate money from the timid for gold, and sold it for gold to the confident; trading on the passion for patriotism as he had traded on the passion for drink. Running like a ferryboat from shore to shore, collecting fares before landing, he plied between hope and fear, working in the same secret and mysterious way that he made his loans, for he was never missed from his bar. While armies were being equipped, and companies raised, and men were going out from his very bar to die for their country—and some of his most drunken clients, those who were the most abject cowards in the morning about facing the world without a drink, did die for it heroically—Tony said nothing, but bought cotton. When the ships of the enemy made their appearance at the mouth of the river, and the price of cotton fell, like a dropping stone, he bought cotton. During the sharp but futile fight between the enemy's vessels and the forts that guarded the approaches to the city, when the young men were hastening away into the Confederacy, and the old ones stood in the streets listening to the guns and counting the minutes between them and ruin, Tony bought cotton, at lower and lower prices.

When the enemy's ships passed the forts and all that war could inflict hung in dread over the city, and when seeing itself doomed to capture it fell into the rage of despair that vents itself in wanton violence and destruction, Tony, shutting and bolting his barroom, left his

wife inside and was seen by her no more for twenty-four hours. While the furious rabble rioted in drunken frenzy; while packs of wild negroes, screaming with delirious joy, rushed through the streets aimlesly like yelping dogs in the night; while stores of powder were being exploded, and millions of dollars of cotton and sugar burned; while warehouses and groceries were thrown open for pillage and whisky and liquor ran in the gutters and stood in pools like water; while boats were being fired and sent down the current in flames, and the bank opposite the city seethed in one conflagration, from burning ships and shipyards; while the lurid clouds hung like another fire over the city, and the heavens turned to the blackness of pitch with smoke; while bells rang an unceasing alarm—Tony like a rat was slipping in and out of the hiding-place that he alone knew about; an old, empty, abandoned saloon whose batten doors and shutters were covered with the dust and cobwebs of years. But like most saloons it had a back entrance upon an alleyway that had been opened for the purpose of providing back entrances—exits they literally were—to the buildings, whose needs required at times means of quick and secret evasions. This was where Tony had stored his cotton—the building was packed with it. When the enemy's fleet anchored in front of the city and the despair of grief succeeded to the despair of rage; when in truth there was nothing left to be destroyed; when the enemy landed and marched through the streets—and had the cobblestones under their feet been human hearts the anguish they caused could not have been greater—then Tony returned to his saloon, unlocked the door, and began opening oysters

again. When he left it the night before, he counted his dollars by tens of thousands, now he counted them by hundreds of thousands. The great battleships that brought disaster, death, havoc, and ruin to the city, with suspense and dread to last a half century longer, were, in sober truth to him, not battleships at all, but argosies of silver, masted with gold, rigged with silken sails, musical with thrilling flutes and with Cleopatras, aye! with Cleopatras had he wished them, greeting him from damask cushions.

At the Ursulines' convent Spring comes prettier than anywhere else in New Orleans; for she comes bringing not only flowers for the convent garden, but white dresses and blue ribbons for the convent girls; and the Easter lilies, themselves, might envy the young convent girls, as in the early light of a Sunday morning they wend their way, in their white dresses and blue ribbons and white veils, walking two by two, under the bright green trees, to the chapel. The lilies might have envied, and pitied, them too, as the young girls pitied the beautiful lilies on the eve of Easter, with the fate of the gardener's scissors hanging over them. The convent girls knew that the enemy's vessels, thirty or forty of them, were lying in the passes of the river; but they knew too that their city could never be taken, that their men could never be vanquished, that God was with them and they with God in the present war. The great tocsin of St. Patrick's, as all the church bells of the city, had been given to the Confederate Government, to be made into artillery. Cannon made of consecrated metal, shooting consecrated balls! The vision of it fired the young hearts with holy flames and made them wish that they might be the ones

to serve that ordnance. Every little girl there who had a father, brother, uncle or cousin in the forts that guarded the river—and each one had some relative there or elsewhere in the army—held her head as high as if she were trying to reach her soaring heart with it, that virgin heart, higher up in the clouds than ever! The poor orphans, the charity scholars and half menials, were never pitied so compassionately as then; their hard fate and isolated lives in the community were never so sadly considered; their outcast lot, deprived of the glory and honor of defending their country, was apparent even to the convent slaves.

As for the sisters, never among the Ursulines of Louisiana could there be found a fear for Louisiana before the enemy. They too were happy enough in their gentle, pious way, except perhaps the Mother Superior, who must have been too old a denizen of the world of men or of God to have any more hopes or fears left in her heart. She must have cast them away, long ago, as grave-cloths of the soul.

They were happy enough at the convent, therefore, until the firing began at the forts. At the first shot, confidence was shaken; at the second, it vanished; at the third, the young girls gave a scream that brought the Mother Superior to them in haste. Louder and louder grew the bombardment, fiercer and fiercer the cannon. Sisters and scholars were hurried to the chapel. Once before in dire extremity of battle, when an overwhelming force threatened the city, when the British came to conquer and spoil it, the Sisters had prayed and God had heard them. General Jackson, himself, had come to the convent after the battle and assured them that

their prayers and the favor of the Almighty had saved the city, not he and his handful of men. The convent could not have prayed more fervently then than now. Every shot that sounded, sped to Heaven with a prayer to avert its ball. "Oh, Thou, Our Lady of Prompt Succor, help but this time, once more! Remember, how first Thou guidedst us through the tempests of the ocean to this country! Remember, how when the conflagration raged in the city, threatening to consume us, Thou turnedst back the flames from the convent door! Remember, oh remember, how once before Thou gavest us the victory!" But God's face was turned away from them. Our Lady of Prompt Succor could not succor them this time.

The bombardment ceased, the event was decided, and still, when praying was all too late, they prayed with frightened lips, the rosary slipping through their icy, trembling fingers. That night they watched the lurid light spread over the city, flaming up, through the rolling smoke. The river itself seemed to be on fire. They could hear the explosions and at times the roar of the voice of the frenzied populace. At last word was brought them that the forts had been passed and that the ships were on their way to the city.

Throughout the night, white forms glided about the dormitories, from the beds to the windows. In the early gray of dawn, the time when watchers by the sick always look for death, the first gunboat slowly steamed by the convent. Fearful, fearful, fearful apparition! stopping the breath, freezing the blood. At sight of it, one little girl screamed in agony: "Papa, Papa!" and fell fainting. The rest could look no more.

They ran back to their little beds again and laid their faces upon them and cried.

And the sisters! The nuns, the white veils and the black veils! Alas! the veils were rent asunder for that once and all the holy mystery of the hearts enshrined behind the pale impassive faces was revealed. They too had fathers, brothers, uncles, cousins, in the forts—for the Ursulines recruit their ranks, as the Confederate army did theirs, from the best families in Louisiana—and of what account are vows and renunciations when the woman's heart is pierced? Of what use are black veils or white veils, when the enemy advances over the corpses of her kin?

But the Demoiselles San Antonio looked on dry-eyed. They had no one in the contest to weep over. No cannon ball could render them more brotherless or kinless than they were. They winced not at the echoing boom, shrank not from the sight of the passing gunboats as their companions did. And well might these do so! As those vessels passed before the convent, family, friends, ease, comfort passed out of their lives; leaving behind, bereavement, desolation, poverty, wretchedness! The gaunt specter of war itself, flying over the convent roof, could not have sent down more directly upon their defenseless heads the thunderbolts of its dire tempest.

But not upon the Demoiselles San Antonio, whose father was creeping, like a rat, in and out among his cotton bales. Over their heads the golden cornucopia was turned and all the choicest Spring flowers of fortune showered down upon them; luxury, love, and enjoyment of their youth and beauty fell down upon them like the mystical roses upon Sainte Rose de Lima. The moment

of crucifixion for the others was their moment of transfiguration.

For one who has lived through the experience it is clear that the true fruits of conquest come not all at once in the moment of victory, but are a succession crop, yielding gratuitous reapings of profits to the one side as of pains and penalties to the other with unfailing regularity for many years afterward; as the true mortality of a battle is not the number of killed on the field but the resultant roll of the dead in the ensuing years. This could not be apparent at the time to the people of New Orleans, so unused to conquest, who it may be said, despite their vaunted love of fighting and military glory, knew not, as the event proved, what real war was.

It must have been the surprise of his life to Tony, "a heavenly surprise" he might have called it, to find that when he thought he was at the end he was only at the beginning of his harvest: that his gold and paper money speculations and his cotton buying were but the prelude of what was to follow. He had not dreamed of the wholesale confiscations of property all over the city, the auctioning off of buildings by the block, of houses and stores with their contents for a mere percentage of their value; the secret sales of trembling owners in fear of confiscation; the hidden cotton that still could be touched; the bargains from panic-stricken women, the endless reach of money-making, even beyond this, for any one, like him, who had no scruples about buying and none about compounding with the auctioneer who sold, the officer who seized, the soldier who guarded. San Antonio could compound with all officers, soldiers, white and black, camp-followers, and roughs from the

purlieus of other cities. In a way, he knew well that, conquerors though they were, they were but men as the conquered had been, men who had the same taste for oysters and liquor. He bought in property of all kinds, spoiling the spoilers and looting the looters of their cotton, houses, silver jewelry, velvets, furniture, libraries, pictures, pianos, carriages, horses, carpets, India shawls, diamonds, laces, the riflings of fine ladies' wardrobes, the treasures of baby layettes, for many a soldier came into possession of these so cheaply that anything he sold them for was a profit to him. Runaway slaves brought and sold to him what they had stolen and every runaway then was a thief. Successions of absent Confederates were opened and settled in ways so convenient to money-makers, that the corpse went to his tomb not more bereft of worldly goods than the absent heir was when he returned to his heritage. Money, money, money was cast out upon the streets as sugar and liquor had been when the city fell, for any one to pick up and enjoy who did not mind the filth on it.

From the convent windows, as one looked down the river over the roof of the convent chapel, could be seen the chimneys and the tops of the cedar and magnolia trees of what was known as the old Havel place. The old Havels had fled in a ship to Havana, in the first panic of the invasion, leaving behind what indeed they loved, only less than one another, their home: It was the prettiest one in the parish of St. Médard and no one in the Parish, even the most unworthy, could walk past it on the Levee, without feeling a covetous desire to possess it. The fence that surrounded it was of brick topped by an iron railing of delicate design which at

regular intervals was upheld by brick pillars that supported vases, holding century plants. It was called the "Villa Bella." Its real name was "Isabella," the name of the bride for whom it had been built; but as the bride and her husband and the villa aged, the pretty name in gilded lettering over the gate had become rusted and dimmed and finally lost under the vine that had been planted in the bridal time, to encircle it with roses.

A broad brick walk, bordered with shrubbery, led to the house whose gallery was floored with white and black marble and instead of a balustrade had pedestals of marble holding vases of growing plants with vines hanging over the sides. In the center of the garden on one side was a fountain, on the other a sun dial with a setting of flowers in *parterres* encircling them. Under the magnolia and cedar trees, white plaster casts of nymphs and fawns seemed to be shrinking back in the shade cast by the heavy green branches overhead.

The old Havels had furnished their house as a young, romantic, bridal couple with taste and fortune would furnish a home for their love with fine lace and satin curtains, with rose wood and mahogany, bronze and marble statuettes, Sèvres and Palissy vases; with silver and cut glass candelabra and chandeliers; with pictures and with mirrors everywhere. No matter in which direction, at what angle they looked, the bride and her husband might, by lifting the eyes, see the reflection of their happiness and their luxury. The old Spaniard felt secure in his generosity as he had contributed money to the defense of the city against its invaders. When the invaders triumphed, therefore, the property was confiscated at once, sold at auction, and bought by Tony.

Thus the Demoiselles San Antonio were provided with a home just when they were leaving the convent and needed one. And it was one of the prettiest roses that fell to them from the gilded cornucopia. Heaven, by sending them the tenderest of parents, could hardly have benefited them so well as by sending them the sordid, selfish ones they had; who, to get rid of them, had gladly thrust them out of their drinking saloon home into the pure, holy atmosphere of the Ursuline convent and by never going to see them there, had saved them from the shame that comparison with parents of other scholars would have produced.

But, the old villa? Old houses like old families never seem to fall in one clean drop from height to depth, they are always caught by some crag or bush growing on the side of the precipice and there kept gibbeted through their slow decay in no matter what ridiculous posture. The short, quick termination of destruction has no terror for the original owner in comparison with such a tragi-comical ending. Had the Villa Bella, however, been closer to the center of the city's life, it might have been caught in a still more ridiculous position, for all its refined appearance and the tender sentiment of the old couple who in it had watched their young and rosy love grow old, bent, and wrinkled it is true, but yet remaining none the less love to them.

To their neighbors, particularly to Madame Joachim the San Antonios were no better than masqueraders in the old villa; like the negroes who of *Mardi gras* nights go to their balls dressed in the second-hand finery of the whites. There was not one among them who had not a jibe ready when opportunity offered for the slinging of

one. "No wonder that his daughters were admitted to the Ursuline convent," sneered they. "No wonder they sing so well."

"Ah, yes! They did sing well; their voices soaring like birds from a cage, out of the house, over the trees, to the public road so that passers-by could not refrain from stopping and listening to them. Even the young American officers from the barracks, sauntering along the Levee with their dogs of an evening, would stop, and had been heard to remark one to another: "How strange it is, one never hears such music from American *parvenues!* No matter how much money their fathers have they always seem to suffer from an extreme poverty of talent."

When one wanted to buy five cents' worth of milk or eggs or anything that Madame San Antonio had to sell—for different from Père Philéas, she gave nothing—one went not through the vine-festooned front portal, but through a distant backgate and ran for fear of the dogs through a path that led to the basement of the house, where Madame San Antonio would be found sitting before a table counting eggs or oranges; sorting pecans, plaiting garlic, straining vinegar or bottling *Merise*—as the Creoles call Cherry Bounce—dressed in the *cotonnade* skirt, calico sacque, and blue check apron of her barroom days; with a long black pocket tied by a tape around her waist; a perfect market woman.

"Madame San Antonio, *Maman dit comme ca, un picaillon de . . .*" and while she counted or measured the little girls would stop and listen to the singing, milk-pitcher or basket in hand, forgetting everything, until like the trump of judgment came to them the thought that

they must go. And Madame San Antonio? What was Faust, L'Africaine, Charles VI to her? (for they sang only airs from grand opera, the Demoiselles San Antonio). Madame San Antonio heard them not at all, but went on plunging her hands into this basket and that, this bucket and that, stopping only to blow her nose on her red and yellow cotton handkerchief. And San Antonio? When he came in from his business in the city and took his seat in the basement, his flannel cap pulled over his eyes, and a red handkerchief tied around his neck, he did not seem to hear his daughters any more than his wife did; any more than when he was in his barroom and they in their convent.

Three afternoons of the week Mademoiselle Mimi came to practise with the young ladies, and every morning came Madame Doucelet for her day's attendance upon them. This had been arranged by the superior of the convent when she had also advised that the Villa should be substituted for the barroom as a home, when it seemed good to her for the young ladies to leave the convent: their vocation not being that of St. Ursula.

Madame Doucelet was of the kind always to be found at the doors of convents and churches as other guides are to be found at the doors of museums—thin, wrinkled, sallow, somewhat bent, dressed in mourning, of good family, with a name that can serve as passport into society—one of those, in short, who seem in every generation to be reduced providentially to poverty in order to serve those who are as providentially elevated to wealth.

She was so shabby, in her old black bonnet and pointed black *cachemire* shawl pinned tight across her shoulders,

and seemed so far removed from the brilliant world of fashion, that no one but that wisest of women—a superior of a convent—would have suspected her intrinsic merit as an initiator into the mysteries of the manners, dressing, and customs of good society; her vocation, in fine, in religious parlance, of a worldling.

"Religion and music," she thus explained herself to Mademoiselle Mimi, "what more can a woman want? Religion for the soul; music for the heart."

The Demoiselles San Antonio possessed these qualifications in perfection; that is if the practice of devotion be called religion, and singing music. As Maria was not so precocious as her younger sisters, and as Lisida was more precocious than her elders, the three went through the gentle curriculum of the convent abreast; and as they entered it together as babies, so they left it together, as young ladies. It may be said, that they were well educated; for whatever they could learn, the convent had taught them. They were drilled in good qualities, and knew all about them whether they possessed them or not: discretion, truthfulness, patience, industry, obedience, resignation, and the wholesome restraint of the feelings—or when this was not possible, that concealment of them which comes from the consciousness that they were always in sight or earshot of a sister, whether they saw her or not.

Of books, they knew what they studied in classes, or received as prizes; the pretty gilt and pink, blue or green volumes of pious histories authorized by the church as the proper reward for convent excellence. Of the world outside their schooling they knew only what the sisters told them, and they did not imagine aught else about it,

for it was one of the qualities of convent education that the imagination (that cursed seed of damnation, planted by the subtlety of the serpent in the mind of woman in Paradise), since it could not be extirpated, was trained upwards in the harmless direction of Heaven. Their hearts, therefore, had been kept pure, as the saying is, their minds innocent. In short, the convent had done its best for them. It had taught them the only thing they could learn; had cultivated their one talent—music—and not in a niggardly way either, for when the limit of the convent standard and means had been reached, a professor of singing was procured from the city for them, the best professor there, and they were never excused from practising their piano.

Madame Doucelet's duty was to accompany the young ladies whenever they went out—never to let them go into the street without her had been the charge given her—and to teach them how to dress. Slipping in every morning, wrapped in her shawl, her reticule clasped tight against her breast, she took them into the city to the shops, showing them, what of course they had never seen before, the infinite devices and inventions for adorning and enhancing the interests of women in the world; that is their beauty. Showing them, what also they had never seen before, their own capital of beauty and how it could be profitably increased; by vigilance here, enterprise there. The poor idea of the nuns was that a woman's beauty was of her soul and that could only be increased by spiritual adornment.

Mademoiselle Mimi, when she took her position at the piano three times a week for the performance of her duty, could observe the progress Madame Doucelet was

making in the fulfilment of hers: Maria's waist growing hebdominally smaller, more corset-like, her complexion whiter; Antonia's slimness more sinuous and graceful; Lisida's fulness more engaging. The hair of each one had commenced to travel at once from the rigid uniformity of the convent coiffure, for what is hair or coiffure to the soul? Maria's long, thick plaits were wound around her classic head; Antonia's were unplaited and coiled loosely. Lisida's hair, which had been her sin almost at the convent, so unmanageable it was and curly and tangled—its reproach was turned into its beauty, for its disordered luxuriance was encouraged and even increased and it was carried to the top of her head and held there with a tall comb; black and brilliant over her black, brilliant eyes; soft and entrancing as her soft form. As soon as Madame Doucelet laid her small, faded eyes upon the youngest Demoiselle San Antonio, this transformation and other transformations sprang, as it were, before them.

And as their hair and their figures, so their complexions, hands, and finger nails. Madame Doucelet insisted upon long, polished, finger nails as authoritatively as the convent did on fasting and prayer. Long finger nails, she said, denoted a lady—that is, one who never worked with her hands—for, obviously, one could not work with long finger nails. Even the practising on the piano had to be sacrificed to them, for the lady with long finger nails cannot afford to break them on the piano keys.

As all these small sums of their capital were being rescued, as it were, from their uselessness, to be turned to profitable account, the convent dresses, which were in-

deed only dresses for a soul, not a body, were replaced by the apparel that fashion in truth seems to adopt for the purpose of revenging itself upon the soul for its servile treatment of the body.

Mademoiselle Mimi saw skirts grow longer, more flattering to the figure, waists more transparent, more open at the neck, sleeves more charitable to the eye of a lover of beautiful arms, heels higher. Earrings made their appearance, beads, chains. And as all this was observed by Mademoiselle Mimi, three times a week, she observed, too, that each sang better, according as she progressed upward in the teaching of Madame Doucelet. Sometimes, when as it seemed to her, the voice she was accompanying was making a triumphant, exultant escape from the body and all ties of the throat, to soar untrammeled through the greatest difficulties of *technique,* she would look up and find the eyes of the singer fastened on some mirror (as has already been said the Havels had multiplied mirrors in their pretty salon), where was the reflection of a beautiful, beautifully dressed young lady.

Ah! what were the poor nuns, with their feeble imagination of the angelic, to this revelation? What more rapturous gaze could the eyes of their pupils turn upon the pictures of the most immaculate saints?

Madame Doucelet, always in the corner, telling her prayer beads, would dart out every now and then, with her noiseless tread, like a spider out of its web, to put a footstool under Antonia's bronze slippers, to show off her foot; to thrust a bright cushion under Lisida's languid head and rumple her hair still a little more; to lift Maria's arm to the back of her chair and gently lay her shapely head, *en profile,* on her palm in the pose of a

listening muse; fastening her ideas on to them, just as a spider fastens the ends of his threads to a leaf or twig, in making a trap. No woman could give more of herself to the work for which she was paid.

"Where, where?" Mademoiselle would ask herself, from the depths of her ugliness and ignorance, as her short, blunt fingers struck chords and ran trills; "where, in the name of piety, did she learn it all?"

But Mademoiselle Mimi, who could not sing for want of a voice, was she not apparently as badly equipped for her rôle as Madame Doucelet for hers?

The husband and wife would sit in the basement until the time came for them to go up the backstairs to the servant's room they had selected for their chamber. Here they would sit with shut door, forgetting themselves, and perhaps fancying they were again in their old chamber over the barroom, smelling of oysters, whiskey, and the foul emanations from the gutters. In a corner was the pine bed bought when the wedding ring, the marriage certificate of the ignorant, was bought; there stood also the wooden table with a pail and basin; a clothes chest and two short-legged chairs, as in the old chamber. The one addition to these old friends, the bridal accompaniments of the bed, was a safe with a combination lock. There had been no fireplace in their old room, nor was there one in this one. They would as soon have thought of warming their cow by a fire as themselves. When other folks made a fire in Winter, they tied a woolen scarf around their necks and over their heads; as when other folks drank their coffee out of china or delft cups, they drank theirs out of tin, stirring it with the handle of their iron forks or knives.

They would sit in their room, silent, inert, until the nine o'clock bell rang, when, together with a lighted candle, they would make the round of the pretty house that lay like a sleeping beauty under the spell of a curse. Ah! she would never awake, that beauty, nor find a deliverer tc bear her away out of her doom!

They would go back to their room and sit there again, silent and still together—one might as well imagine the two magnolia trees in the garden caressing one another, as the husband the wife, or the wife the husband.

When the gray dawn was about coming on, when in old times the last drunkard would be put out of the bar-room to the sidewalk, and they would be free, to fasten and bar their door and creep slowly on their tired feet to their room, to sleep off their day's work—not until then did their old methodical habits permit them to go to bed. They were hardly more silent and inscrutable in their sleep than when awake.

A BAD PART OF THE ROAD

THEY talked along pleasantly enough for a while—the uncle, aunt, and nephew—with the gay frankness and easy humorous comment of family conversation, but there can be no long stretch of pleasantness, even in family intercourse, when there were such ugly obtruding questions as they had in their minds. Questions that were in possession there, like sheriffs in possession of a seized house: how to get along, how to make a living, what to do next in politics to ameliorate the situation; with no better answers to them, as far as they could see, but such as were given by a warring congress, a powerless president, and a hating, taunting press closing in pitilessly around them, with articles that were as the spikes of a new and terrible Iron Virgin. The South was at bay, and the conquered Confederates were at bay in the South.

The mother found herself, suddenly raising her head quickly as a hen does when the fear of a hawk strikes her. And as the hen, even where there is no hawk in sight, yet at the thought of one, hurries her chicks to a shelter, so she gathered her brood together and led them into the next room, and seated them around the dining-table, turned up the lamp in the center of it and carefully took her own place on the side next the door, so that in maintaining order and quiet in one room, she could be ready to make a diversion in the next. She was always afraid for Harry, with his uncle.

Her intuitions, however, for once seemed to be at fault. The smooth tones that rolled in to her had a kindly tone (that is, her husband's tone was kindly) and every now and then there came the tapping of the pipe, showing that it was empty and being refilled: always a good sign. Any guardian angel might have been tempted to wander into inattention. But she was aroused from her thoughts by the ominous words from Harry: "It is no use for me to keep at this sort of a thing, I will hunt a place somewhere!" And after that the angry murmur of a discussion, and the closing of the door.

After a few words of pleasant chat with the children, in case they had heard anything, she arose and went into the little parlor. "Why, Harry!" she exclaimed in surprise, "it was your uncle then that went out?"

"Yes," he replied.

"I thought it was you," she said simply. After waiting a moment for him to speak: "What was the matter? Of course, you did not expect him to approve your giving up your profession?"

"I," he answered coming out of his silence with an effort. "I—Oh, I was fool enough to tell Uncle some unpleasant truths, that was all!"

"Why did you do that?" she asked very gently to conceal her displeasure.

He had twisted himself around in his chair so as to rest his elbow on the back of it and his head on his hand; and she saw, now that the light fell on the scarred side of his face, that it was no longer the reckless, good-humored, dare-devil boy's face she remembered, but the face of a man, worn and discouraged, older, harder, the scar wrinkling it into ugliness. How different from the

boy who had come to her and her husband fresh from Princeton! How different from the man both had expected from the promise of the boy!

"Why did I do it? Why did I do it? I will tell you why I did it," he raised his voice angrily, the fire of temper shining in his eyes. "I did it because, unless he sees things as they are, unless some one did tell him the truth, unless, unless . . . you will all want for food," he concluded impatiently.

She arose. "I think your uncle perfectly right not to listen to you."

"My uncle is a fool not to listen to me."

She turned to put her hand on the knob of the door to open it. He jumped from his seat and putting his hand on hers loosened its clasp.

"Don't go off that way, Aunt," he begged. "Just listen to me, let us talk it all over." Then striving to be pleading and affectionate: "At any rate, you ought to know," he continued with unmistakable emphasis.

When she sat down again, he brought his chair closer to her. "I knew, when I undertook to speak to Uncle about his affairs he would not listen to me. But, whether he listens to me or not, Aunt, the circumstances will remain the same."

"What circumstances, Harry?"

He looked at her in surprise. "Why, Aunt, don't you know that we are ruined, that we have lost everything?"

"Why, of course, I know that, Harry. We have been whipped in the war and lost everything. But, what of that? We certainly expected to lose everything if we lost our cause."

As he had nothing to answer, she went on: "We have all to do our share in the work of getting along. I know that I am willing to do my part. I made up my mind to that. Of course, there are disappointments"—her voice faltered a little—"the children will suffer . . . but what of that? The experience may be good for them. . . . And at any rate, the circumstances, as you call them, cannot last forever. Your uncle thinks we have gotten through the worst already, he sees signs of better times . . . of renewed prosperity . . ." then—her calmness suddenly breaking—"he made a fortune out of his profession once, and how dare you . . . how dare you . . ." At this moment, the door opened and her husband entered. Standing by the mantel and leaning his arm upon it, all traces of his previous irritation obliterated from his face and manner, he asked:

"You are confident that your information is correct, and that the council have engaged Stone to reopen the Riparian case?

"Yes," his nephew answered, coolly and formally, "my information is perfectly correct; Stone is the brother of the commanding General; there is another brother in a wholesale house here furnishing army and navy supplies."

"And," his fingers tapping the mantel softly, "you say he is going to associate other counsel with him."

"Yes, Dalton; that is decided on."

"Thank you, that is all I wanted to know. Have you found out any news about the banks?"

Harry paused before he answered and then proceeded with a sympathetic inflection in his voice, that he tried to stiffen out of it: "I made it my business to find out if

there was any change to be made in any of your old banks."

The fingers on the mantel stopped their tapping, and this little noise withdrawn, a breathless stillness seemed to fall over the room.

"It is a 'pull dick, pull devil' business in all the banks between directors and presidents as to which man's relative should get the places. But the Union men, who are in possession, are to be retained, I hear, for the present, on account of their influence with the courts. As for the Delta, that has been given positively to Fosdick."

"To Fosdick? Why?"

"His father-in-law was a Union man, and he pushed Fosdick, who has been pardoned by the government, and . . ."

His uncle left the room and was heard pacing up and down the gallery outside with firm, measured steps that fell as steadily as the ticking of a clock.

The Riparian case! the great feature of all their plans! the high tower of their future! That upon which they were to depend, even if everything else failed! The wife looked up as if to certify where she was. The Riparian case, given to another lawyer! . . . And the Delta, her father's old bank! What right had Fosdick to that?

She listened until the steps reached the farthest end of the gallery:

"And Mr. Haight's bank, Harry? The Caledonian?"

"The Caledonian? Oh, that was given to a friend of Haight's from the West."

"What! Did George Haight give to another a position that my husband could have accepted? He couldn't have known."

"Ah! but he did know."

"I cannot believe it."

"I told him myself."

"You told him? You asked George Haight for a position for my husband?"

She looked at him as if he were demented.

"I not only asked him for it, I plead with him to give it to the husband of his old friend, to the husband of the daughter of his old benefactor, the man who helped him when he needed help, who . . . "

"Helped him! Helped him!" she broke in with indignant impetuousity. "Made him! made him! A stranger! A friendless lad! Gave him money to buy decent clothes with . . . found a place for him . . . why, he would have died of yellow fever but for my father! He took him in his own house, found a nurse for him . . . and he . . . and he . . ."

She could not find words to express what she felt. "My husband," she asserted, foolishly, weakly, it must have appeared to the nephew, "is as much above George Haight as heaven is above the earth."

"Oh, no, Aunt. You are mistaken there! Haight is as much above your husband now, as gold is above heaven. And he knows it and he wants you to know it [showing that her foolish assertion had not been lost upon him]. He has the money that we are all upon our knees begging to be allowed to work for . . ."

Her lips curled with scorn, she shook her head, her fingers twitched; she was, evidently, in her mind speaking to Haight. When she was angry, she showed that she was the daughter of a high-tempered father and could talk as he did when occasion required.

"Harry," she turned in a constrained way to him, "what are you going to do when you give up the bar?"

"As I told Uncle, I shall try and get a clerkship somewhere; sell pots and pans, groceries, anything to make a living. There is nothing for me to do at the bar. I should die of starvation before I could get a practice now." He laughed scornfully. "There are no political qualifications required to sell pots and pans. And the city is full of that kind of business. Capital is the only necessary qualification for it, and the land of inexhaustible armies is the land of inexhaustible capital. . . . We went under to the one—now, we must go under to the other."

"It will break your mother's heart," she said sadly.

He shrugged his shoulders.

She continued, bitterly: "Tommy Cook, a little ragamuffin picked up from the street to be a lawyer! and you! with your family and education . . ."

Harry held up his hand warningly, "Listen, Aunt," he spoke slowly and distinctly: "when I was brought to the city, Tommy hunted me up, searched for me in the hospital until he found me and did not leave me. He bribed the doctor to look after me, specially, and paid the nurses right and left to get some sort of decent treatment for me; and at the worst part of it, he brought in the best doctor in the city, from the outside, to see me, and I should have died if he hadn't. . . . And when I was strong enough to leave the hospital and go to prison, he stuck by me there; and if I had ever gotten strong enough to escape, he would have helped me out of the city. . . ."

"And he is helping you now!" she looked at him with sudden inspiration; "he is helping you now!"

"Yes," speaking still slower, and more impressively: "he is helping me now, I am living with him, I am living upon him."

"Oh, Harry! Come and live with us! Come and stay with us," she cried with tears in her eyes.

He paid no attention to this. "He is a very much better lawyer than ever I would have been with all my education and family. . . . As he will prove it one of these days." He sighed heavily and then continued in a desultory way: "Try to understand things a little . . . it is your duty to do so . . . You talk about doing your part in the poverty ahead . . . let your part begin right now and here." He showed that he was listening to the regular steps on the gallery, and every time they passed, the door seemed to expect them to stop, but they continued; going backwards and forwards from one end of the gallery to the other.

"And Tommy, you know, saved Uncle's library. When the city was captured, he saw that he must save the office and library. If he had not been lame, he would have gone into the army, he would have fought with us and been whipped with us. But, he had not taken an oath to the Confederacy and so he was immune politically, so to speak" . . . The steps were passing the door again, they did not stop . . . "most of the lawyers did not find a book left when they came back. Why, every ship that went North for a year after the capture of the city took a load of books as a regular part of their cargo. Whole libraries were shipped. There were even preachers in the army to steal the libraries of preachers

. . . but that was not all; Uncle had accumulated data of all kinds, pamphlets, briefs, invaluable to another lawyer; not to speak of a private journal filled with commentary on the decisions of the Supreme Court in all important cases, a thing that no one else on earth would have had the patience to do. Alone it would furnish good capital for any lawyer to start with. What he wrote about the Riparian case, if Stone could get it would give him more knowledge than he could acquire in ten years' study of it."

She nodded to the look he gave her.

"And Tommy held on to the business too. He could not help being a lawyer; always around the courts, listening to every case Uncle argued, hunting up his authorities from the time he could read; copying, from the time he could write. Uncle himself used to send him to listen to the reading of the decisions of the Supreme Court; and he said that Tommy's report was as good as the official one and sometimes better. So he could easily pass an examination. He confidently expected to hand over the business with the library to Uncle after the war. He did not foresee. . . . You do not seem to realize, Aunt, that Uncle is practically disbarred from the higher courts; that if he had all the cases in the world, he could not bring them in a United States court, unless he sent on to Washington for a pardon, which he won't do; and took an oath which he cannot take. Our own courts are in the hands of scalawags, scalawags for judges, scalawags for lawyers. . . ."

"Yes, I know all that," she answered hastily, for her quick ears heard the steps on the gallery turning in toward the door.

It opened, and her husband entered, and as before took a position by the mantel.

"Harry," the name was pronounced absent-mindedly, "where did you get your information about the Riparian case?"

His nephew grew as embarrassed as if he were making a confession of guilt; as if he were still a boy before his stern uncle.

"I saw it in a letter, Sir."

"A letter to whom?"

"To Tommy."

"Who wrote that letter?"

"Colonel Dalton."

"Who?"

"Colonel Dalton; he wanted Tommy to refresh his mind about some of the points of the case. He offered to engage him as associate in the case." His uncle's arm fell from the mantel, and his face grew white. Without a word he left the room, but instead of walking on the gallery, those inside heard him go down the steps and out of the gate.

His aunt raised her eyes to Harry: "Dalton!" she exclaimed.

The young fellow jumped from his chair as if to follow his uncle, but hesitated, and sat again by his aunt: "If it had not been Dalton, it would have been some one else," he said heavily, "It is a fight now, Aunt, not for rights, but for life."

"Yes, but Dalton! Any one rather than he! I would not have believed it of him . . . Why," she said, the tears coming into her eyes, and her voice trembling, "we were talking about him the other day, and your

uncle said he could count upon Dalton as upon himself; that he trusted him more than any friend he had. I was asking him," she explained weakly, "something about his business and he was telling me what he was relying upon, when the political troubles were past. I do not mind being disappointed myself, . . . but to see him disappointed, deceived. . . ."

"Uncle always trusted those whom he helped along," interrupted the young fellow curtly.

"Your uncle met him only yesterday, and Dalton told him all sorts of pleasant and affectionate things."

"I met him today. He did not know that I knew about the letter to Tommy Cook and he was full of his admiration of Uncle and his devotion to him. Aunt, Aunt, if you want to serve Uncle, advise, persuade him, . . . Dalton would take him in as associate counsel."

She shook her head without waiting to hear what he wished her to advise and persuade.

"But, Aunt, you don't know what hard times may be ahead of you."

"That would make no difference with your uncle if he thought a principle was involved. He will never ask for a pardon, or for help from Dalton,"—her lip curled.

"Think of the children, Aunt, the difference it may make in their lives."

"That is what I am thinking of Harry; that is what we both are thinking of all the time: the children. We do not wish our children ever to be ashamed of, ever have to apologize for their father."

"Ashamed! apologize!" he repeated.

"Ah, Aunt!" he said bitterly, "an American child

is never ashamed of a father that makes money for it, you know that, even if he stole the money."

"If I were a child of Colonel Dalton's, I know I would be ashamed of what he is doing now," she retorted angrily.

"Aunt, mark my words, this transaction will be the making of his fortune. Dalton is a fine lawyer if "—he hesitated as lawyers do in saying such a thing about a *confrère*—" he is not a scrupulous one."

"No, after this I should say not, although your uncle trusted him implicitly."

"The Dalton children," he continued, "will be reared, educated, and provided for like a gentleman's children. Yours . . ."

"We shall educate our children like a gentleman's children, Harry! Do not be afraid for that." She raised her head proudly.

Taps sounded from the barracks, clear and sweet in the night air, and the street, in front, was filled at once with the noise of the feet of running soldiers. And as if this were the cue for their entrance, the children straggled through the room on their way to bed; yawning, sleepy, hair rumpled, feet dragging. Their mother kissed each one good night and watched them go; the boys through the door on one side, the girls through the door on the other. Their cousin watched them also with a strained expression.

"They," he said, "are the real victims of the war, they are the real losers."

"Oh, let us forget our losses, our misfortunes!" she exclaimed desperately. "Let us go on from where we are as best we can. We can at least be cheerful. I am

not going to think about it any more than I can help, and rich or poor, we can enjoy our children and one another. As for the future, the future," her voice died away. What could she say about the future? Always changing, still changing! her future of a few hours ago was gone now from her as much as her future before the Confederate war.

When Harry spoke again, it was from a different direction, and with a gentler voice.

"You see, Aunt, it is not as if I came straight from the Confederacy as you and Uncle did, where you could not help being keyed up all the time to the heroic. I was here for a year before the end of the war, lying for the most part of the time on my back, for even in prison, you know, I was a cripple and half blind. When the worst of my pain was over, I could not sleep, that was my great trouble. I used to long at night for the pain to come again, for that did exhaust me so that it made me sleep. Tommy used to bring me the papers; of course, he could only bring me the papers on one side, and I can tell you, they gave me enough to think about at night when I could not sleep: papers from the North, the East, the West; from Europe." He laid his head in both his hands. "It is a wonder I didn't go crazy. The doctor used to snarl at me: 'If you go on this way—thinking—you will go crazy,' and I would snarl back at him: 'Damn you, I will think and I won't go crazy.' So I used to go over and over it all in my mind; and Tommy would come with more news, more papers, more for me to think about, to go crazy over. Aunt, I can see as plainly as I see you sitting there, that we are not at the end but at the beginning of a war."

"Harry! Another war! Oh, I pray God not."

"Not another war, Aunt; the same one. We have gone through one phase of it, that is all. We have been whipped into laying down our arms, that is all. They have not laid theirs down, nor are they going to do so. The victorious side will never lay down its arms, Aunt, never, never!"

"Your Uncle does not think so, Harry. Your Uncle, argues differently, he maintains the very opposite. He hopes for a good future for us all still, a prosperous future. He says defeat never yet destroyed a good people—I mean the good in a people"—conscientiously correcting her report of the original words.

"He does not know, Aunt, he does not know."

"You are dispirited and discouraged, Harry, and I do not wonder. You have not yet recovered from your wounds and your hard time in prison. You must come and live with us and let me nurse you up again." She smiled affectionately at him.

He seemed not to hear her, for he only shook his head and repeated:

"Uncle does not know, he does not know the people against us."

"But, Harry," falling in with his humor, "you used to be devoted to the North. Don't you remember how you used to be always telling us how superior they were up there to the South, oh, in ever so many ways?"

"I was thinking of Princeton then! Yes, I was devoted to Princeton. But I can never think of the people who were over me in the hospital or in prison in the same day as Princeton."

"Your uncle is very confident of the wisdom of his judgment, and you know he is not a man to be easily mistaken."

"What did his judgment about Dalton amount to?"

"Oh, he was simply deceived about Dalton."

"That is it," with rising temper, "he was deceived, and you are all deceived; deceiving yourselves. You don't know the truth, no one among you knows the truth. You are like those idiots in the country strutting around in heroic attitudes, your heads in the clouds."

"Your uncle . . ."

"We are a ruined people," he interrupted, "it's no use thinking we can come back from the war and take up where we left off and go right on. We can't do it. We have lost our men, we have lost our money, we have lost our place in business. Where one of us stood before there stands now a keen, shrewd, pushing stranger, who does not care a damn for the heroic or for anything but money-making; and we must down that man before we can make a step in advance. This is no Southern talk, no nonsensical sectional prejudice, it is plain common sense. We are in poverty, not as transients, as Uncle thinks, but as permanents. We are in poverty to stay while our masters grow rich over us and rule the land. Make no mistake about that, they are going to rule. We have no rights as freemen now; but we will gain our political rights, yes, we will gain them. We can show at least that we are not going to live under negro rule; but to the end of our days we will be outnumbered, outcounted in the nation."

"Your uncle . . ."

"Never will we get out of the sound of that trumpet

over there; out of the sound of what that trumpet means," he declared.

" Your uncle understands the temper of the country," his aunt continued firmly.

" He knows what the men of his class think at the North, the men with his standards and ideals. I know what the other class think and there are nine hundred and ninety-nine of them to one of his class.

" He and his class have rather proved themselves in the past, I think," she answered proudly.

" Oh, yes, in that easy little game that they used to call life; when this was not considered the act of a gentleman, nor that, when they acted and talked to one another like dancing-masters. That is the way they tried to carry on the war. Look at Sherman and who blames him?"

" Well, not his own side," she acknowledged.

" Remember always that Lee was whipped by . . ."

" Enough, Harry, enough. I can hear no more to-night. You are not well, you . . ."

Still he went on: " Oh! I know that we could fight for a time for our sentiments, and we will pose and write poetry about them to all eternity; but that trumpet will outstand anything we can do or say. And that trumpet is always going to be in the service of the man with the dollar. The man with the dollar is going to be the man in the country henceforth, his policy will be the national policy. It won't pay to have any other. We shall find in the South that it won't pay us to stick to the South; it won't pay us to stick to our party; it won't pay our children to stick to us—but it will pay them to flock to

the winning side, to be setting Lincoln above Washington, Grant above Lee."

"Harry, Harry," she sighed in protest.

"Oh, yes," he proceeded stubbornly. "Have no doubt about it. Money is to be the power in the United States from now on, and the power of the Almighty Himself will not be able to prevail against it."

"You think so now, Harry, you think so, only now."

"I know so," he insisted. The day will come in this country when it will pay a man who loves his family to steal money and serve out his time in the penitentiary for it, if he has the sense to secure what he stole for his children. Good name and principles! Bah! In a community such as this is going to be," he went on to his helpless listener, "the daughters of a convict with money would be far better off than the daughters of a poor man with all the principles and honor in the world."

"I do not believe it, I do not believe it."

"You will have to acknowledge it some day."

"You do not understand . . ."

"I do understand," he interrupted her sharply. "There is nothing the matter with my mind that I cannot understand. And your children will understand it too in my way when they grow up. They will know by that time what it is to be poor. We can afford to look down on money when we are rich, and consider principles and honor and good name to leave to our children."

"Society will have something to say," she began with the spirit of a society woman.

"Society, society," he answered violently. "Society will get on its knees to the daughter of a rascal who has money and turn its back on the daughter of a poor man

who has only high principles. Society will flock around the rich rascal's daughter, asking her in marriage; the other will die an old maid unless she herself makes a compromise with principle."

"Well," obstinately, "religion is always there for women."

"Religion!" sneering more bitterly than ever. "Religion means church, and the church represents nothing more nor less than the men in the church. And when the church needs money, the church is going to do what the men who make money do when they need it; it is going to be mighty polite to the men who have money to give and will have mighty little use for the other kind of men."

And so he went on, in his desperate state of discouragement, pouring out now one, now another of the black thoughts that had come to him in the hospital and prison, "Honor! pride! sentiment! You will live to see the day when the daughters of our heroes of the war are working like menials for their living, when your own daughters will be glad to seek employment at the hands of the scalawags and carpet-baggers of today. My uncle and the men like him will never regain their lost position in the country. While he is standing on his dignity and maintaining his ideals, his means of living will be taken by a shrewder man, one who doesn't know what dignity or ideals means; one of the class who even now are hiring negro legislators to steal the resources of the State for them, handing over grants and monopolies to insure their fortune for fifty years to come, to gild their way into your society; and into your church! You don't know what is going on! My uncle doesn't know! Great God!

Have you any idea what sort of people our masters are? Let me tell you! Let me tell you!" Jumping from his seat and standing over her he poured out in a torrent of burning words what he had seen and heard, what he had suffered himself and what others about him had suffered; the cruelties, the horrors that peace for generations afterward would be trying to bury deep enough to kill the noxious pestilence of it; the stories and experiences that it is hard for the heart to restrain and keep out of sight, yet which must be kept out of sight if women are to live at all, and not die under the reverberating memory of it.

"Harry, Harry," his aunt whispered, trembling herself with excitement while trying to be calm: "Hush, hush! Not so loud! The children might hear, we do not want them to know, we must protect their memories."

He sank his voice to a whisper, but flinging aside all effort at self-composure, fiercely, pitilessly gave full rein to his passion.

"They are the people who send ladies off prisoners to sandy islands in the Gulf, with only men—with negroes over them; they are the people who make proclamation ordering their soldiers to insult ladies if they choose to; as"—he could not say the word—"who put negro soldiers to guard white gentlemen, and . . . let them curse their prisoners, they . . ."

"Yes, yes," she could stand it no longer, and now as in a panic her passion joined his. "When they came to the plantation; when they flung our last bit of food in the Bayou; when they told me they had caught my husband and had him in their boat and were going to

hang him before my eyes"—her words coming quicker and quicker, and her breath in gasps—"when they took my poor little boy and stood him before a file of soldiers and told me they were going to shoot him . . . when they went through the house, cursing, swearing, searching, searching for God knows what . . . when they dragged the bed clothes off Cicely, who was shivering with a chill—with a doctor standing by, and a preacher, who offered me a Testament—when . . ."

"When I lay in the hospital . . ." he could not give her time to finish; "with hundreds all around me, wounded, gangrened, dying, the women would come to bring to us any comfort they could think of . . . and they would lie, would perjure themselves, they would take devilish oaths, enough to secure their everlasting damnation, if it were counted against them. And negro soldiers searched them, do you understand?" She shrank back from the comprehension he forced upon her. "Niggers searched their persons!" He clinched his hands. "And they, the women, stood it for us! . . . God! . . . Sometimes I would think I was delirious, that I did not see it, that it could not be . . . but no! Look!" his voice trembled as he pulled up his sleeve and showed his pulse beating furiously in his broad white wrist. "No, it was not delirium! It was no delirium that made men turn their heads in their beds and hide their faces and sob like children, because they had to see the things they did see and hear what they heard and could not kill and be killed." He was talking wildly and knew it, nevertheless he went on—his aunt leaning back in her chair, pale and panting; her eyes fixed on his face, could not but listen—"Oh, I know them! and the

President, Mr. Davis, knows them! yes, he knows them. . . ."

At last! At last! returning steps were heard; in the walk, coming up the steps, crossing the gallery.

She lifted her finger: "Hush, your uncle!"

A draught of cold air blew through the opened door; a blessed draught of peace and calm, wafted from the serenity gained in the long walk on the Levee; by the great, swift-flowing river; under the stars. The evil demons that had been holding their sway in the close, hot room slunk back, and vanished, like the devils of a nightmare. The wife fled as it were to her husband, grasping his arm and laying her head upon it; the sleeve so cool and redolent of the atmosphere of night!

The nephew passed his hand wearily over his brow; no strength, no hope, no courage, no youth left in his face. Never could he have looked more injured by battle.

"You had better go now, Harry," said his uncle in his usual clear, decided tone. "Tomorrow we shall see what we can do. It is too late tonight to talk any more about it."

Without a word, the young man rose and took his leave. His aunt followed him impulsively, and bade him good-night on the gallery.

"It is Dalton's treachery that has upset him," she told her husband with the simple conviction of a woman's intuition. "Harry thinks it is the war"—she shook her head. "War has not that effect on a soldier. Nothing in the war could hurt him so much. He is too brave to mind what an enemy does; but a friend, a friend . . ." Her voice died away. She could have said for herself,

also, that nothing in the war, despite the memories that had roused her passion a few moments before, nothing in the war had hurt her so much.

" He is demoralized."

" Demoralized, demoralized! " she repeated the words. For the first time in her life she heard the word, the ominous word. For the first time in her life such a condition as demoralization was presented to her intelligence. Was that, too, to be in the future? As the meaning came clearer and clearer to her, she felt more affrighted than at the weird echo of the guns at Vicksburg; the guns that were killing the bodies of the husbands and brothers and sons of the Southern women. To die was nothing in comparison to living demoralized . . .

While she was thinking to herself, her husband was following his thoughts aloud: " It is the worst fate that threatens us. If we do not fight it, we will go under in a far more fatal defeat than any army can inflict upon us. To lose confidence in our principles; our honor; ourselves—that means to lose our place in the nation."

He had lost sight of Dalton, and of his treachery.

MADEMOISELLE CORALIE

"BUT what is he up to now, eh?" asked Madame Joachim, peeping through the shutters of the kitchen into the lane. "Ah! Papa Docteur, some trick, I guarantee."

The doctor was walking slowly along with the priest, who was scratching himself reflectively through his cassock as he always did when he walked. He had been working in his garden and was bareheaded and held a weed absentmindedly in his left hand.

"Do you see how painfully the doctor walks?" continued Madame Joachim, "and listen to that little cough; he always coughs when he walks with the curé. In reality, he would be as fat as I am, if he did not keep thin to deceive people, and he would be as strong as Joachim, just as strong. Don't I know him? Oh la, la! He is getting something out of Père Philéas who is a fool, he is so simple. The good God must love him, for he has not the sense of a chicken. But what is he up to?"

"Perhaps he is going to get married," suggested the American lady, who in truth did not know how else to answer the reiterated question.

"But to whom?"

"To Mademoiselle Eulalie." That was evidently the answer for which the question had been trapped.

"Eulalie! *Non, mon petit docteur!* Not Eulalie; but Maria, but Antonia, but Lisida, yes. But not Eulalie!" She shook her head, first negatively, then assertively.

And she turned it from the window for a moment to relate, once more—for, like all persons who like to tell their own stories, she did not care how many times she repeated the same one—how the doctor was one of those men who had his way with women and therefore any one of the Demoiselles San Antonio he asked would marry him. It was not the wonder but the scandal of St. Médard how his poor wife had doted upon ım and would tell her mother and sister—poor Mademoiselle Eulalie—at any time that she hated them, just to show off, to greater effect, her love for her husband. She took him into her home (Madame Joachim's hand made a gesture of hospitality) and gave him the best room; which had been her father's, turning her mother out of it. She not only called it his house to her friends but even went so far as to praise his kindness in letting her mother and sister stay there. When he was away from her she suffered the tortures of purgatory from jealousy, and when he was with her she was so much in love that it was as painful to witness as her jealousy. She was diseased when he married her! Long before this sentence, Madame Joachim was again watching the subject of her discourse through the blinds. "He knew she could not live long! But he must have known it! Did he not attend her in the convent? Every one there knew it, even the sisters! Do they not employ him? And do not they enjoin upon all the faithful to employ him? God knows why. And the Curé? . . . Has not the doctor given a statue of our Lady of Lourdes to the church? Does he not go there, to pray before it? He thinks no one knows it but the Curé, but I know it! I ask you? A doctor, and our Lady of Lourdes, eh?"

winking both eyes. "Other people, yes, but a doctor! And the poor Curé believes, he believes. *Aïe! Aïe!* Women, yes,—but a man,—a doctor. . . ."

Cribiche now came creeping up behind the pair until he got close enough to twitch the gown of the priest once, twice, three times, mumbling something.

"No," answered Père Philéas, "I refuse. You cannot go crayfishing." The boy mumbled again. "It is true as you say, this is a good day for it, and tomorrow is Friday and crayfish are good for fasting, but you cannot go. You must finish your work in the garden. The weeds have taken possession of it. They will choke out all our Spring vegetables. No, my son, go back and pull up weeds. Another time you can go crayfishing."

"That is the way," Cribiche grumbled in the way of all grumblers, loud enough for everybody to hear except the one interested. "He is always telling me to ask permission: 'you must not go off without asking permission,' and when I ask permission, he says 'no.' What is the use of asking permission when he always says 'no'? I would never go crayfishing if I waited for him to say 'yes.' He is always telling me to pull up weeds! . . ." In the meantime, the doctor and the priest were leisurely pursuing their conversation and the former his design in the conversation.

"Listen, listen," whispered Madame Joachim. The pair were nearing the window.

"Eh, mon Père," the doctor was saying to the priest in the voice he must have used in his devotions to the Lady of Lourdes. "What do we know, we doctors? We guess, that is all. Disease, health, life, death?—We have invented a little more light to throw upon them, that

is all. How can we doctors say what is going to happen? The old are apt to die, the young to live . . . you can make the calculation as well as any one. Look at the Charity Hospital, a doctor will go in the morning to the bed of a patient who he thinks is on the high road to recovery. He finds the bed empty. 'But where is my patient, Sister?' he asks. 'In the dead room, doctor, he died during the night.' And again, he goes to the bed of one that he gave up the night before: sent for the priest for him. He is better. In a few days he is well. What can we count on, we 'scientists,' as we call ourselves?"

The simple Curé looked like a cat that was having its back scratched. "Ah," he answered gently: "It is God alone who makes the dispensation of life and death."

"Send your poor to me, always, mon Père. I will do what good I can for them; but the best is what only you can do, mon Père."

"God and the blessed Virgin," corrected the priest.

"I," continued the doctor, "I give my services gratuitously. Why not? It is all I have to give. Those who have money give money; those who have not money give what they possess. *We* are priests, too, in a way, mon Père."

"Servants of God we all are, Monsieur le docteur," answered the priest, forgetting Cribiche.

"We must do something for the church, Monsieur le Curé. We must do something for St. Médard. The church needs paint, it needs cleaning up."

Now, it was as if a saucer of milk were presented to the cat.

"Every Spring, Doctor, I say that to my congrega-

tion," the priest rejoined eagerly, stopping his walk short. "Every Spring! I have a sermon for the purpose and I have preached it over and over again: 'What, my brothers?' I say. 'The good God renews the colors of the earth every Spring and you cannot renew the color of your church, once in a lifetime? Look,' I say, 'at the most miserable garden, at the ugliest, at the muddiest street in the parish and you see every Spring, what? Beautiful flowers! The trees with new leaves! Even the gutters renew their simple vegetation in the Spring! That is what good God prepares for our Easter. And we, what do we prepare for Him? For His Easter?'"

He would have gone on to the end of his sermon, for he had repeated it so often that it went off his tongue by itself, but the doctor interrupted him.

Turning and tapping the priest on the breast, he said impressively: "I shall take a hand in it! You will see a difference by next Easter. What! The Parish of St. Médard too poor to paint its Church! Bah!"

"Ah, yes, bah!" Madame Joachim echoed mockingly. She saw his schemes as clearly as she saw the great ships go up and down the Mississippi, past the open door of her husband's blacksmith shop. "I will paint the church for you, my good father, and you will praise my generosity, and my piety to everybody, particularly to the good sisters; so the San Antonios will be bound to hear it . . . and you will praise me to my mother-in-law, and to Eulalie—above all praise me to them every day, for they are so pious they must see their priest every day. Close their eyes, softly, softly, make them think I am busy attending to the affairs of the church, and not . . . oh, yes! and I will paint your

church for you. That is, I will make that poor devil Pantin, the painter, do it. He never has any work now, and with his drinking and his consumption, he is always in debt to me. I shall never be able to make my money out of him. I will make him do it!"

If, as we have seen, Doctor Botot's subtle schemes could not be hidden, but on the contrary were as clearly seen by Madame Joachim as ships sailing up and down the Mississippi, how much less could the Americans hope that their poverty could be concealed? But the Doctor's efforts at concealment were child's play, in comparison with their full-grown man and woman struggle. Poverty, however, is a different sort of secret from love. There is another place in the heart to hide it; a darker corner, a deeper cellar. And there is something in the self-reproach that a confession of it inflicts that bears down the pride in a way different from other confessions. Even the poorest of women shield their men from the accusation of it. Human patience, indeed, has been burdened, human credulity strained with the reasons that women have invented to account for it. Nothing in one's past, as we know, is more carefully covered over.

Later on in the day, while the sun was marking off the radiant Autumn hours past the noon, and the quiet of St. Médard was disturbed only by the innocent noise of cattle and chickens, Mrs. Talbot stood under the fig trees of the garden, weeping in humiliation. There was no nook in the house where she could do so unseen. The fig leaves hung close around her; the place was like a cave; there was not light enough in it to see the creeping things on ground or branch, and the air was dull and heavy. But it was a good retreat. Instinctively,

she had fled to it when she felt that the time had come when she could no longer restrain her tears, stifle her sobs. It had come to that. She had to weep like a child over what in truth could only be wept over; for there was nothing else to be done. And this thought made her tears and sobs come faster, more uncontrollably. She looked in her mind all around and about, far and near, on this side and on that; she could see nothing but darkness, desolation, degradation. And even while she wept more and more bitterly, giving up courage in hopeless despair, she would ask herself: "What can I do?" and exclaim: "I must do something! I must find something to do!"

In such moments, what has been done is much more present to the mind than what can be done. While the future seemed to shut the door in her face, the past brought forward, endlessly, needlessly, all that it could; going farther and farther back to heap an accumulation of memories that only made her tears flow all the faster. There was her childhood, her happy thoughtless childhood, her indulgent father who spent his money and good humor so generously; the tender grandmother who had replaced her mother. Then before she knew what love was, when she was only dreaming about it, her husband, descending like Jove out of a dazzling cloud, so great, so noble, so superior to all men! He, the supreme one, whom at the time she could not look at, could not talk to without trembling, he loved her! And then the life that followed: a bright life with a bright light shining upon it; even under the fig tree she saw and felt it again.

And then the war. That did not seem now a time of suffering at all. On the contrary, how easy were its

struggles and hardships in comparison with what followed! What one suffered then, one suffered gladly, proudly. And afterward, when the family came to the city, the first days, how pleasant all that seemed! And now in detail and more minutely came the events of months, weeks, days, each one greater than years in the farther past. "Harry was right! Harry was right!" she cried to herself. "We are doomed! All has gone from us, even our old selves! What are we now? What friend would recognize us if we had such a thing as a friend left to recognize us? Friendship! We have not so much as a church nor a pastor to whom I could go and say:" —As a dream within a dream so in imagination within imagination, she saw herself speaking to a pastor such as the old pastor of her church had been to whom the poor and suffering always went in their extremities of grief and suffering—"My husband is at the end of all his resources. He has tried everything. He cannot, in the conditions that exist, make money during the year to pay our house rent, let alone provide food and clothing for us. His old practice has left him, it is of no use to explain how; he will never get a new one. The times make that impossible. What he makes is from writing briefs for lawyers who do not know enough to write them for themselves. The children are being educated for nothing; we cannot pay for their schooling any longer. If it were not for the boys' fishing and hunting, I do not know what we would do for food. I do the cooking and washing. It is a miracle how I get a breakfast and dinner every day and a clean shirt for my husband. I brush and darn his coat and trousers every morning before day, so that he may not know how

shabby they are. He dares not spend five cents on tobacco, he uses no carfare but walks every day to his office and back. He really has no office. He cannot pay the rent. He has, in truth, only a place in the office of his former office boy. He will soon have to sell his library which he has held to the last minute. Ah, if we could only prevent that! Great God!" she exclaimed, losing the thread of her imaginary address, "Great God! Prevent that! What will he do without his library? Has not his pride been cut enough already without that? Must he became a dependent upon Tommy Cook for his books too? He never complains, but I know what he suffers. He still pretends that it is all natural, that it will all come right in the end. He is always cheerful, he makes the boys study all the same, he still has the same confidence in his principles. Oh, God! make me suffer if Thou wilt, more and more, but spare him!" And as her love for her husband wrung her heart, she wrung her hands and moved her head wildly in the dim twilight under the trees, as if trying to see some way out of the darkness in her mind.

She had tried to help him in secret and private ways. She had gone one morning to see Benson, the millionaire now, whom as a porter she used to speak to out of mere kindness of heart. She went to see him as if he had been one of the most aristocratic, refined men in the city; went to his house, for, a lady going to a man's office, her husband would never have allowed. She thought it out in the car, what she would say to him and what he would say to her. He would naturally speak of her husband and then it would come to pass as she pictured it in her imagination. She could not go on with the

humiliating memory of what she had expected. He had not mentioned her husband's name. He had pulled out his watch before she had more than time to speak and had dismissed her. He said he must go to his office.

And she had written to George Haight, written to him as she thought he would like to be written to according to the past; a letter of old friendship and kindly memories and frank humor over the present. Ah, she could have read between the lines of such a letter, had she received it! She in a rich home in New York impregnably strong in her wealth and he in despair. But she would not allow her imagination to follow this out either. Haight wrote as he talked; acted as he lived. He was not a gentleman as she had always maintained. God had not made him one, that was all. She despised him in her youth and she despised him now.

She had ventured to call on the wives of some of the men whom she and her husband used to know and go to the races with, and to the Boudreaux dinners afterward—the wives of those who had been skilful enough to go up with the times and not down. Some of them fawned upon her and her husband obsequiously enough in the old days of prosperity. Ah! their wives now had put her well back in her place! The place of the wife of a poor man out of whom nothing can be made. A woman can be even meaner than a man!

"Where," she asked herself, "is the generosity to the poor and needy that he used to show, the delicacy, the tact in relieving want?"

At this thought, a whole landscape rose magically before her filled with the people her husband had been kind to in the past. And even now, when he was an object

of kindness himself, was he not always finding out those in worse need than he? And if ever, by hook or crook, he gained a small sum of money! was there not always some one to whom a portion of it must go? Some one who even by hook or crook could not gain food for his children, some one always following him "to pick up the stalks of the herbs that he threw away," like the beggar in the Spanish verse.

All these thoughts and memories did not take in her mind the time that it does to read them now. They came and went in a flash like the thoughts of the drowning. Nervous and sentimental ladies might have spent a day in their beds over a single one of them, but she had only moments to spare, in any one of which she might be discovered, even under the fig tree. It was but a few moments, indeed, from the tears that had forced her to flee into privacy to the moment when she emerged from the tree, calm and composed, strong and determined, with a new project in her brain.

Coralie, the little governess, whom she had pitied and helped and consequently given her friendship to. After thinking that she had seen her in a confectionery, and finding she was mistaken, she had dropped her from her memory. She seemed to have no more need of her since she could be of no further use to her. But now, Coralie could be of use to the friend that had once served her. A ray of light seemed to fall across her mind! How foolish not to have thought of her before! Was her invalid father still alive? her dissipated brother still as much of a sorrow as ever? And was she as usual, still in dire want, needing everything?

How distinctly the figure of the little creole governess

came before her, clad in her neat calico dress; the collar and cuffs scalloped in red, her curling, glossy, black hair, in a twist on top of her head, with the pretty fluffy "*accroche cœurs*" on her temples, her rather small black eyes, always wide open and alert, her dark thin skin well dusted with rice powder, perfumed with the faint fragrance of Tonka beans, her yellow hands, with their long pointed finger nails, that were so useful in her embroidery. Where could any one have found a more gentle, docile, devoted dependent; one more grateful for kindness; more humble in her confession of need for it? Never without a pretty speech in her mouth, a compliment of some sort for somebody! She went about the house inaudibly, with her soft footstep; was never in the way but always within the sound of a question, a bidding. It was marvelous, in truth, to the patroness, how the dependent managed to fix herself so securely in her dependency in the short space of time at her disposal, and how, indeed, the patroness fell herself into a species of dependency upon her, the dependency of the generous upon the object of generosity.

Did she live in the same place? Somewhere, in a back street in a long row of little one-story houses, whose steps came down to the sidewalk, with heavy, green batten shutters. . . . She had gone there once or twice carrying some delicacy for the sick father. An apothecary shop, she remembered in an indistinct way, stood on the corner.

Coralie was the last person to whom she said good-bye when she left the city to go into the war as it was called. The details of the hurried departure (for she had been notified only in the morning that a steamboat would be

ready that night to take her out of the United States lines) shot into her mind, with microscopic distinctness. Coralie at least did not lose her head, her hands did not tremble, as she folded and packed. She, herself, forgot everything whenever the bell rang or soldiers marched by in the street.

Armoires and drawers were left standing open, clothing was heaped in confusion on the floor, plates and dishes and silver were left on the dining-table, the sideboard glittered with its crystal, the buffet, with its silver coffee and tea service, and dishes . . . But Coralie was to put all away—she was to care for the carelessness of others. Surely, surely, she must have saved something for her patroness as Tommy Cook had saved for his patron! The silver forks and spoons—how easy to wrap them up and hide them in her trunk! The jewelry, left in the bureau—that little box, that had been so carefully tied up, containing the most precious pieces, to take away, and then forgotten at the last moment—each trinket in it, chain and locket, ring and bracelet resurrected suddenly in her memory as from the grave, perhaps some of it was saved! The officers who came to seize the house may have relented and relaxed in their vigilance.

It was not surprising that Coralie had not found her patroness. Who would have found her in St. Médard? She was waiting, yes, surely, she was waiting until word was sent to her and then—and then . . .

And so in spite of experience and of common sense, Mariana Talbot set out again fresh and bouyant on a new speculation of the imagination; investing in it all the remnant of hope still left in her heart. There was

still something to do! Such an experiment as Mademoiselle Coralie, still to be tried!

. . . .

There is nothing mysterious in the ways of war. On the contrary it carries out its designs in the most open manner possible and by the simplest and most natural means, as we find out afterward—always afterward. One of the occupations of peace is to find this out; to see and handle the rude devices by which our undoing in war was accomplished. The surprises of war are indeed much surpassed by those of peace. As has been said, Mademoiselle Coralie received the last good-bye of her patroness, and when the family drove away from their home, of a dark, rainy night, she remained on the front steps, looking after the carriage as long as it was in sight. Then she went into the house, the sole mistress in charge, with what keys could be found in her hand (for housewives were careless in those days about locking up and a key once out of its hole was a key lost and a lock nullified).

The only directions given her, were to do the best she could when the emergency arrived, that is when the officer and soldiers came the next day to seize and take possession; for to leave the city, and join her husband in the Confederacy, instead of remaining and taking a proffered oath of allegiance to the United States, was construed into an act of enmity by the military authority in command.

Waiting for an emergency is a trial to the spirit as well as to the body when one is alone in a great empty house. The servants who had not wished to follow their mistress had been dismissed to their freedom; the

only retainer left of the establishment was an old Irish scrubbing-woman, a supernumerary, and the erstwhile spurned and scoffed of the pampered slaves for her poverty. She was to remain and serve Mademoiselle Coralie and while also awaiting the emergency to prepare the house for it; for although housewives of that time were careless about keys, they were not about cleanliness.

Mademoiselle Coralie's trunk stood open in her room. She soon filled it and needed another one to hold all that was given her in the last moments when in the hurried packing there had been a constant discarding of articles and: "Coralie, this ought to be useful to you, Coralie, you had better take that." Ladies *en route* to a war and with the limited amount of luggage allowed by a foe carry only the new and the strong, the serviceable; not lace-trimmed *sacques* nor fragile *deshabillées,* light evening dresses, embroidered petticoats, *fichus,* sashes, hats, feathers, artificial flowers, the follies, fripperies, and extravagances of many a day's amusement in a pretty shop. They were all as welcome to Mademoiselle Coralie, as the bonbons her mouth had been watering for from infancy. And with what zeal can a woman long for pretty clothing? It can become a passion with her, like drinking to those of the opposite sex.

The old Irish woman saw her in the solitude of her room before her mirror, trying on hats and veils, laces, and dresses, when from moment to moment, as she knew, the summons might come that announced the arrival of the emergency. But all over the city, the emergency was knocking at the doors of houses, hastening in one direction and perforce lagging in another. Mademoiselle Coralie had ample time to sip at her own beauty in the

glass as she tried on each new seasoning of it. And when she had a pause in that pleasure she sought and found the other trunk needed to hold her recent acquisitions. She chose, the largest one that offered, and thence perhaps came the divergence in her life, for there was space left in her new trunk after packing what she rightfully owned and she sought to fill this space—with what?

If one had a great houseful to choose from, what would one select? When one saw, all about, everything one wanted, and remembered the poor, bare rooms awaiting one at the other end of the city and knew that the emergency was on its way that would put an end to choice? In truth, before she had half made her selection she needed another trunk, and having begun to collect what she needed she could not stop. The house was deserted, and in a few hours, minutes perhaps, she would no longer have option or opportunity in the matter. It became a race between her and the emergency, a race for possession. Can it be believed that it took only the time from nightfall, when the family departed, until daylight for Mademoiselle Coralie to be on the street engaging a cart to remove her trunks? She found it as one can generally find a chance to do wrong, no farther than the street corner. Carts were always waiting in sight of every corner then for surreptitious removals. High prices were charged but high prices were paid for such services. Mademoiselle Coralie was accommodated to perfection in man and cart. The former was shrewd, the latter covered; only a half word was necessary to explain the urgency of secrecy and prudence.

About midday the house was formally seized by the

military authorities. Mademoiselle Coralie was at her post. She received the officers and transferred the keys to them; her personal trunk was duly examined and she was dismissed.

On reaching home, did not the little governess regret, in looking back upon her night's work, that she had not taken more? What were the blankets, the bed linen, the table linen she had, to those she left behind?—the wines, the liqueurs? Perhaps, had she known the ease with which the transaction could be accomplished, her poor old Pleyel piano would have been replaced by a grand one. Why leave velvet rugs behind when there was only matting at home? She could have provided herself with books and pictures; and she was fond of both. But if to Mademoiselle Coralie, who could compare what she took with what she left, the covered wagon brought little; to her invalid father, and invalid (from bad habits) brother it was much, far more than they had ever hoped to possess, and they adapted themselves to it as naturally as heirs to a rightful legacy.

The curtains were hung, table covers spread, *bibelots* disposed of, china and glass awarded to the empty sideboard, and Mademoiselle Coralie lost little time in donning some of her new toilettes; the dainty dressing *sacque* over the long, full, trailing half-worn *moiré antique* skirt, or the slightly *chiffoné foulard* (bunches of pink roses on blue and salmon stripes over a white ground) or the pretty silk gauze; white with pale pin-dots of green and sprigs of red roses.

All this, however, turned out to be but a means to an end, not the end in itself. There could be but one end in Mademoiselle Coralie's mind as in the mind of every

young woman like her and it is needless to say what that end is, so well is it known, so well was it known even to the *garçons* of the confectioneries where she munched cakes and candies with the officers of the United States army.

Men strive no harder for wealth and fame, old women for immortality, than such young women to get married. Everything else in life is subservient and conduces to that one end, and it may be said that they never cease to work for it, even when they are past it.

Mademoiselle Coralie, having been born in the condition to which so many of her sisters had been reduced by a hard turning of fortune, had naught to catch a husband with but art and good luck, notoriously poor servitors of the poor. Always her sorest envy of the rich had been that they could get married "*quand même*" as she expressed it; no matter who or what they were. And for such benefits as she and those like her expected from marriage, to be married to no matter what or whom, to be married "*quand même*" sufficed. What a luxury in her eyes, would have been the decried *mariage de convenance!* What an announcement, as of the Heavenly Father Himself, the: "I will that you become the wife of so and so. Come! No prayers! No tears! Prepare for your wedding!" Ah, only in novels do poor girls find such royal chances in their path! In truth, Mademoiselle Coralie's poverty was so great and her matrimonial chance so meager that they would have warranted any tyrannical interference of this sort. Thus, her plunder was the fulcrum she needed, only that! Would not Archimedes have stolen one if he could not have gotten it any other way?

Had Mademoiselle Coralie been engendered in the bosom of Napoleon Bonaparte's army she could not have known more about conquerors. Yet, perhaps, it may only have been her five minutes' interview with the young officer who received the keys from her that revealed to her that it rested with no one but herself to change her lot from being governess of children to governess of men. She very soon traveled up from that young officer to the supreme peak of military state and authority and became *gratissima* in all military social gatherings; and before her borrowed plumes had received their second wearing out, she was fledged in feathers of her own growing. Handsome as they were, she wore them well. To the manor acquired, as women have proved for ages, passes just as well in demeanor as to the manor born.

In the course of a year, Mademoiselle Coralie's treasures became her own as much as a kidnapped child would have been. They served her pleasure and furthered her plans. They were shown and cited to substantiate circumstantially the history she had adopted for the satisfaction of her conquerors and herself—a history as current in New Orleans as the little song "*Au clair de la lune*"—of flight from San Domingo, escape from massacre, faithful slaves, etc., etc., etc., and the ensuing, long, patiently-borne straitened circumstances of the *ancien régime* colonial. . . . a romance that was new to her audience, who believed and admired it and her for it. Her little *bibelots* of china, silver, and crystal, the bits of antique coral and tortoiseshell, the real lace, and the few precious relics of old jewelry . . . they were her witnesses; she and they, only, knowing the truth.

When she saw her old benefactress in the confection-

ery, she acted (as we know) on the flash of the moment with presence of mind. She decided promptly what to do furthermore. She kept her drunken brother on guard at the window of the little house with a well-taught story. But nothing came of the recognition in the confectionery, and the times were such that she could not but grow confident in her immunity. She ripened in it.

Then came the day that, sitting at the window, whose shutters were turned to command that view of the street that the passersby were denied of the interior of the house (this precaution was almost a necessity, living as she did with visitors to be admitted and visitors to be turned away plausibly)—sitting at her crack of observation, her quick eyes, trained to be always on the alert, caught sight of a lady, pausing irresolute before the apothecary shop at the corner; hesitating whether to go in and inquire, or hazard a trial inquiry first. The trial was decided upon; and with confident sureness and a wistful smile of anticipation she approached the little house whose wooden steps came down on the pavement whose shutters were heavy green, as she remembered from the past. The invalid brother it was who answered the knock, he to whom she used to bring wine and delicacies. His drunken, loud voice demanding her business, would have been enough to convince the inquirer of her mistake, to have sent her off in terror; but that was not enough for the sagacious Mademoiselle Coralie. The inquirer was made to ask her questions in order that she might be told that the people had moved away long ago, and nobody in the neighborhood knew where they had gone to.

What did the little governess feel when she heard that gentle voice on the outside of her door? The sweet sorrowful voice, almost breaking from regret and disappointment? When she saw the thin, graceful figure, so well known in old days, in a shabby dress move slowly away, on tired feet? When the kindest friend she was ever to know in this world was turned away with a lie?

Could the benefactress of old have looked into that room she would have seen Mademoiselle Coralie shrinking from her voice as from the voice of a monster listening to the passing away of her footsteps, as to passing away from her of a dragon or ogre.

THE FEAST OF ST. MÉDARD

The good thing promised to St. Médard by the doctor came to pass. The church was painted—only on the outside, however, the inside being left as the Gascons leave the insides of their cottages when they whitewash the outside. And it was not ready for Easter, as Père Philéas had piously wished, but again had to suffer comparison with nature in that beautiful season of renovation. It was only ready for the feast of its patron saint.

It now seemed to the simple Père Philéas, seeking always religious signification in everything, that poor Patin's revolt against thus paying his debt to the doctor, his revengeful delays, his malicious mistakes, his quarrels with the doctor about the quantity of paint to be furnished and the quality, his dishonesty in using what was furnished, his constant trickiness and cheating, his lies, his wilful sprees of drunkenness and the illnesses that followed, owing to his weak lungs—it seemed to the good Curé who like a plodding ass had borne the burden of it all, now that it was all over and past, and he was in a position to look back upon it—the only sure way after all of knowing the reasons of the divine will—that all these circumstances had been carefully fore-ordained and systematically regulated, one after the other, in order that the good and patient St. Médard, who for so many years had stood from his unworthy parish what Père Philéas could never cease reproaching it for, that he

should have the honor of the great accomplishment, and that to him should be paid the compliment of the procession with which it was to be celebrated.

Ah, when it came to the celebration of the event, no one could complain of want of zeal in that parish! The very ones who had shown most energy in avoiding any contribution to the furtherance of the good work were the most eager now to contribute to the celebration of its accomplishment . . . and when it was announced from the pulpit that Monseigneur himself would honor the procession with his presence in it; the procession was formed instantly, so to speak, before the eyes of every Gascon present; each man seeing, not so much Monseigneur walking in it, as himself and his family, dressed in their finest clothes, while other Gascons in crowds from their dairies and gardens in other parts of the city stood along the way to admire—a great and glorious procession about which the people of St. Médard would ever afterward tell great Gascon tales.

There was no difficulty now in getting the streets and gutters around the church cleaned of the disgraceful weeds against which Père Philéas had so often tried to start a crusade, which had not been cut since the church was built, according to the sad memory of those who were old enough to remember that event.

The good St. Médard, if he, as the Curé believed and affirmed, was ever watching the affairs of his parish and knew all that was going on in it, no matter how much pains were taken to conceal things from the eyes of its curate; the good St. Médard must have been amused to see (after the doctor and Patin had wiped out the sin of their neglect) the pride and boasting of his Gascons

over the painting of the church (poor Patin meanwhile getting drunk and telling his grievances in Pépé's barroom), and how quickly they reversed their former position, they now acting the benefactor, he becoming the beneficiary; and to note the increasing number of petitions sent to him, and the confidence with which they were despatched, like checks against a full deposit in bank; for cows, calves, mules, gardens, chickens, dry weather or rain, lifting of mortgages, collecting of debts or assistance in avoiding payments of them. . . . Poor Patin was the only one to send in no prayers, to ask for nothing.

St. Médard, doubtless, did send the beautiful weather needed for the celebration, for it is seldom he does not send a good June to the city whose conviction has grown into the saying that as it rains or shines on St. Médard it will rain or shine for thirty days afterward. And Nature was not behind in her bounty; the supply of flowers surpassed even that of Easter. There was, indeed, such an abundance of them that the way of the procession through the ugly streets was over lilies, roses, magnolias, jasmins, oleanders, crape myrtles; and the four halting places—the altars—were in appearance great bouquets. So sweetened was the air with their perfume that the way of the incense through it was as truly heavenly as that of Monseigneur, the Archbishop, through the streets.

It was a pretty procession, and one with which St. Médard, looking down from the blue sky above, as most of the people thought he was doing, might well have been pleased: Monseigneur in front under a canopy, Mademoiselle Mimi, singing her best and pushing her choir

in the back to make them sing their best instead of gazing open-mouthed at the canopy over Monseigneur; the Demoiselles San Antonio in their trailing white muslin dresses and shapely arching, high-heeled, bronze bottines, and all the Gascons, each man of them, swaggering along as if St. Médard owed him a big bill for milk or vegetables for which he would be forced to pay in the currency of Paradise; their wives and children trudging after them happy and smiling as Gascon wives and children always are, when their men are good-humored and swaggering —that being their idea of Paradise; old Aglone hobbling along with the negroes at the end; and such a crowd of lookers-on—Gascon friends and relatives, negroes from the plantations, soldiers and riff-raff from the barracks; even those who did not believe that St. Médard was watching them from above walked as if they believed it.

Few indeed in the parish had not responded to the call of the church bell. Patin, as might be suspected, was not there, nor that pirate, at least in religion, Joachim, nor the old San Antonios, who were doubtless sitting as usual on their low squat chairs in front of their onion-smelling basement room as they had sat in front of their whisky-smelling bar, during many a festival at the Cathedral. Monsieur Pinseau would be in his old cane chair on his gallery looking at his flowers, with Belle at his feet, paying no more attention to St. Médard than St. Médard did to him—except when the old dog would raise her head and howl impatiently at the hysterical clamor of the church bell whose rope Cribiche pulled as if he too wished to put St. Médard in his debt and remind him that he was in the parish if not in the procession as well as Monseigneur and the Curé. Made-

moiselle Mimi, as has been said, was there, and the Demoiselles San Antonio, Madame Joachim, and Aglone, and old Zizi, and the doctor—no, not the doctor, not Doctor Botot. He was not there, for, as said Madame Joachim, he had patients or wanted to have them, who did not care for processions any more than for Our Lady of Lourdes; as he had patients who did. So he arrived only at the last moment, in the greatest haste from the car, just as the procession was receiving Monseigneur's benediction from the church porch.

The Americans, husband and wife, sat on their gallery under the wistaria vine. They could smell the incense and the perfume of the flowers and they could hear the chanting and singing which rose and fell softly as the procession moved along from station to station and when it stopped the muttering of prayers before the altars like the buzzing of bees. But the husband did not seem to hear anything of it nor to know what was going on in the street. With his eyes fixed meditatively on the garden, or on the bright blue sky above, he was following the course of his usual Sunday afternoon thoughts; the future, the prospect before them as he called it; that thought-worn road over which he and his wife traveled so incessantly. The mud street outside the fence with its ruts, ridges, and hoof holes was not better known to her feet than this one to her mind.

" There is no need that I can see for discouragement " —this was always the burden of his intimate talk with her—" the country is recovering from its excitement; calm judgment is gaining its way by degrees; prosperity is bound to come with law and order; the best men at the North are taking the lead; the newspapers are com-

ing to their senses; the worst is over, the worst is over; we have to be patient only a little longer, there is plenty of business for us so soon as we have a chance to take hold of it; the children are doing well; the Summer will be a healthy one, next Winter will be an improvement on the past one; I am confident . . ." The church bell was not more faithful to its ringing than he to his. And she, faithful to her ringing also, answered him in her usual way; seeing what he wanted her to see and even more, adding to his store of confidence all sorts of little things that she had been able to pick up around the home and neighborhood. She must have been gathering them all throughout the week, never passing one by; as the old peasant women in Europe never pass a twig lying on the ground but always pick it up to add to their little store of future fire and warmth. She knew even more of the improvement of the children than he did, and had always ready examples at hand to prove the truth of his observations; the boys always doing what he would like to hear, the little girls what would flatter his aspirations for them; and as their old friends had once bloomed in her conversation, so now did the new ones of St. Médard, the poorest and most miserable material for friendship that could be found, one would think, the sorriest expedients in the way of substitutes for what they had once enjoyed, while the passions that stormed in her heart when she thought of politics and politicians seemed to be but the resting-place of halcyon ideas for her to give him. She found a way even to speak of national honor so as not to offend but rather please his sense of justice. She accepted his prognostications for the good ending of the present as she used

to do those for the good ending of the war . . . strewing, in fact, their trampled dirt road of a future with flowers, as the Gascons had their streets to hide their ugliness. His empty hand, which could not get over its habit of holding cigar or pipe, moved restlessly along the arm of his chair, his long fingers feeling for something. When he noticed this, he would place his hand between his knees to keep it still. And as his mind held to its habit, so did her eyes to an old habit of theirs; the habit of the young wife glancing ever at her husband's face, peeping at her happiness to see if it was still there. But now her eyes, on the contrary, seemed to be ever touching a sore spot to see if it still hurt; looking to see if his hair was really streaked with gray, if those were really wrinkles down the cheeks, if the eyes that once burned with such fire were really heavy-looking and with but one dim light under the drooping lids. In spite of his talk of courage and hope, he looked weary and sad, and as unconsciously as his hand sought his pipe, his lips seemed ever wanting to sigh and to be refraining from it.

Had he come out of the war looking this way, she would not have been surprised. Wars are waged for the purpose of killing and wounding men or at least wearing out their hope and courage. But no, he came out of the war looking and feeling stronger than when he went in. He could have fought in the war forever, it seemed to his wife at the time. The great cause, the great devotion it exacted, seemed to act on him like the leaves of the plant that the old Choctaw woman who came to see Cicely told her about; leaves that the Choctaw warriors used to chew when on the war path to keep

them from feeling wounds, hunger or fatigue; that kept them up without food or drink when they were beaten and had to make their way back to their people through a country swarming with enemies on the watch for them. They had lost the plant somehow, the old squaw said and their descendants had never been able to find it and so they had all died out. She herself, who had spent her life gathering herbs in the forest, had always been looking for it and had never found it. Many a time the wife had wished she could find that plant too.

"Ah," she said to herself, in her simple way, "who would care for things, if one could stop feeling them!"

To entertain her husband she repeated to him the story of the old Choctaw squaw. She could not have had a happier inspiration. It led him from the future to the past, to the Summers he had lived with the Indians, to hunting and fishing adventures, and to the stories he had gathered of their good qualities of friendship, bravery, and stoicism. The children who came in from looking at the procession drew closer and closer to him in their interest as they listened until the trumpet from the barracks sent them to bed.

To recall any part of youth and pleasure is to recall all of it. And what a pageant memory can furnish when one looks back out of an iron age of poverty to a golden age of youth?

The trail led in peaceful windings from the Indians to what followed the vacations passed with them and what followed them . . . and on and on, in gentle declivity, until the two memories came together, joined, and became one.

The graceful wistaria leaves and curling tendrils—that earlier in the evening had hung before their eyes like a pretty lace over the blue sky and later over the golden clouds of sunset—now, as the moon rose, fell in light, fragile shadows on the wall of the old house. As she listened to her husband in silence, the wife let her eyes follow the tremulous garlandings and trailings as the soft evening breeze played gently over them, thrilling them into motion, until, growing stronger with the moonlight, it ended by tossing them up and down, chasing them, running them together and apart in boisterous frolic, so that they rippled, as in irrepressible laughter from one end of the gallery to the other; the irrepressible laughter of children that begins and ends in nothing while the old wall, growing ever brighter as the full moon shone straighter upon it, shone at last behind the leaves pure white, brightened out of all its dinginess and stains of time and weather. Brightened too by the moonlight, out of all its marring lines of anxiety and care, the husband's face shone too, at last pure white, noble, handsome, fair and smooth as in the day when the two memories joined together and became one.

They drew near to one another, and talked together, after the two memories became one! In the moonlight, with the fragrance of the flowers offered to St. Médard still in the air, and the soft sound of prayers and chants with the evening breeze playing through the clouds overhead and sending the shadowy leaves and tendrils behind them into ripples of laughter—where was the ugly mud road of a future? Where the burdens, cares, anxieties? where the wrinkles, gray hair, dim eyes, and drooping shoulders? Nowhere in sight, nowhere in feel-

ing! Brightened out of life as the stains and holes had been brightened out of the old wall; until it too glistened, pure white for thought to play upon, for the heart to make its pretty garlandings and trailings upon.

Only a pleasant sleep could follow so pleasant an evening. One from which all care and trouble had been filtered, a pure dreamless sleep that flowed on peacefully, illimitably; the sweetest kind of sleep to the weary, the kind that they would abide in forever; out of which they awake slowly and reluctantly; trying still to hold on to its caressing ease and to float out once again into its great, blissful open of unconsciousness. But while the wife languidly strove to retain it, she heard her husband talking to her; laughing as if they were still sitting in the fragrant moonlight on the gallery. She thought she was still dreaming—dreaming that everything else but the dream itself was a dream; that they were still in the time of youth and love and wealth when they could laugh together over balls and dinners, opera and theater; the things that rich young people laugh over at night when they come back from them.

But it was only for a moment that sleep could thus dally with her. Keen-edged reality, cutting into her like a sharp knife, awoke her. Her husband was burning with fever, he was delirious! She would as soon have thought of the universe in delirium, out of its senses as he! She ran through the dark to the room of her boys: "Quick! quick!" she called, shaking them roughly. "The doctor! Your father! . . ." Her voice sank to the familiar whisper of the nightmare. She tried to speak aloud but could not.

The doctor came and sat by him until daylight, humoring his fancies, listening to his vagaries until he persuaded him to take a potion. At last when sleep visited him, the doctor left, but he went for Madame Joachim and sent her to watch by the bed in his absence.

How surely, how treacherously do fevers come upon us! There is no foe to humanity that shows more insidious cunning in slipping into and getting possession of a body, which if only warned in time could so easily, with a mere trifle of defense, defy him: "Did you not notice? Could you not see?" When it is too late, it is easy enough to ask questions and as easy to answer them. "Yes, it was noticed, yes, it was seen, this symptom and that; but that was not the enemy expected, watched for!" When one is attacked by poverty, when one is in full struggle, hand to hand, with poverty, one—and that is the misery of it—one can think of nothing else but it; there seems nothing else in life but it to think about. And there is so much in poverty that resembles disease; the heavy head, the tired thoughts, disturbed sleep, low spirits, aching limbs, loss of appetite and the painful sense of fatigue all the time! The constant straining of energies, the thinking, thinking, thinking! the effort to keep up courage in others; the forced cheerfulness and the work—the never-ending work! Who could sleep at the end of such a day, eat meals that cost so much anxiety? Who could think of caring for self?

The wife explained all this to the doctor, as if he did not know it already, as if his understanding it would help the patient; telling all, keeping back nothing, as if keeping back anything would hinder the cure.

"Walking to the city every day and back to save

carfare; coming in so tired," she said, looking earnestly in the doctor's face.

"He *was* tired," answered the doctor.

"He would eat nothing."

"Ah, he had no appetite," said the doctor.

"He took only a cup of coffee in the morning," she continued, too intent on her own thoughts to notice his interruptions. "And it seemed hard for him to get up; often he would go back and sit on the bed and wait."

"It *was* hard for him to get up," said the doctor.

"And then working in the garden every afternoon, every afternoon except Sunday, so that we would at least have vegetables to eat. I am sure his back and limbs ached afterward."

The doctor nodded. "They *did* ache."

"And at night, teaching, teaching, until the boys knew their lessons to his satisfaction. And they were so slow, so stupid!" she exclaimed passionately. "He wanted them to learn Greek as well as Latin and mathematics. I would see him put his head on his hand while he was trying to drum it into them, as if his head hurt him."

"Of course, it hurt him," said the doctor.

"Often I felt like crying out to the boys: 'Why don't you learn faster? Can't you learn faster?' I would have learned anything rather than keep him sitting there, so tired, so pale, so patient, so thin, and miserable-looking."

"He was miserable-looking because he felt miserable," answered the doctor.

"And then he did not sleep at night, he was so restless."

"Ah, that was the fever. He had fever every night," said the doctor.

"I would say I was restless and could not sleep, just to let him talk to me and stop thinking of his affairs."

The doctor nodded.

"Sometimes we would talk all night long, going over and over everything. He would not say so, but I could see he was discouraged. On the contrary, he would tell me how much hope and confidence he had."

"And you would tell him the same, eh?" the doctor asked.

"Oh, I never let him see that I was discouraged, that I was not confident and cheerful no matter what happened. And no matter what he hoped, there was disappointment after disappointment." Her voice trembled, she could not help it. "Not a friend, not a friend, but disappointed him! And the one he trusted best, whose honor he was surest of, he"—her voice did not tremble now, it grew stronger with temper and her eyes burned, "he—he more than disappointed him, he deceived and betrayed him."

"Ah," said the doctor, "all that goes together."

"And the house rent always before him! Do you know how he made the house rent?" she asked in her despair. "He wrote briefs and prepared arguments for other lawyers who could not write their own briefs in the cases they got, but which my husband could not get. Carpet baggers, scalawags, rapscallions, the scum and refuse of politicians," she flung the words out of her mouth with disgust, "they received the money that he earned."

The doctor tapped her on the shoulder with his finger

to draw her attention to himself. "He has had the fever, or," he could not resist the witticism, "the fever has had him for I cannot tell how long. How long will it hold on to him? That depends upon how long it has had him." He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, it will hold on to him until he, that is we, wear it out. That is what we will have to do now, wear it out; not let the fever wear us out, eh" he went on, the cunning doctor, putting the patient out of the question.

"Oh, if that is all," she answered joyfully, the expression of her face changing at once, "it will never wear me out! It will never wear any of us out!" She changed the form of her assertion because she saw the children peeping from the other room, listening to the doctor's verdict. They shook their heads also and smiled contemptuously at the fever. "It will never wear me out," each one seemed to be declaring.

And then as always happens in periods of serious illness to the head of a family, a curtain, as it were, fell around the household, shutting it in to itself, shutting out all else; its life moving along whispering and on tiptoe so easily that the hours and their regular habits slipped by unnoticed; the days and nights succeeding one another as unobtrusively as the ticking of a clock.

THE FAITHFUL WARRIOR

ALWAYS in the morning when the fever went down, the sick man's mind would clear. He would call for his coffee and forgetting his illness would struggle to get up, dress, and go to his office: "I have work to do," he would say, "I have a brief to write." But always he fell back to his pillow and after a moment would be rising again, to fall back once more. Passing his hand over his forehead and frowning unconsciously: "I must go to the office," he would repeat to his wife.

"It is early yet, rest a little while longer," she would answer, pretending to be putting his cuff buttons in his cuffs, while he would look at her with a long gaze, watching her movements and drawing confidence from them.

As the day wore on and he saw himself that he could not get up: "Tomorrow, tomorrow," would be her answer to the mute inquiry of his eyes. Day after day, she repeated her confident: "Tomorrow, tomorrow."

When he could not see her and thought she had left the room he would shake his head and murmur "Too bad, too bad," and she could see him going in his mind over his business, noting points on his finger until she would draw his attention from it. She could always manage to do this by talking about the children until he would take the pilot wheel again in his hand as she knew he would and tell her what he expected to do in the way of larger plans for them, while pushing them more and

more in their studies, always reminding her to tell them to bring their books to his bed that night so that he could teach them there and make them read aloud to him as usual. He wanted them to finish Gibbon by Autumn. And he would tell of the other books that he intended to make them read. There was a second-hand Motley he never tired of talking about. It was being held for him by the shopman.

"A wonderful bargain!" his voice sounded triumphant about it, as fine a bargain as the Shakespeare he had bought, which was perfect except for the binding. The boys must read Motley next. They must learn to appreciate the character of William the Silent. Then he would ramble on about William the Silent until he remembered something else—the garden perhaps. She must see that they worked in the garden, they must not neglect it. A day's work lost in the season was hard to replace and he would tell her minutely just what beds he was preparing for just what seeds.

Eagerly he took what was prescribed for him and always with the words: "I must get up tomorrow and go to work. It is only a fever and we know what fevers are."

There was no danger of the boys not studying or not working in the garden. The thought that he was ill and that all they could do to help him was to study and to work in the garden, effected more in making Latin translations clear and Greek verbs endurable, than his presence had ever done. The quieter the house grew, the more settled in its routine of illness through the days and then the passing weeks (for if the fever was as far as ever from wearing them out, they seemed no nearer to

wearing it out), the harder the boys pored over their books and worked in the garden; Cribiche with them.

Every night he would take his place at the table and study as he too had never studied before; raising his swarthy face from slate or book only to give a look at the chair where the teacher should have been sitting and turning it again more doggedly than ever to his lesson. As he studied, so, too, he worked in the garden with the boys. Potatoes, beans, carrots, turnips, spinach—if ever they were offered to heaven in propitiation for past laziness or petition for present favor, they were in those long Summer afternoons by the three boys as the sweat rolled from their faces and soaked through their shirts.

The little girls were not behind them, although being little girls they had no need to offer propitiation for the past. Nevertheless they worked as if they had; worked indeed like grown women and even harder in their ignorant zeal and passionate determination to do their part toward the cure of their father. No studies for them! No books, no reading aloud, no going to school. When had women time for such things while there was illness in the family? They took no more time for them than their mother did. They kept themselves awake at night, thinking what they would do the next morning. And often their impatience to be up and about what they had thought of, and their fear of being late, would make them mistake the hour; and slipping easily from their beds so that their mother in the next room could not hear them, they would run across the yard, still in the darkness of night, to the kitchen to light the fire in the stove and drip coffee and boil hominy through the slow gray hours to daylight—just as their mother would

have done, as doubtless she had done many and many a time, before any one else in the house was awake. More and more did they stretch their little steps to follow in the tracks of a grown woman's duties. More and more their little thoughts tried to fill the measure of hers. For there were always others besides the family to be cared for—the church door swung not more easily open to the pious than their rickety old backyard gate to the wretched. Always there was some poor woman creeping through for a dose of medicine or bit of linen rag to put on a sore; some thin, miserable child, begging something for a sick mother or one well known to mendicancy—the blind old cripple Zénor, surnamed the Voudou, on account of the malific charms that his ugliness and deformity had gained him the credit of working; and although not a mendicant every day, Jerry would slink through the gate to sit silent and cowed on the kitchen steps; never asking for anything, but as grateful as a hungry dog for a cup of coffee and a kind word. He worked no more now and was ashamed to let his master know it, but not his mistress.

Indeed, their mother was so afraid that they would not know what to do; that some one would come and go away disappointed, (no one knew better than she what it was to go somewhere in hope and return disappointed) that she was ever slipping from the sick room out to the gallery to warn them against it; and ever remembering something else. Ah, at that time, every want, every need was important to her; all suffering consecrated. She dared not let one prayer to her go unanswered. No! No! Thus one day, the little girls were called in haste to the gallery: "The poor, sick

negroes," she whispered hurriedly in a kind of panic. "I forgot them! They used to come every day, you will hear them outside the window . . . give them something to eat, anything—scraps, and some coffee. I used to save it for them . . . drip over the old grounds. . . . They are just out of the hospital . . . they have been ill too." The tears started into her eyes, and her lips trembled, for all her courage, at the word, the sad word, ill. "But they must not come into the yard."

So the little girls listened for them and the day never passed that they did not hear the shuffling steps in the street stop under the kitchen window and the hoarse whisper: "Mistress, I'se here! Mistress, won't you give a poor nigger something to eat? For God's sake, Mistress, I'm that hungry. . . ." And looking out of the window they would see a trembling negro with ashen face, still shivering from fever, or freshly scarred from smallpox.

"Here! Here!" they would respond, eagerly stretching their hands out of the window, as full of pity for the poor wretches—most of them boys—as their mother had been.

"Thank you, little Mistress! God bless you, little Mistress!" Some of them would cry like children from weakness as the little girls had seen negro men do on the plantation when they were weak and miserable.

Although they had always shrunk from the sight of negroes in uniform, and had turned their face away from them in passing, according to the command of their father, they did not now. Nor were they afraid of their diseases, also according to the command of their

father, who, as much as his little daughters hated Yankees, hated women who ran away from contagion; "as if," he said, "the life of a coward were ever worth preserving." But in their sorrow for their father and their wish to help their mother, the little girls, forgetting their plantation judgment and common sense, gave more and more; and in consequence the file of convalescent negroes outside the window increased daily; their number, however, only seemed to increase the pleasure of the charity.

It was well that there was a barrel of flour in the kitchen and a sack of coffee; the barrel of flour and sack of coffee that gave their father so much comfort in his clear moments from the fever. "At any rate," he would say over and over again to his wife: "we have a barrel of flour and a sack of coffee in the house." And she would tell him what good flour it was and what fine coffee, and count up how long she expected them to last. He would smile, well pleased, and tell of his good luck that a grocer should pay him in that way for a bit of legal advice.

Little by little the habit of fever overcame the habit of health; the effort to rise in the morning grew fainter and he yielded more and more to the force of the disease. Always as the fever mounted, delirium came on and his mind would wander forth from the quiet little room in St. Médard to some other beautiful parish where he seemed to see all the bright moments of his past life blooming like flowers around him. Smiling joyfully, he would stretch out his hand to pluck at them as if he were still a youth, and they the flowers his dreams of the future. Sometimes the flowers seemed to be bits of

poetry, flashing upon his eye from all directions: the blossoms he had gathered and stored in his memory when he was young enough to wander in the bright fields of poetry. Then his parched lips would soften and curve and he would repeat verses with all the tenderness and sentiment and musical expression of his Springtime freshness. Sometimes, trivial incidents from the first meeting of their two hearts—which his wife with all her gift of memory had forgotten—would slip in between two lines of verse. And sometimes, breaking in his weakness through the close reserve of his heart a still more secret word or memory would seem to tremble on his lip, when she would hastily rise, bend over him and softly, as if she were drawing a sheet up over a sleeping child, hush him; and after a moment of silence he would be again in the land of his enchantment. . . . In his delirium at least he was happy. This—and not what it might have been: the cruel vagaries of the bloody field of war, the carnage, the fury of the onset, the curses of defeat or the anguish of fear, the painful humiliations and the goading phantoms that came with peace—this was the blessed change wrought probably by St. Médard and his flower-strewn procession and the pretty play of the breeze and the moon on the gallery.

Madame Joachim, sitting close to the head of the bed with the mosquito bar veiling her from the patient, kept her eye fixed on the subtle, treacherous fever, following it through all the windings of its serpent trail. As neither she nor the doctor was sure when it began, how could they tell when it would end, or even where it was in its course, or which one of the fighters was wearing the other out? They could see the one on the bed;

they could only guess at the other; and they had therefore to be always ready to meet insidious attack with insidious defense, to set surprise against surprise, ambush against ambush, like the old Indian warriors they were on the warpath.

But almost as well as these shrewd, untiring ones, did the sick man's care and anxieties—those rugged friends—serve him, as the days went by and still the fever held on. They worked for him now, as they had once worked against him, going after him, pulling at him and, like faithful dogs, rousing him from the lethargy that was always threatening to creep over him and still him forever.

"What are you doing for money?" he would ask with a start, suddenly opening his eyes. Or he would stop his poetry to exclaim: "The house rent! What day of the month is it?" Or he would murmur sadly: "The barrel of flour and the sack of coffee must be giving out by this time."

When the fever went down, and the delirium rolled away like a cloud from his brain, he would bring a clear mind to bear on his situation and discuss it with the doctor intelligently. The closer he was pressed by his foe, the more convincingly he would reason with the doctor about it. And as the fever, so to speak, captured his convictions one by one, he would always find some other defense to fall back upon, just as he had done during the war. But pressed closer and closer, forced further and further back and beaten out of hope after hope, so weak that there seemed but one more stage of weakness to traverse, he could still find yet another one left behind him; still from sources invisible to his

watchers call up reinforcements of strength, still manage to keep up the fight.

"I *must* not die, Doctor, I cannot *afford* to die," he would whisper eagerly to his physician when his wife was out of sight and he thought out of the room. "But," confidentially, "I cannot hold out much longer."

"The fever cannot either," the doctor would answer in his ever high good humor. "You think he has unlimited resources too, like the Yankees, eh? He is worse off than you, I can tell you." The doctor kept his private opinion and his private manner so well to himself that Madame Joachim could only guide her judgment by her experience of him.

"He is not as good a doctor as he thinks he is," she always declared when questioned, "but he is the best doctor for fevers in the city."

"Mariana, you will wear yourself out, always sitting there day and night . . ." he would whisper to his wife.

If it were night, she would take the shade off the candle; if it were day, open a window, so that he could see her smile while hearing her cheerful voice. Ah! the fever obtained no concessions from her either of courage, hope, or strength! Before her husband she was the same on the last as on the first of the sixty days of the campaign; and she would tell him the news of the children, the garden, the chickens; and, she would laugh (*"Aï, Aï!"* would exclaim Madame Joachim to herself hearing her) over his favorite game rooster—for he was so prejudiced in favor of game roosters that he would never have any other kind in the yard. She would talk to him of anything, everything as if—as if—they

were still sitting side by side, spying away together at the future, meandering on! far ahead of them.

Across the backyard in their domain, the kitchen, the little girls held their outpost against the fever; held it so well that no one in the other part of the garrison had need to think of them. The hot days, passed, increasing their fatigue, diminishing the flour and coffee and exhausting other provisions; but producing no effect on their supply of courage and determination. However, the help of those who help themselves, according to the proverb, was accorded them. After a while, no matter how early they rose in the morning, nor how fast they ran across the dark yard, they found the fire lighted in the stove, the water boiling, hominy simmering, and the biscuits ready for baking. Old Aglone was always before them. How could the poor old thing, who could barely stand on her feet, manage to slip out of her own home and come into this one so easily that no one heard her? The little girls asked this of each other in wonder every day, when they, for their part, could not lift a damper from the stove without letting it fall, nor approach a pot without knocking it over by its long handle. And every day when they fell asleep (and strive as they did against it, with all the good will they possessed, they did fall asleep, no matter where they were, in their chairs or sitting on the gallery steps, every day about eleven o'clock when the boys were in front working in the garden, and the yard was so quiet that even the chickens seemed to be keeping still) they always fell asleep without knowing it, and always awoke, thinking they were in bed with their heads on their soft pillows, opening their eyes and closing them again, dreamingly; pouting or

smiling. When at last they did awake they would always see Papa Pinseau, sitting in a chair near them on the gallery with Belle at his feet, looking hard into the upper branches of the wild cherry tree, however much he may have been looking at them before; noting, as he must have done, how pale and thin they were growing; how tired—and how red and scarred their little hands were, for when did they ever pour hot water from the kettle without scalding them? They never heard him come in any more than they did Aglone, although his feet were gouty and awkward enough to betray any one. And they never heard him tiptoeing about the kitchen, slily taking little bundles wrapped in paper from his pockets and slipping them into jars (Belle following him sedately); peeping into the soup pot, and lifting the cover from the *daube;* and sitting down afterward and flipping away the flies and mosquitoes from the children with his soft bandanna handkerchief. Poor Papa Pinseau! As he watched the children of Talbot assuredly, he must have thought of the past and of his old political campaign; of his farcical oratorical attempts against Talbot, and of Talbot's really eloquent outbursts at every mention of Pinseau's frivolous name—for no one could deny that Talbot was an orator at least when expressing contempt and indignation. And there was the eloquent, contemptuous Talbot in there fighting for his life with the fever; and he, the frivolous Pinseau, out here on his kitchen gallery watching his children and minding his pots! No wonder that his humorous smile came and went over his lips!

When, at last, the little girls would yawn and stretch themselves awake, vowing that they had never been

asleep at all but awake the whole time and knew when he came in, he would fall in with their humor, and divert them so well that they would forget everything else but himself—just like the ladies of old, whom he had diverted. It must be conceded that the eloquent Talbot, however superior he may have been in other things, could not be compared with the frivolous Pinseau, in the ability to please the ladies, old or young. The more the little girls laughed, the more gain did he seem to think it; and the closer he saw the black cloud descending upon the house across the yard, the more he strove to turn, and the better he succeeded in turning, the eyes of the little girls from it. And then he would go into the kitchen with them (Belle lending herself too, to the humor of the situation) and looking around, they would find the little bundles he had hidden away and would open them. Then he, with all the care and delicacy in the world, would show exactly how to cook the contents of the bundles, touching the seasonings as lightly as if they were jewels; the little girls meanwhile listening and watching with keen interest and enthusiastic appreciation. Gourmets are always the best of cooks and therefore the best teachers of cooks.

If the haughty Talbot could have seen him then! And his daughters in such society!

When Papa Pinseau had hobbled away; as surely as the afternoon came, Polly's friend, the old Kentucky gentleman would make his appearance in the street, walking leisurely along, switching the weeds with his cane, carrying a great paper bag, well filled, in his hand. He would push open the back gate as the mendicants did, and entering, take the seat on the gallery that Papa

Pinseau had just left. Then the busy little girls would leave him to distribute their charity out of the kitchen window to the negro soldiers, and he would hear the latters' soft voices whining out:

"For God's sake, little Miss!"

"Ain't you got somethin' for a poor hungry nigger, little Miss?"

"I'se starvin', little Miss!"

"Dey most killed me in horspital, little Miss!"

He would throw back his head and laugh silently to himself, showing his white teeth behind his white beard and mustache, murmuring: "the rascals, the rascals," with a true Kentuckian's enjoyment of a joke. He seemed indeed so amused that smiles hovered about his lips a long time afterward. Like Monsieur Pinseau, he must also havé had a comical past to look back upon.

When the little girls came back to their places, they would all talk about the chickens. He seemed to be as fond of game chickens as their Papa, and could be as much entertained as he by the airs of an old rooster or the antics of a young one. And looking at the chickens, he would relate to them all the circumstances of the various exciting chicken fights of his youth in Kentucky; and tell them further all about the most beautiful country that God had ever created: its fine horses, its blue grass, and its women, known as the most famous belles in all the world, he told them. The little girls—who had never heard of such supremely lovely women in their little lives and could never hear enough about them—could, as they listened, again forget the black cloud over the house across the yard. As he described the marvelous

complexions of these famous belles of his youth, such as no other women in the world had, and their hands—like the hands of goddesses, he said—he would pull out of his pocket a cake of sweet soap, a pot of cold cream, or a bottle of *eau de Cologne,* and show the little girls (with the taste and delicacy that Monsieur Pinseau had exhibited over cooking) how to make their hands like the hands of the Kentucky belles. And so the little girls would wash and rub and cream their hands diligently under his supervision, and wipe them on the fine large linen handkerchiefs he brought fresh every day and always forgot to take away with him; and they would eat the fruit out of his great bag every afternoon—every afternoon; they needed no better entertainment. And Polly the chatterbox, who loved talking even more than she did beauty, would relate to him all the happenings of the little house; tell him, in order to keep talking, anything, everything; (so different from the wise little Cicely!) never heeding what she said, for she could no more look where she was going in her talking than in her walking. And so every day he heard the same things: Madame Joachim; Papa Pinseau and his cooking and the little bundles; old Aglone. And every day, without fail, he heard the story of the barrel of flour and sack of coffee—how the grocer had given them in payment for legal advice, and how her Papa talked about them in his illness and how they made him believe there was plenty left, as there would have been if they hadn't given so much to the negro soldiers, who came begging more and more because more and more of them fell sick, and the Yankees treated them worse and worse. . . . Ah! he was well informed about the negroes and their ill

treatment at the hands of their barracks masters! This part of the conversation must inevitably have come to an end had not another barrel of flour and another sack of coffee been received just in the nick of time: a whole barrel and a whole sack, not half ones as before. Nobody could have enjoyed their surprise with them more than the old gentleman, nor rejoiced more at their relief from the consequences of their charity. He, too, thought it must be the good grocer who sent them, and praised him for it.

When the time came for him to leave, he turned from the back gate into a little side lane instead of proceeding by the street, and so reached the Levee. As he walked along now, he did not flip at the weeds with his cane, and there was no smile of humorous anticipation on his lips. He bent his head reflectively, and clasped his hands over his cane behind his back, the thoughts that had been amusing him fading from his face. Abstractedly he answered the greeting of the officers on the Levee, and, turning into the donjon-like portals of the barracks, barely noticed the sentinels presenting arms to him. Not so did he leave it. To be the Colonel in command of the barracks and a Kentuckian seemed always a joke to him in the morning, when like a young man he would start out fresh for the continuation of his boyish fun in the mystification of the little girls: his little blossom of romance after the hard war. (Kentuckians can never grow old, or rather even in old age, never cease to be young; and even in old age, can no more live without romance than without jokes). His romance! It was his romance that made him sad now and that made that radiant lady Victory who had crowned the banner he had

fought under seem now, as he looked upon her, to be weeping.

. . . .

All the while in the house the patient was making his struggle for life, his last struggle as it began to appear to him.

"I cannot hold out much longer," he would whisper wistfully to the doctor who was constantly running in to see him, like a commander constantly running upon the ramparts to watch the foe.

"Hold out to the end—and then still hold out; that is all you have to do." The graver the situation, the more jocular the doctor became.

"I am doing—my best—but—my—strength—is going—fast." He seemed hardly to have the breath to say it.

"No stronghold in history," said the doctor majestically, as if he had the whole of history at his finger ends, "would ever have been taken by the enemy if it had held out only a little longer. You, who know history, know that."

And still he fell every day into delirium; still he came out to meet his anxieties and responsibilities; still he measured his chances in the struggle; still he calculated; just as he had done when the Confederacy was making its last stand.

"Where are the boys?" he asked suddenly one afternoon.

"Ah, he has noticed that I have kept the children out of the room," his wife said exultantly to herself. "I knew it, the fever was weakening only the body!" And as if she had heard a piece of good news, she hurried out and called the boys in.

They were always within call now, never leaving the garden except to go to their books on the gallery. They never even undressed when they went to bed, but threw themselves down in their clothes in case they were wanted; always determined to keep awake, but always, poor boys, going to sleep.

They snatched up their books and hastened at the call, stumbling over their own feet and dropping one book after the other from their trembling hands. Their mother stood at the head of the bed, holding the mosquito netting in her hands as a screen, her eyes fixed upon them, her head firm and erect. They needed her look and gesture; for their knees trembled as much as their hands when they reached the bed. She prompting them, they opened a book, turned the leaves, and showed the marks of their lessons; then clearing their voices, their words running together from nervousness, they told how fast they were getting through Gibbon, and, poor boys! how much interested they were in it. At that moment indeed, trying to keep back their tears at the sight of their father—emaciated, weak, strange, and changed beyond all recognition—they would have sworn devotion to any book; even to that secret horror of their minds the Bible, their Sunday imposition.

"Study." Their father's whisper, so low and faint, frightened them as much as his appearance. "Work." Then with a great effort he repeated the word: "Work." His eyes closed. After a pause that seemed never-ending, he opened them, and a glance of his old warmth lighted them, as, looking beyond his sons toward the door, he whispered: "Cribiche."

It was Cribiche, barefooted as usual, and dirty; his

blue *cotonnade* trousers hanging by one suspender, his shirt unbuttoned. Cribiche did not go to his bed at all of nights. He lay on the gallery outside, close to the window of the sick room, where, like a sleeping watch-dog, he could hear every movement within. He had more nerve than the sons and therefore could come forward steadily. He spoke in a voice that the wife herself might have envied, laying by the sick one's hands some birds he had killed for him. Every day he had managed to kill some and bring them.

"Study—work——" The feeble lips tried to add something else as he looked at the three, but he could only murmur indistinctly, and the eyelids dropped again over the struggling eyes. The boys started to withdraw, but by some divine inspiration they were enabled to understand the meaning of their mother's eyes, her lips, the movement of her head. They put the question that she, with divine intuition, had guessed.

"Is there anything we can do for you, Father?"

"Yes, yes," came the eager answer, dissipating the lethargy that was creeping over him. "Tommy Cook—Tommy Cook."

They started as they were, without hats, without car-fare, but the latter made no difference; they could run faster than the mule car could travel. They ran all the long way into the city, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but straight ahead, with their message before their eyes.

. . . .

Père Philéas was working in his garden. There was always as much work for him to do in it as in the parish; the devil being as busy with his tares in the one as in

the other, and the rich soil growing the one, as prolifically as the rich Gascon nature the other. It is not surprising that his garden often appeared to the priest like a parish, his parish like a garden; and that he pulled up weeds as if they were sins and tried to pull up sins as if they were weeds. The bright afternoon sun shone from its blue heavens, benignantly over him, shedding its warmth, impartially, as is its wont over the good and the bad alike; over that which has to be removed for the welfare of the rest, as over that which has to be kept for the welfare of the rest. And so were his thoughts doubtless running along, in company with his busy hands, when his arm was pulled violently. "Mon Père! Mon Père!" Cribiche's voice and hands trembled with excitement, his breath came in gasps: "Mon Père, pray for him! Quick! Quick! pray for him! The priest straightened himself up, and put his hand on the small of his back, which was where the weeds at least hurt him most.

Cribiche pulled at his arm again, and repeated his hurried: "Pray for him! Pray for him, quick!" And he looked across the street at the cottage of the Americans, so quiet and peaceable behind its trees. "He will die—he looks like he will die!"

The priest turned as if to go to his work again, saying calmly:

"You will lose a good friend, my son."

"But," replied the boy eagerly, "if you pray for him, Mon Père, if you pray for him——"

The priest shook his head thoughtfully: "Ah, you remember now that there is a good God in heaven! But where is your friend the devil? Your master that you serve so well? Why do you not go to him?"

Cribiche looked at him angrily: "You pray for anybody, for any rascal and thief and . . ."

The priest interrupted him: "Yes, the rascal, the thief, the good-for-nothing . . . I pray for them!"

"Mon Père, if you saw him, you would pray for him." Cribiche's trembling lips related what had just taken place; the priest, listened willingly; he liked to hear any version of what was going on about him in the parish.

"Why do you not pray for him yourself, my son? When you want something, it is better to ask for it yourself."

"Mon Père . . ."

"If you want your good friend to live—and if he dies, I do not know what will become of you but the devil knows—the friend that you love so much . . ." added the priest vindictively, "that you love so much and work for so hard . . . but," softening his voice: "if you want your good friend to live, pray for him yourself."

"Mon Père," cried Cribiche desperately: "They will listen to you, they won't listen to me!"

"And why," asked the priest softly, very softly, "why will they not listen to you?"

Cribiche gave a wild look of despair at the bright sky above, where dwelt his offended God.

"Mon Père, I can't, I can't . . . I don't know any prayers."

"But why, my son?"

"I don't know any prayers."

"And why do you not know any prayers, my son?"

The boy leaned hopelessly against the arm he had

shaken, and sobbed, as if he had been born a child who could afford to cry and had been granted a parent's bosom to cry upon.

"He will die. He will die!"

The priest had never seen him cry like a child before.

"That is as God wills, my son."

He put his arm around Cribiche's shoulder, and bent his head over him.

"My son, if you want your good friend to live, you must pray for him yourself."

"I don't know any prayers," came the answer through sobs, as Cribiche pressed his head closer against the priest. "They won't listen to me, they will listen to you. If you pray, maybe God, maybe God . . ."

The good priest had reached the end of his simple comedy. "My child," he said in a different tone, laying his hand tenderly on the bushy black head of Cribiche: "Go and make what prayer you can. When they see you up there" (the priest fixed his eyes on the blue above) "trying to pray, they may be sorry for you and . . . Go, go, you will find out what to pray . . . God knows all, my child, remember that, He knows all . . . And when he sees you on your knees praying, you, his poor little orphan, who knows? Who knows? . . . Tell Him you will fulfil your duties to Him. You will go to confession; you will make your Communion; you will not neglect the church. All this for love of the good friend He has sent you, whose suffering has taught you in your grief the way to the One who alone can help us poor mortals in our struggle with sorrow and death. Tell Him"—the father was going on much longer, with his eyes directed above,

when he was recalled by seeing the black eyes of Cribiche fixed upon him and his lips, his impudent, lawless lips, repeating the words after him. "Go, my child," pushing him gently, "the prayers of a child are always listened to and God may grant you what he would not grant others. Go, and when I come in, I will pray too."

Cribiche ran away in the direction of the church as hastily as the boys were running in the direction of the city.

Tommy Cook sat alone in the office. He had it all to himself once more, as in the days when a bloody war separated its owner from it. The great bookcases with their tightly packed shelves of calf-skin volumes, the heavy mahogany *armoire,* filled with the tin boxes of litigation as he called it, seemed once more to be floating like a derelict ship upon the Gulf, a prize for the nearest captor at hand. The Confederate lawyers, dropping in day after day to ask news of their sick friend, grew more and more polite of manner to Tommy Cook, more and more considerate of tone to him. As Tommy Cook saw, they were getting ready for the floating prize. The enterprising among them did not limit their interest to the life of their friend; but would casually extend it to the eventuality of his death; glancing at the *armoire* of litigation; the business of which though in ruins, like the plantations of the State, would revive like them and flower into money again when the political condition of the South was restored to its proper *statu quo,* as they classically expressed their domination of it. That was the land of Canaan toward whose possession they were fighting their way with all the ruse and artifice of ac-

complished politicians added to the determined courage of the tried warriors they were; stepping over the bodies of their friends and comrades who fell from among them by the way; leaving them behind as they had learned to leave the bodies of friends behind, on the other battle-fields. But only their bodies, only their bodies, as Tommy Cook observed to himself; not the business that the dead man might have in his pocket. That was looked after as they were looking after their friend Talbot's business, to carry it along with them into the land of Canaan. It would flower there, they knew, as well for one possessor as another.

So Tommy Cook, in imagination, saw his old patron stepped over and left behind, as in his memory many another good man had been. After a season of cold, heat, rain, and sunshine, a skeleton of a name would be all that would be left of him. In a little while that too would have disappeared—and all the work that he had done and all that he had prepared to do, all his accumulation of study, thought, books, and papers, would serve the ambition and fortune of another whose business and interest it would be to see that their friend Talbot was well and surely forgotten. Tommy Cook had learend the *modus operandi* of it, as he called the process. The place he occupied was the best possible one for the picking-up of such knowledge. And in his experience, as in that of others, it was ever the best man who was the easiest forgotten. The longest remembered were the men who had enriched the community with their money, not with their lives; whose lives had indeed to be ransomed from the contempt of posterity by their money.

As he sat thus in the office, in communion with him-

self, the two boys, hot, bareheaded, dusty, and out of breath, ran in to him with their summons.

Although he was dressed in black like a lawyer, was clean shaven of any beard he might have had, and would have been taken, by any one who did not know him, for a respectable young professional—Tommy Cook, in the eyes of the house he entered, was still only, little Tommy Cook, the errand boy of the office; one who sat in the hall and waited for answers and (being white and in a menial position) was looked on with disdain by the negro slave who opened the door to his polite ring. In his own eyes too, he must have been only the little street ragamuffin and newspaper boy who had been jerked up one day from his dice throwing with other ragamuffins on the pavement and made to go upstairs to the office. He must have been still only that in his own eyes, as he entered the sick room and saw his patron on the bed sleeping, and as he sat there waiting for him to wake.

"As if any one," the poor wife thought, "could wake from such a still white sleep."

What would Tommy Cook have been at the present moment if that skeleton hand had not caught him up from his gambling and had not caned him, too, whenever he was caught at it afterward? What would he have been now if the inexorable will of that corpselike head had not forced him to learn his letters; and then to write; and then to go to school? His patron was a young lawyer at that time, just admitted to the bar. He slept in a room adjoining the office. And Tommy, who had been given a closet adjoining the room, would wake up at night and see him many a time, still in the evening dress of dinner or ball, sitting at the office table, studying

and reading. That was before he was married. Tommy had known him longer than his wife. He had been picked up out of the gutters at ten and he was now twenty-five. Fifteen years he had been living under this patron, and with him; serving him, watching him, copying him, trying to please him, hunting up authorities for him as soon as he could read, taking down notes for him as soon as he could write distinctly, learning to know his affairs even better than he knew them himself. For Tommy lived closer to earth and had a mind that could creep into little business holes and places that the mind of a gentleman could not condescend to.

As he sat at the foot of the bed, he looked indeed more like the poor little fellow he had been than the lawyer he had become; for he had never outgrown his thin, starved face, and the small sad, bright eyes that had first attracted the attention of the handsome young lawyer passing by on the sidewalk. His black hair was plastered down now with pomatum instead of hanging over his eyes, and his face was clean and white; that, with his clothes, made the only difference, after all, in his appearance. He sat crouched down in his chair, with his narrow shoulders bent, just as he used to sit in the hall waiting for answers.

From under his half-closed lids the eyes of the sick man looked at him, with a soft, gentle, fixed gaze, as at something in a dream; one of the dreams of his long, long sleep.

"Hello, Tommy, is that you?"

The words slipped in the faintest breath of a whisper through the immovable lips.

Tommy gave a start at the sound of the old familiar

greeting, faint though it was, and uttered as in a dream. But it was his patron's old familiar greeting and no one else's; the greeting of the days when his patron was a young lawyer and lived in the office room.

He came around to the side of the bed.

"Yes, Sir," he answered as he used to do, when he stood cap in hand at the office table.

"Tommy," but the weak voice gave out and only a sigh followed.

"Yes, Sir."

By a great effort, the weak lids were raised and the anxious eyes looked slowly around the room; seeing no one but Tommy: "Tommy," he whispered. Tommy bent over him. "I cannot hold out much longer—my strength is almost gone." The words fell slowly, with long pauses separating them, but the will behind them forced them out. "Stay here in the house, until——"

"Yes, Sir."

How well Tommy knew his patron! His voice was as clear and steady as if he were being sent to court on an errand. But he bent still closer over the thin white face and watched the closed eyes. The lids slowly struggled open again and the great eyes looked into Tommy's bright eyes above.

"My library," he sighed—a long trembling sigh that cut the heart of one to hear it. "Sell it—at once—to pay—give the money to—my wife. My business——" another long sigh.

"Would you like to see some of your friends, Sir?"

"No, no," he tried to shake his head.

Ah, Tommy! Where would you go to find a friend for him? One that he could trust?

"My family—food—food."

The words were inarticulate. He felt them to be so, for he opened his eyes and fixed them upon Tommy with a look so piercing that the boy fell upon his knees and putting his ugly little face close to the god-like head on the pillow said steadily: "I will attend to everything, Sir. I will look after the office and the business as I looked after them when you were in the war, when I was keeping them for you against your coming back. I will keep them for you, just the same now, Sir, as if you were coming back. And if you were to come back, Sir, you would find me there, Sir, just as you found me before taking care of your office, looking after your interests for you until you came back."

Looking at the thin face and closed eyes under him, Tommy ventured yet further, whispering close into the ear on the pillow! "You know, Sir, there is no one on this earth owes as much to you as I do; there is no one would work for you as I would. You know that and you know me, don't you, Sir? You ought to know me, Sir. You picked me up out of the gutter, and if there is any good in me you put in there, and if you cannot trust me now, Sir, you had better have left me a dog in the gutter. And I wish to God you had left me a dog in the gutter if you cannot trust me now."

He said it simply. The ragamuffin who had learned so much about life had never learned the fine language of sentiment. He who could mimic so inimitably could not mimic that. He had shed no tears since his drunken mother had been taken by death from beating him; but they came to his eyes now. As he talked, he wiped them away with his finger. Like his patron, he thought

no one was in the room; no one, he thought, heard him; no one saw him, his patron's eyes being still closed.

It was true, all true. If he could not trust Tommy, whom could he trust? Since he had picked him up from the gutter, he had always found the boy sitting in some corner of the office whenever he entered it: a thin, puny, miserable little cripple boy, always eager to do something for him. When indeed had Tommy not gladly responded to his call like a dog to a whistle? Cold, rain, hunger, fatigue—when had Tommy ever felt them if his patron required a service? When had he ever asked for anything for himself? A reward? Between them there had never been a question of such a thing. And what was there in life worse than the sad misery, the hard work, the contempt and humiliation that had been Tommy's portion in it? Yet, he had borne it all with a laugh. Who had ever heard him complain of his lot or of his thin undersized body, his crippled foot? And during the war, when he could have done so easily what others had done, made a position and fortune for himself out of the loot of conquest; when his patron was absent, dead for all he knew—what had he done? He had sat in the office protecting its interests and studying to make a lawyer of himself. He had succeeded too. Where, among all the ardent gentlemen fighting in the State for their politics and their bread, was there a better one? And if there was a book left in the office to sell now, if there was a dollar now to be made out of it for wife or child, to whom was it owing?

If all this passed through the mind of her who stood behind the head of the bed—hearing, seeing all, pressing her hands upon her heart to keep it still—must it not

have passed through his mind also? He, who was so much more just, so much more sensitive to merit than she was, so much more piteous of struggling humanity!

Did he see himself, picking up the boy as Jove might have picked up a boor's brat? (For no Jove could indeed have been more self-confident than he was at that time.) There must have been some sudden revival of the forgotten thrill of the old, intimate, and subtle tie that daily companionship weaves between man and boy; or it may have been only the picture of the office conjured up so vividly before him by Tommy's words: the office, with all it contained of his past and all that he had thought it contained of his future, as he saw it before him at that time. There was the business so faithfully worked for; the knowledge so patiently acquired, the foundations of fortune and reputation so conscientiously laid to last forever! Or perhaps it was the bitter waters of defeat that overwhelmed him: the surrender, so much worse than the one that had made the oldest and strongest soldiers in the army shed tears. For he was alone in this humiliation; all by himself in this surrender; and perhaps—worst shame and humiliation of all—perhaps—he was to die in this second defeat—perhaps, not be allowed to fight his way out of it, but was to lie, a corpse in a graveyard while other men marched to the redemption of their land and of themselves. Or, it may have been only mortal weakness, for life is sweet and to die is a sorrow to the best of us. But, as Tommy was wiping the tears from his eyes, a tear forced itself from under the lid of the eye beneath him and rolled down the long, white cheek.

Tommy, awed, slipped away into silence and into his place at the foot of the bed.

Ah, there is no departure in life that cannot be better prepared for than the one for which so much preparation is needed. At the last, when there is so much to be said and when (as we think about it in health) no words are quite important enough for the saying of it, the mind is too drowsy with the sleep that is coming on to care for anything but that, and the lips hurry over the words as if wanting only to be done and quit with them forever.

The sick one seemed to feel all this and he strove to keep his eyes open and his mind awake so that if he had to depart, he might not do so, leaving disorder behind him.

"Mariana! Mariana!" The sweet musical name fell from his stiff dry lips, like the poetry learned in his youth. He repeated it over and over again, as if it were cooling drops to his parched mouth.

"Mariana!"

Madame Joachim thought that the fever was coming on again and delirium taking possession of his mind; but his eyes instead of closing as in delirium were wide open and filled with meaning, the meaning that he wanted to put in his incoherent sentences.

"Mariana!"

"Here I am; here I am beside you!" his wife answered in her pleasant natural voice; almost gay it sounded in the still, little room. Had the fever been in reality the impersonation that the doctor and Madame Joachim liked to imagine, what would he have thought of that voice from that shadow of a woman!

"Mariana!"

"I am here."

"Yes, I see you, I hear you. Always the same; always by me night and day . . . always the same . . ."

Of all that he had in his sleepy mind to say, that he saw so clearly must be said, this was all he could utter.

"Mariana!"

"I am here, close to you."

"Yes, always the same, day and night, day and night."

He stopped the foolish words slipping through his lips as in delirium. He opened his eyes wide, and gave a long, a longing look into hers. He seemed to try to brace his mind; but what he wanted to say seemed to wander crookedly before him; he followed his meaning, nevertheless, forcing himself to go on, word by word.

"Mariana, my wife, when I had to leave you in the city, in the power of the enemy, I told you to come out to me, on the plantation. You came, I knew you would, you came to me. When I had to leave you alone, on the plantation, alone, all alone, with the children—no neighbors, no friends,—alone in the swamp—alone—I was not afraid—I was sure of you. In all the sickness—in all the danger, I was not afraid—I was sure of you. When I used to come creeping through the swamps, in the night—I knew I would find you there—always found you there, awake, sitting up—waiting for me—awake, waiting—ready to open the door, for me."

The perspiration broke out on his white forehead, moistening his hair; but he forced himself on, word by word.

"In the army, before a battle—men were afraid on account of their wives and their children—they would

nearly go crazy—thinking what would happen to them afterward—I was not afraid, I was sure of my wife. Mariana!"

"I am here, I am here close to you."

"I was not afraid, I was sure of her, sure of her," he repeated triumphantly. "Always brave, always cheerful, never cast down—never discouraged—never tired—I, often—but you never, never you!—braver than I—better than I, better than I—" Like slow gathering drops from a wound the words grew fainter, more sluggish. He had got to the end.

"My husband! My husband! You, not I! My God! It was you, not I!"

The poor woman had risen from her knees; pale, trembling, at last at the end of her strength and fortitude. She wanted to scream the words aloud. She thought she was screaming them; but no! She did not disturb his repose. She stood, holding on to the post of the bed to keep from falling, she leaned her head against it, to stop the whirling in it; but she let no word, no sound, pass her lips.

"Mariana! . . ."

But here the doctor came into the room, noisily as ever.

"Well, my friend, and how are you? Better, eh?"

Doctors have little originality, or care little for variety in their salutations. This one had been used day after day, week after week, and always in the same loud voice, as if there were nothing so proper for a fever as a loud, unconcerned voice. But he always roused his patient.

"I cannot hold out—" the breath hardly holding out to whisper it. "I have to give up."

"Not yet! Not yet," responded the doctor cheerfully. "You must not give up, you must make the fever give up, eh?"

He made a sign to Madame Joachim, to open the window near the bed for more light.

"No strength . . ." the words barely fluttered from the lips.

"You think you are badly off, eh?" asked the doctor. "Well, you should see the fever! He is worse off than you," bending close, "I can tell you. He could not take another case now if I gave it to him. But," laying his finger on the pulse, and turning his ear upon the heart, "but you . . ."

"My God!" exclaimed Madame Joachim to herself, "how can he lie so!"

The wife winced in pain at the word case.

"I tell you what to do," he said to Madame Joachim, and speaking louder still so there could be no doubt about the patient's hearing. (She knew that maneuver of his so well.) "You go to Joachim, and you tell him to give you a bottle of his good Spanish wine." He described the bottle to her. "And you catch your oldest and toughest chicken—you know the kind—for soup, eh? And you put it on. We'll show that fever!" he declared as if he had merely been playing with it hitherto.

Out on the kitchen gallery, Papa Pinseau sat through the afternoon putting off his dinner from hour to hour; and with him sat the other old gentleman, the Kentuckian, Polly's friend. As Papa Pinseau had encroached upon

his time, so he encroached upon Papa Pinseau's; coming in the morning, and sitting through the day. He too put off his dinner; but what did dinner matter to an old soldier and an old hunter? And all day on the kitchen step sat Jerry; looking toward the house, rising only to separate the young roosters when they fought too noisily. On the front gallery steps were Tommy Cook, and the two boys, and Cribiche; all of them waiting for what no one mentioned, however much each one was thinking of it. But the little girls! The only change in them was that they ran about the kitchen more excitedly than ever, answering more decidedly than ever "Papa's better" to any inquiry about him, as they had answered steadily from the first day, holding their heads higher than ever as they felt the craven spirit of uneasiness gaining ground about them. The longer the fever lasted, the more determined were they not to give in to it. The old gentlemen on the gallery must have seen this in their pity.

When it was dark, they took their leave, and the little girls went to bed, to whisper what they would do the next day. But the Kentuckian, went away only to wait until he thought it was safe for him to return and take his place on the gallery again; sitting bolt upright in his chair throughout the night; looking up at the stars, like a soldier at the door of his tent.

The doctor remained also, instead of going home when his day's duties were over; and like the good soldier he too was, sat on watch by the side of his patient.

Then the routine of so many long nights held the house as usual; no sound but the clock ticking away the hours; no motion but the soft easy swaying of the fan

over the bed; now and then a drink of water given; at certain intervals, a potion of medicine; the shade taken from the light and put back again—no one speaking, all watching—the patient, alone, oblivious and unconcerned.

AT THE VILLA BELLA

ON such long Summer afternoons the young San Antonio ladies were at their happiest. The roses in their garden were not fonder of warmth and brightness than they; nor did the roses make a richer show of beauty and color than they nor a sweeter dispensation of fragrance—when the time came for them to emerge from their chambers, in their thin, trailing white organdie dresses; all ruffles and lace, breathing the subtile scent of French perfumes around them (Madame Doucelet herself was subtile to extreme about perfumes; the discretion of one as she called it—the indiscretion of another.)

Even Madame Doucelet, who strained her eyes to discover defects in the young ladies in order that she might have the pleasure of something to correct, even she, could find no fault with them, externally. As she saw it only original flaws remained; the mistakes of their Creator, who, Madame Doucelet was forced to confess—despite her carefully acquired piety—made more failures than successes in the production of perfect female beauty. The hair, the complexion, the neck and the arms, so naïvely exposed under the thin muslin; the waist, the hands, the feet; the walking, the standing, the sitting; God alone, who knew the truth, would have taken them for the daughters of Tony, the barkeeper, and of the market-woman, downstairs, in her short

cotonnade skirt and loose *sacque,* sorting onions and garlic.

And, never did the demoiselles San Antonio sing so well, so near the complete beauty of their voices, as on these long, Summer afternoons, in their fine thin dresses, with their throats bare and free, looking at their reflection in the glass, and listening to their notes, soaring as has been said like escaping birds through the open windows into the soft, fragrant atmosphere outside; to listening admirers on the Levee.

"Love, love, always love," Mademoiselle Mimi would exclaim to herself, wearied of the everlasting amorous refrain of the words and timing her measure to the vocalization above her: "Love, love, always love! *Mon Dieu,* how monotonous!"

She herself was not at her best on these warm afternoons. The perspiration rolled from her red face, and the *cadenzas,* runs, arpeggios, and trills grew more and more slippery under her moist fingers. The toilettes of expectation, as she called them, suited well the theme of the singing, that seemed to be always seeking, seeking something, until the something was found, and the doctor came into the room.

Madame Doucelet must have noticed it too; but not philosophically as Mademoiselle Mimi did. There was no philosophy in the mind of Madame Doucelet; no theories, no generalizations, no reasoning, no deductions. They were not necessary to such an expert as she. What she saw she saw with her eyes and not with her mind, as Mademoiselle Mimi did; and she had good eyes for seeing a long way off. From the beginning of her official duties, she had seen, with the same eyes that saw a car

coming, the equivalent of what was now before her; saw it clearly. She wondered, how long it would be before the young ladies themselves saw it. But, as she kept telling herself in private, to ease her restrained feelings, they were stupid in the extreme; stupid for all their beauty and singing.

Mademoiselle Mimi knew when the doctor entered the room, for she felt then as if her accompaniment were the reins of race horses, so hard did the fresh, gushing, thrilling voices pull against it, bounding ahead in all the grace and strength of youth and joyousness through variations, *roulades,* trills, as if they were nothing. Each one at times rising on her toes and throwing her head back so that the pearly notes might be seen throbbing in the pearly throat; each one going back to her seat afterward, and extending foot or curving arm as Madame Doucelet had prescribed; or leaning back in their chairs, —the accomplishment that Lisida possessed to such perfection of charm that her soft hair would always seem to be almost falling from the tall comb to curl and glisten on the bright yellow cushion behind her; the hair that grew so prettily around face and neck.

Past forty, neither tall nor handsome, and with a face of the most ordinary type (but such prosaic indices of personality were the last things noticed or thought of, in the emotion that the doctor knew how to produce; the emotion, as it seemed to the observant Mademoiselle Mimi, that came from the sensation of being called by something unseen, unknown; and of following, following, that call in a charm of mystery and glamor)—it did not need even the presence of the doctor to produce this effect. Long before he made his appearance, the effect

began to be felt. Mademoiselle Mimi saw it approaching, with the hour, with the minute; with the sound of the step, the opening of the door; seeing at the same time, each one of the three young ladies recede as it were, further and further back into herself; farther and farther and farther away from her sisters; away from even the consciousness of their presence—each one separately and alone in her own way to follow the call that each one thought she alone heard; following it, out, beyond—personality, self, into forgetfulness of them, of everything, save that she was following something unseen; but felt, moving ahead of her, calling, calling, so that one could not help following when once she had heard it and begun to follow it. This was the effect the doctor knew how to produce upon the young ladies.

All the while, he would be walking leisurely up the Levee toward the Villa Bella. As he approached it, he would look at the fine old iron fence with its interlaced design and brick pillars holding their vases of century plants on high. As he passed up the broad walk, his quick, shrewd, black eyes glanced at the handsome old garden, on each side, with its *parterres* and fountains and palms; and at the white statuettes that appeared as if they were fleeing from pursuit into the dark shadows of the magnolia trees. And as he mounted the steps of the balcony with its pedestals and vases of growing plants, and walked over the black and white marble pavement, his eyes grew ever larger and softer with their gratification at so much that they liked to look upon.

He did not stop to ring the bell; but with the *bonhomie* natural to him in the home of little girls he had known

all their lives, in the convent; he entered without ceremony among them as their old doctor; and as such was familiar, almost paternal with them: calling them "*ma jolie brune*," or "*ma gentille blonde*," or tapping "*ma petite Lisida*," on the cheek as he used to do to all the pretty young girls at the convent; throwing himself into one of the great low satin *fauteuils*, leaning his head back to enjoy the music; asking for the "*Air de sommeil*" from l'Africaine, or the Jewel Song from Faust, "*Ah! si'l me voyait ainsi*," or the "*Ah! Dieu, si j'étais coquette*" from the Huguenots, or the "*Rosine aria*" from the "*Barbier*," that Lisida sang so deliciously, almost like Patti, he said,—or any other compliment that came to him; for it was all the same to him what they sang. Notwithstanding her educational formula for young ladies, one might as well suspect Madame Doucelet as the doctor of caring for music.

Never forgetting herself an instant, she was always on the alert to fetch a fan, or a glas of *sirop* and water; open or close a window; advance a footstool, or a pillow, as this one or that one of the young ladies needed the attention to accentuate something in attitude or expression that Madame Doucelet thought complimentary. It must indeed have been a pleasure to her to note the efficiency of her delicate training upon the doctor; to note it as she did, with her sharp little eyes peering from the dim veil she managed at certain moments to throw over them.

The eyes of the doctor too, would peep out from under his closed lids, now at the foot, now at the arm, now at the hair! And now, as if at last he could not resist the temptation any longer, he would rise and go from one

to the other, Maria, Antonia, Lisida, to make the most insignificant of remarks to her—in the manner of a man who has his way with women.

Mademoiselle Mimi played not more skilfully on the piano than he on the instrument he best liked to practise on. But Mademoiselle Mimi knew nothing of her art in comparison with what he knew of his. No one, without turning one's back on her, could forget Mademoiselle Mimi in her music, as she sat at the piano; but no one remembered the doctor in his performance, although he was before one's eyes.

"Love, love," thought Mademoiselle Mimi playing away. "Love, always love! Do they never get tired of singing of love?" and while meditating thus as usual upon music and love, people and life, she thought she heard—for in truth she did not listen to the singing after the doctor came in, no fear of false notes or measures then—she thought she heard something like an animal crying; but nobody else heard it and she went on playing, until she heard the sound again: something like an animal, but calling.

"It is poor old Aglone," she said to herself. "He is dead; Mr. Talbot is dead." And in a flash she saw it all before her; the little girls with her father in the backyard; the end of life in the front room. "Aglone has come for me; that is her poor old voice, calling from the back, instead of ringing the bell in front, which she won't do, because she despises the rich dagoes."

By this time, she had risen from the piano, seized her gloves and portfolio, and was hurrying out of the salon, making a sign to the doctor, who, quick as she at an inference, followed. They hurried through the hall and

down the steps, the back ones, hearing the cries still clearer.

"That stupid Aglone!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Mimi impatiently, this time aloud. The doctor who had no thought of this kind to mislead him arrived before her at the truth. He pushed by her and ran down the steps and found the San Antonio woman trying to give an alarm; to call assistance to her husband who was lying on the brick pavement of the basement.

She had seen him leave the car and watched him as he walked across the open pasture land, into which the evening sun was slanting its rays; still as hot as at midday. But when had Tony ever noticed the sun or its heat? His wife saw he did not walk straight and that he staggered every now and then. She wondered at it, for Tony, whose business it was to make men drunk, did not himself drink. He was too good a barkeeper, as we have seen, for that. He staggered forward, as far as the brick pavement, and there fell like a log and lay unconscious, breathing heavily.

His wife was rubbing his hands, calling to him and crying aloud; the cries of an animal, more than of a woman who has given birth to daughters with beautiful voices. Her daughters, hearing her cries, at last, ran frightened into one of the corners of the salon and crouched down, shutting their eyes and stopping their ears.

Madame Doucelet hastened downstairs, and after one glance at the prostrate body ran for the priest.

By the time the doctor was ready to go to his fever patient, the priest had expedited the departing soul, the heavy breathing had ceased, and Tony lay on his wife's

long table in a clean blue shirt with a crucifix on his breast and candles burning at his head.

Ah, Death that, like a skeleton with finger on lip, had been moving so stealthily around the cottage of the Americans, put on a different aspect when he visited the Villa Bella!

When Tony was out on the hot Levee, chaffering with oystermen about his September supply, Death had him then, and could have taken him; but he played with him, like a cat with a mouse; letting him out of his grasp to catch him again. When Tony took the car to go home, and sank into a corner seat; drunken—as the driver and the passengers thought him—Death was watching him all the time, opening and shutting his hand over him. Death let him reach his gate, which the driver of the car had to open for him and help him to get through, watched him staggering toward the house, let him reach the threshold, but there the play closed. Death caught him and this time held him. As the doctor and the priest walked away together from the Villa Bella, the doctor began gently to speak of the San Antonios. Père Philéas, evidently, never imagined before who and what they were; that is, what great wealth they possessed and what good Catholics they were and all else that the doctor unfolded about them with the agile hand of a surgeon at the operating table—the probable and possible consequences to St. Médard of the union of this great wealth with the great faith.

"Tony," proceeded the doctor, from his initial base, "made money, we shall not ask how; he is not accountable to us now. He accumulated a fortune; we ask ourselves wherefore—seeing that as for himself and his

wife, for poor, hard-working people they were born and poor, hard-working people they lived."

The doctor shook his head reflectively and improvised (at least the priest thought he improvised) further along.

"He made money and he stored it in one bank and another, and in that safe in his and his wife's room; that safe which her eyes never forgot, not for a moment did she lose sight of. Of course, you do not know it, but that is the reason that she never left the house; never left the place where she could sit and watch the room the safe was in. She is sitting by her husband's body now; but she sits so as to keep watch on that safe. In banks and in that safe he stored it," the doctor reverted to the beginning of his sentence, for he was as neat in his oratory as in his bandaging. "More in the safe than in the banks, for good reasons, doubtless. It is a mistake to suppose that he was only the vulgar common *dago* he appeared to be. No, he was what we call a financier; in truth, *mon Père,* a great financier; and as a priest guards the mysteries of his faith, so the financier guards the mysteries of his wealth. All wealth, like all religions, has its mysteries, its inexplicable . . . But we see now, you see it too, *mon Père*"—the doctor paused significantly. "The daughters in the convent carefully preserved in their piety and innocence . . ." (but the doctor did not dwell upon the convent; for it has always been notorious in St. Médard that the church and the convent cast, at the best, only cross-eyed looks at one another) . . . "storing good intentions while their father stored wealth. And now; just as they reach the perfection of their piety, and the full bloom of their youth and sentiments—ah, when it comes to sentiments,

it is only the young who are bold and strong and daring. A young girl can put the strongest man to shame when it comes to expressing sentiments. Yes, the young dare anything that the heart bids, they do not know what prudence, what caution means . . ."

Père Philéas, as he strained his mind to follow intelligently so many flights and so many tracks at once, could not but thank God in his heart, that while he was attending to Tony's soul, and only to that; so wise and sure a ministrant was at hand to think of what seemed in truth of so much more importance—of the wealth that the soul had been obliged to leave; the wealth, which the doctor gave him to infer had been accumulated in a mysterious way for the eventual profiting, so at least the priest construed it, of the church in St. Médard; the poor little church of poor little St. Médard and not of the rich convent of the rich Ursulines as might have been expected.

"What they need now, the San Antonios," the doctor turned in the path and faced the priest impressively, "what they need now, mon Père, after the consolations of the church, is a good lawyer, an honest one. Think of it, money in banks all over the city,—and that safe full of securities, bonds, stocks, banknotes, who knows? Gold and jewels, too, perhaps—and that old woman—she is not really old, she and Tony were both younger than people thought—that old woman who cannot read or write, who never talks, who hardly knows her daughters; while they do not know her at all. I do not know if there is a will. I expect not. Such people do not make wills. (The doctor's sentences grew laconic as he approached the nucleus around which he

had been revolving.) If there is no will, you know the public administrator will put his hands to it! and you know who the public administrator is! A negro! And if he were only a negro, no more than that! But in addition there is a politician, a white carpet-bagger, behind the negro; that is what the public administrator is; negro, carpet-bagger; carpet-bagger, negro; that is what our government is from governor down. Negro in front; carpet-bagger behind. Carpet-bagger in front; negro behind. Whew!" the doctor blew out his breath as if that was what he feared Tony's fortune would amount to in the hands of the public administrator.

"A good lawyer could arrange it all . . ."

"A good lawyer," continued the doctor. "A good lawyer! But Madame San Antonio! will she ever think of such a thing? Never. She will sit watching her safe; selling her picayune worth of milk; and onions . . . and . . . Ah, if she had only a good lawyer? A lawyer like our friend over there," he nodded toward the sick room.

"But," began Père Philéas again, with pardonable curiosity. "But . . ."

"A good American lawyer, an American lawyer could manage it, an honest one with a reputation. You know he has a great reputation uptown—our friend over there—one to make a public administrator afraid." The doctor, too astute not to foresee the question and evade it, paid no attention to the attempted interruption.

"She must be protected—the widow—in her rights, and the daughters in their heritage," pursued the doctor, scratching his head reflectively. "What Tony left be-

longs to them—the fortune he made in spite of the question of how he made it. Money, mon Père, as you of the church know, is like running water, it purifies itself in its course."

"But," the priest eagerly availed himself of the opening afforded by the pause, "if . . ."

"He could manage it; he could save that fortune and put it in the good course, as we may say. It is not the good course the public administrator will put it in, of that we may be sure. And our friend, here . . ." They were close to the gate; he thought a moment, and then went on briskly: "Another lawyer, even one with a great reputation, might do—but there is always danger with lawyers! Even with those of the best reputation at the bar." (Which showed that he knew lawyers at least as well as lawyers knew doctors.) "They have a way of managing a rich succession, of settling them, as the kings of France used to settle an inconvenient personage, by shutting him up in the Bastille and keeping him there until he died. Eh, mon Père?" (He gave an interrogatory end to his phrase in deference to Père Philéas's knowledge of the kings of France.) "The lawyer, he only shuts up the succession in court until he eats it up with his costs, and his fees, and a little borrowed here, and loaned there, at ten, twenty, fifty per cent. profit—not to the estate, oh, no! to their own pocket. . . . Ah, mon Père, you know this world and you know the other; but you do not know lawyers. But," taking the priest's arm genially, "there are good lawyers to be found if one takes the trouble to look for them. St. Médard has one here—one would say he has brought one here—for the purpose, his purpose—why should we not say it? . . .

and a good lawyer could arrange it all as easily as you could a case of disquieted conscience.

Poor Père Philéas! What case of conscience had he ever arranged? From all that he had ever seen of a conscience disquieted or otherwise among his flock, he might affirm that Gascons were born without them. He could frighten them with hell; yes, if that could be called arranging cases of conscience.

They were now at the gate of the cottage and at the end of their conversation. "When you are praying for Tony, Father, pray to St. Médard for his family, that they may not fall into the hands of the wrong lawyer. . . . Good-bye then to their money, and," he reiterated, "their pious intentions."

The good Père Philéas—who was docile enough in listening to advice and accepting assistance in behalf of his parish, and who was not one to shut his eyes to any light held out to him whereby the affairs of St. Médard might be bettered—was not so simple, however, as to be put off any longer when he had an important question to ask; one all the more important since he saw what great results the answer included. Firmly, therefore, he opened his mouth to put his question for the third time. The wily doctor, however, again eluded him for the third time, by anticipating his direct words: "What can one say? As long as there is life, well, there is life . . . a fever?" he shrugged his shoulders. "It kills or it goes away, there is no other alternative." He could not hazard anything more definite, not willing, like the good doctor he was, to run the risk of having his judgment reversed by the event. "Nevertheless," deftly mingling his science with piety: "we doctors must always hope,

mon Père, as you good priests must pray, no matter what we fear. Our hopes are our prayers, is not that so?"

After this, he entered the sick room as has been described, himself to pass the night on watch.

"What has happened? But what has happened?" The question gathered slowly in Madame Joachim's mind from a thousand minute sources; imperceptible ones to any mind but one who depends on observation for knowledge. "What has happened?" she repeated continually to herself during the night as she watched the doctor, watching his patient. She could not have explained, to herself, the reasons that formed such a question, any more than she could have explained the reasons of the formation of the clouds that passed over the sky.

But why should she bother herself with explanations? She did not need them as, to quote her own words, she knew what she knew, for the doctor no more carried a face for people to read, than the sky, one for people to understand. So, as the night went on, she asked herself, whenever she looked at him, not "Has anything happened?" but "What has happened?" Finally, as one tired of walking in a dark tunnel, she chose her moment, and softly leaving the room on her fat feet, she went to Cribiche on the gallery.

"My son," she whispered, shaking her head significantly: "Go find out what has happened. Something has happened, run quick and bring me the answer."

The longer Cribiche tarried on his errand the better satisfied she was.

When he returned with his report, she took him to the far end of the gallery. He was breathless with running,

and beside himself with amazement, excitement, and exultation at what he had discovered.

"Eh, Madame Joachim! It is Tony! But it is Tony who is dead!"

He closed his eyes and folded his hands on his breast to show how Tony looked; as he told of the crucifix, the clean shirt, the candles; Madame Tony on one side, Madame Doucelet on the other, praying. He had seen it all. "Dead! He is dead! Madame Joachim! Eh, but St. Médard has sense," winking in the dark at her and laughing. "St. Médard knows what he is about! He has sense; he jerked Tony up! And Tony was fooled! Tony was fooled this time!" He laughed and jeered: "Blow, San Antonio! Blow! Blow, San Antonio! Blow," mimicking the prayer of the Italian luggermen to their patron saint when their luggers are becalmed.

"A . . . h H . . . a!" was all that Madame Joachim answered. When she went back to the sick room, she had emerged from her tunnel and was in the clear light of day.

"Lisida, Maria, Antonia, which shall it be? Maria, Antonia, Lisida?" She knew now what the doctor was thinking about, what had made her sure that something had happened.

Madame Doucelet put her young ladies to bed and stayed with them until they went to sleep because they were afraid to be left alone. They did not keep her long, and when she left the room, she left it until the time for the chapel bell of the convent to ring in the morning. Convent girls know how to sleep soundly.

Then, Madame Doucelet went downstairs with her prayer beads. She could pray a night through by a

corpse, as easily as her young ladies could sleep upstairs. Her poverty had made many things easy to her; had taught her to be useful to others, in many ways; in superintending funerals and mourning, as well as shopping, and the training of young ladies. And now, she could pray by this corpse almost happily, animated with the perfect faith that makes prayer a satisfaction, that sees clearly as through a glass, that what is prayed for is sure to arrive. Now, she could look ahead as far as she cared to the point where she expected to find—what she never for a moment of the day forgot; what she was ever seeking, ever, without intermission, no matter what she appeared to be doing; what, it had been her vocation to seek, as she would have phrased it, through her long life of poverty—money; the money that would free her henceforth to do nothing but her pleasure, that is—live undisturbed by word or torment in her little room in St. Anthony's alley (where she could almost touch the Cathedral from her window)—go to church and pray. There was nothing now ahead of her to prevent her seeing that point clearly; nothing at all. The abject wife and mother, sitting on the other side of the corpse, too stupid in her grief and bewilderment even to weep; she was nothing to Madame Doucelet, no obstacle in the way of anything she saw ahead of her or the young ladies. The young ladies, far from being an obstacle, were to be her means to the end—the goal in view.

The prayer beads ran faster and faster through her fingers; the prayers, faster and faster through her lips, as she thought of all that was ahead of her and the young ladies—her means to her end. The doctor, himself, was not more absorbed in his meditation than she in hers.

THE TURNING OF THE ROAD

When daylight came into the sick room, and the shaded lamp was extinguished, and the windows were thrown wide open, the patient opened his eyes and followed the doctor going the rounds of his inspection. His lips were too weak to speak, but not his eyes.

"*Sonnez clairons, tambours battez!*" The loud voice of the commander called his officers to his side. "What did I tell you? He has gone! Our enemy has gone! Ha! We held out too long for him! No, he will not come back! His ultimatum was 'You go or I go'! and we bluffed him! He has gone!"

How prosaic the scene! The shabby little room with its cheap furniture; the disordered bed; the ugly details of illness; the worn, tired wife; Madame Joachim in her rumpled blouse *volante;* the doctor, despite his good qualities as doctor, so loud of voice, so offensive of manner; the children's towzled heads peeping through the door; all so commonplace. But no stage however heroic, no circumstances however resplendent, no personages however exalted, no language ever invented by dramatist, could have produced a moment of greater effect than the one in the little room, among the poor accessories of St. Médard. To one of the personages, Heaven itself could not have opened a more beautiful, radiant vision than what she saw then. And what did she see? Only an ugly little dirt road of a future opening

out again before her, twisting its way along, with all its ruts and weeds, its ugliness and roughness; but in it she, the wife, and all the family, trudging along hopefully after their head.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!" laughed the doctor, over the joke that was to come. "The fever will not be ready for another case soon, I warrant you, but you? Ha, ha, ha!"

They stood around the bed, sipping the cups of black coffee that old Aglone herself brought them. She had sat up all night too, in the kitchen, in case (that responsibility of the cook in the hour of danger) they needed black coffee during the night. Were the doctor the believer he wished the devout to take him for, he must have believed that the Lady of Lourdes, or St. Médard, both being beholden to him, had placed Tommy Cook there on the gallery, in the early morning light, for their own grateful purposes.

And Tommy, after his long night on the gallery, looking at the brilliant August stars above him, and pondering over life and death and the even graver question of people making a living; when he saw the rich succession falling down so close to his patron's hand, like a planet as it were out of the clear heavens; he might have believed something equally as probable, could he have believed in anything but his patron's principles and his own sharpness. This sharpness—as he decided even while the doctor was speaking to him, as he spoke the evening before to the priest—the sharpness must be called into service at once (as it had been called into service to save the library during the war) before Tony's death was known through the papers to a whole bar of greedy lawyers—a rich succession makes even the richest

lawyer greedy. After the sharpness had secured the succession, it could wait until the principles were well enough to proceed upon it.

A good succession! That was a prize worth capturing! And not many of that kind sailed the sea of litigation. Such a succession as Tony's would indeed furnish a living to any lawyer, for any number of years, until, at least—and that was all Tommy cared for—the State was restored to her *status quo,* and his patron to his.

The name of Talbot seemed to brighten out again on the office sign as he thought of it, and the faces of the inquiring lawyer friends grow dim. As he and the doctor walked along together, the doctor seemed to be treading on air, so elated was he. And he was not vague as when talking to the priest, but as man to man, clear and to the point. No lawyer could have made himself clearer as he told off the points that rose before his mind: the ignorant widow who would necessarily be always in tutelage to her legal adviser whom in the end she would follow as blindly as she had followed Tony, the daughters as ignorant for all their education as the mother, completely in the hands of an unscrupulous sharper (so he diagnosed the case of Madame Doucelet) who he was confident had already planned to stir up trouble, very likely had a lawyer already engaged for the purpose—and so they came to the house from whose doorpost a long black crape was floating in the breeze.

In the presence of death, what an intruder Time seems to be? Who then pays any regard to him or to his paltry trade of minutes? He is treated, indeed, then, no better than a peddler, singing "*Rabais! Rabais!*" So short a while from daylight! And yet, Tommy found

what looked like mid-day at the Villa Bella. Servants were sweeping, Madame Doucelet was throwing open the windows of the salon, and directing the pinning of sheets over the mirrors and the pictures, and the arranging of the chairs. She surely was a woman of inexhaustible enterprise and activity in funeral emergencies. Tony, she had decided, must be brought up into the handsome drawing-room that he had entered so seldom in life, and he must have a funeral that befitted, not his past but the future of his daughters; and no one knew better than Madame Doucelet what that future required in the way of the conventional. Madame Doucelet had, herself, bargained with the undertaker for a handsome coffin with silver handles and silver candelabra to stand around it holding wax candles. Tony, in short, was to lie like some rich respectable merchant amid the pretty furniture, ornaments, laces, and frescoes, that the old Spaniards had gathered together for their own life and death; a symbol himself, indeed, among symbols!

When the young ladies heard that the coffin was to be brought upstairs and put there just over the hall from their chamber, they were more frightened than ever. They wanted to run out of the house, they frantically pleaded with Madame Doucelet to let them go to the convent for the day, or just for the funeral. They caught hold of her dress and held on to it (strong young women as they were) when she wanted to leave them. Ah, yes! They were frightened enough then to forget even their looking-glasses. When Madame Doucelet did leave them—for she was going over her opportunity with a microscope as it were—they buried their heads in their pillows and stopped their ears to keep from hearing what

was going on. There is no power on earth that would have induced them to look out of the windows or doors, so afraid they were of seeing the coffin brought in.

Madame San Antonio was still in her same place, sitting by her husband, almost as dead-looking as he; too stunned still even to replace the flickering candles in the sockets of the candlesticks. The doctor, himself, did it when he came in. But she was not so stupid, and ignorant, as she seemed to be; as the clever people about her thought her to be. She had lived with Tony too long to be that, at least about business. She had been saving and holding on to money too long to forget it, even now. Indeed, she would have sold five cents of milk or eggs that very morning if any one had come to buy.

Tony had been forced to learn much about the law and therefore was not inexperienced in lawyers. How could he be? The law being to the barkeeper what the devil is to the righteous. The path of his money-making had been little more than one long dodging of it; one continuous flight from the pursuing jaws ever seeking to devour him. Many a time—driven to bay by the legal *condottiere* sent by the city against him—he had been forced (though all unknowing in his ignorance) to adopt the distinguished expedient of famous illicit money-getters of picturesque past ages: to subsidize those forces sent against him—the lawyers. He found that he could always afford to pay them more than their clients could. Whatever Tony knew, his wife knew, silent as he was. Wives of such husbands gain their knowledge, as parasites do their growth, from the tree they live on.

Tommy had little trouble with her. He felt with her none of the embarrassment that intimidated him with a

lady; lifted by long inheritance of refinement, far, far above his standing ground in human nature. He could talk to her as he could have talked to his mother.

The priest? The doctor? Could St. Médard himself have opened the old woman's safe any easier than he did? Or have confided more trustfully to him the handling of the papers whereby the precious succession was to be secured from the hands of one who would not put it in the good way?

It has been explained that the one grief of the bar-keeper and his wife was the loss of a son, whose life was a trellis upon which they were training their affection and ambition to climb, and how, in their despair at his death, they let their affection and ambition grovel hence-forward on the ground; and how in their ignorance, they could never understand why the son whom they loved, and wanted, should be taken from them; and how the daughters they did not want should live. One cannot speak surely about a father; but a mother—even though she spend her life groveling on the earth alongside of a husband—when she loses a son that she loves she loses him not from her heart; his life is never dissevered from the life that conceived him. From year to year she follows his growth, from birthday to birthday counts his age; and her best dream is that she is still carrying him in her arms, suckling him at her breast. And when in after life she meets one of the age the son might be; who talks to her mayhap in the voice he might have had; who takes her hand, her onion-smelling hand, as he might have done; in her loneliness, with only three fine daughters upstairs . . . (But all this is, it must be, con-jectural) . . . In sober truth, all that can be said by one

who knows only the outside of a woman's or a mother's heart is; that as easily as the undertaker's men lifted the corpse and laid it in the coffin, so was the corpse's succession lifted by Tommy and laid where no other lawyer but his patron could get it; and well out of the reach of the public administrator.

And by the time that Tony's hearse had accomplished its slow journey to the Louisa Street Cemetery, Tommy had towed his prize safely to the office and anchored it in the armoir of litigation. And Tony, who had laid up treasures nowhere but on earth, entered the other world as great a pauper as he had entered this one.

"And now," said Tommy succinctly to himself, as he sat in the office, waiting for the appearance of the kind inquirers of his patron's health, "now, the country *is* safe."

BY DOROTHY CANFIELD

THE BENT TWIG

The story of a lovely, opened-eyed, open-minded American girl. $1.35 *net.*

"One of the best, perhaps the very best, of American novels of the season."—*The Outlook.*

"The romance holds you, the philosophy grips you, the characters delight you, the humor charms you—one of the most realistic American families ever drawn."—*Cleveland Plaindealer.*

THE SQUIRREL-CAGE

Illustrated by J. A. WILLIAMS. $1.35 *net.*

An unusual personal and real story of American family life.

"We recall no recent interpretation of American life which has possessed more of dignity and less of shrillness than this."—*The Nation.*

HILLSBORO PEOPLE

With occasional Vermont verse by SARAH N. CLEGHORN. $1.35 *net.*

A collection of stories about a Vermont village.

"No writer since Lowell has interpreted the rural Yankee more faithfully."—*Review of Reviews.*

THE REAL MOTIVE

Unlike "Hillsboro People," this collection of stories has many backgrounds, but it is unified by the underlying humanity which unites all the characters. $1.35 *net.*

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

34 WEST 33D STREET (8'16) NEW YORK

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

Translated from the French by GILBERT CANNAN. In three volumes, each $1.50 net.

This great trilogy, the life story of a musician, at first the sensation of musical circles in Paris, has come to be one of the most discussed books among literary circles in France, England and America.

Each volume of the American edition has its own individual interest, can be understood without the other, and comes to a definite conclusion.

The three volumes with the titles of the French volumes included are:

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE

DAWN—MORNING—YOUTH—REVOLT

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE IN PARIS

THE MARKET PLACE—ANTOINETTE—THE HOUSE

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE: JOURNEY'S END

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP—THE BURNING BUSH—THE NEW DAWN

Some Noteworthy Comments

"'Hats off, gentlemen—a genius.' . One may mention 'Jean-Christophe' in the same breath with Balzac's 'Lost Illusions'; it is as big as that. . It is moderate praise to call it with Edmund Gosse 'the noblest work of fiction of the twentieth century.' . A book as big, as elemental, as original as though the art of fiction began today. . We have nothing comparable in English literature. . "—*Springfield Republican.*

"If a man wishes to understand those devious currents which make up the great, changing sea of modern life, there is hardly a single book more illustrative, more informing and more inspiring."—*Current Opinion.*

"Must rank as one of the very few important works of fiction of the last decade. A vital compelling work. We who love it feel that it will live."—*Independent.*

"The most momentous novel that has come to us from France, or from any other European country, in a decade."—*Boston Transcript.*

A 32-page booklet about Romain Rolland and Jean-Christophe, with portraits and complete reviews, on request.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

THE NEW POETRY

CHICAGO POEMS

By CARL SANDBURG. $1.25 *net.*

In his ability to concentrate a whole story or picture or character within the compass of a few lines, Mr. Sandburg's work compares favorably with the best achievements of the recent successful American poets. It is, however, distinguished by its trenchant note of social criticism and by its vision of a better social order.

NORTH OF BOSTON

By ROBERT FROST. *6th printing,* $1.25 *net.*

"The first poet for half a century to express New England life completely with a fresh, original and appealing way of his own."—*Boston Transcript.*

"An authentic original voice in literature."—*Atlantic Monthly.*

A BOY'S WILL

By ROBERT FROST. *2nd printing,* 75 *cents net.*

Mr. Frost's first volume of poetry.

"We have read every line with that amazement and delight which are too seldom evoked by books of modern verse."—*The Academy* (*London*).

THE LISTENERS

By WALTER DE LA MARE. $1.20 *net.*

Mr. De la Mare expresses with undeniable beauty of verse those things a little bit beyond our ken and consciousness, and, as well, our subtlest reactions to nature and to life.

"——— and Other Poets"

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER. $1.25 *net.*

Mirth and thought-provoking parodies, by the author of *"Challenge,"* of such modern Parnassians as Masefield, Frost, Masters, Yeats, Amy Lowell, Noyes, Dobson and "F. P. A."

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

36 WEST 33D STREET (3'16) NEW YORK

THE HOME BOOK OF VERSE

"A collection so complete and distinguished that it is difficult to find any other approaching it sufficiently for comparison."—*N. Y. Times Book Review.*

Compiled by BURTON E. STEVENSON

Collects the best short poetry of the English language—not only the poetry everybody says is good, but also the verses that everybody reads. (*3742 pages, India paper, complete author, title and first line indices.*)

The most comprehensive and representative collection of American and English poetry ever published, including 3,120 unabridged poems from some 1,100 authors.

It brings together in one volume the best short poetry of the English language from the time of Spencer, with especial attention to American verse.

The copyright deadline has been passed, and some three hundred recent authors are included, very few of whom appear in any other general anthology, such as Lionel Johnson, Noyes, Housman, Mrs. Meynell, Yeats, Dobson, Lang, Watson, Wilde, Francis Thompson, Gilder, Le Gallienne, Van Dyke, Woodberry, Riley, etc., etc.

The poems as arranged by subject, and the classification is unusually close and searching. Some of the most comprehensive sections are: Children's rhymes (300 pages); love poems (800 pages); nature poetry (400 pages); humorous verse (500 pages); patriotic and historical poems (600 pages); reflective and descriptive poetry (400 pages). No other collection contains so many popular favorites and fugitive verses.

India Paper Editions

Cloth, one volume, $7.50 net.
Cloth, two volumes, $10.00 net.
Half Morocco, one volume, $12.50 net.
Three-quarters Morocco, two volumes, $18.00 net.

EIGHT VOLUME EDITION ON REGULAR BOOK PAPER. SOLD IN SETS ONLY. $12.00 NET.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

34 West 33rd Street — New York