

whole company had embarked on the Fulton sailing from New York for New Orleans, and they were burned at sea. Not a soul saved, not one!

'Yes, it is terrible,' said Tirandol, rousing himself a little, 'especially for that unfortunate little woman who was with him.'

'Madame de Targy.'

'Yes, Madame de Targy! Poor little woman.'

'It was her own fault,' said Laubeners. 'What business had she to be there. It was strange. She always seemed so modest. I never understood that escapade of hers.'

'Nor I,' said Vaumartin.

'Between ourselves,' said Tirandol, lowering his voice, 'our friend, the baron, was not entirely a stranger to the event.'

'What do you mean?' asked Laubeners.

'Why, when the De Targys were ruined, he took the husband into his office—you know his kind heart—and then I led siege to the wife. She took alarm and fled.'

'Well, really, that wasn't very honorable of our friend, to say the least.'

'Does it surprise you?' asked Vaumartin, cynically.

'Dear Chevril,' said Tirandol, 'he is full of brains; much talent. But he is hard, very hard, extremely hard.'

'Yes, he will never die of enlargement of the heart,' observed Laubeners. 'I like Chevril well enough, but as a matter of fact, he is an old fox.'

'He has very brilliant qualities of course,' said Vaumartin, 'very brilliant, but he is a villainous type, and I should be sorry to know many like him.'

'Anybody who looked at him would know what he was,' remarked Tirandol. 'He bears his character stamped upon his countenance. He has a regular convict face.'

Laubeners and Tirandol began to laugh, but their merriment was suddenly checked by the appearance of the gentleman under discussion, and that most fascinating of all conversations, the criticism of one's friends, was interrupted for the time being.

'Ah, there he is! How are you, dear boy,' said Tirandol, who rarely lost his composure under any circumstances, and did not now, although he was not quite certain how much the baron had overheard.

'My dear baron!' exclaimed Laubeners, cordially advancing to Chevril.

The baron shook hands with his guests in a manner that required their fears.

'This is most kind of you,' he said, 'to accept my invitation at so short a notice.'

'Nonsense,' said Laubeners, 'we were only too happy to come.'

'Dear boy!' murmured Tirandol, resuming his lazy attitude.

'We are always at your service,' said Vaumartin. 'But I believe you are to offer your congratulations, baron,' said Laubeners. 'It is a triumph of which you ought to be proud; the charming, haughty Rosa has found her master at last.'

'It does you honour, and your friends also.'

'Yes, indeed. You are invincible, baron. Chevril smiled a little ambiguously.'

'Gentlemen,' he said, seating himself in a weary way, and speaking in a rather high-pitched voice, which had a suspicion of nervous trembling in it, as if it were not quite under its owner's control, 'you really confuse me with your compliments, all the more as I do not deserve them. For, in reality, I am beaten.'

All three gentlemen looked surprised, and politely incredulous.

'Bah!' ejaculated Laubeners.

'Explain yourself!' said Vaumartin.

'May we be permitted to know how?'

'It is really a very funny affair, as you will see,' returned the baron. 'Every one knows that for a long time, Rosa has appeared strongly to my imagination; in short I have been wild over her. But still, as you know, I am not a child; I even think sometimes that I never was one. So, fascinated as I was with her, I did not think it was worth while to offer her the moon and stars, especially if she did not ask for them. Now, for some time past, she has been in the habit of consulting me and taking my advice as to her operations on the Bourse, and her bets on the races; you know what a gambler she is. Well, naturally, my first thought and even my second, was to give her bad advice.'

Tirandol glanced up at this.

'Ah! that is so like you, dear boy,' he muttered, good-naturedly. Tirandol had once been associated in an enterprise with Chevril, and had come out of it a wiser, if a poorer man, than when he went in.

'I have always believed and practiced,' continued the baron, 'the adage that all is fair in love or war, and that both parties have a right to use all means in their power to win.'

'Per fas et ne fas!'

'Exactly, Vaumartin! Per fas et ne fas. You are quite correct. But what do you think? She, in viewless to relate, turned out more ahead than I.'

'Impossible! Rosa!'

'Yes, Rosa! The rose of roses, and, with a grimace, 'with the inevitable thorns. Of course, in consequence of my bad advice, I expected every day to hear

that she was completely ruined, which would have permitted me to come delicately to her aid without raising myself. But quite the contrary. To my amazement, I perceived that the more she speculated, the more her little fortune seemed to increase. Then I began to make inquiries and I finally understood the whole business. Instead of following my counsel, she had done the exact opposite of what I told her. She had beaten me with my own weapons, and do you know, it made me all the fonder of her. This morning, at a rather early hour, she came to my house as usual. I refused to be made a fool of any longer and proved to her that I knew all. The little devil laughed in my face. Then there was a scene of reproaches, of insults even. She knows how to take me. She understands me. Never have I felt her when she was so charming. I felt that she was going to escape me. I made a foolish plan, perhaps, but I offered her a villa, furniture, and all. She accepted. So, you see, I am beaten.'

'And content to be so!' observed Laubeners.

The baron smiled, and twisted his moustache.

'Oh! I hope that it will have its compensations. However, to finish the story. Ah! Here are the ladies.'

Announced by Ambroise, the fair Rosa, herself, appeared, followed by three girls all young and all pretty. As Chevril had requested, they had come straight from the theatre, in the short voluminous skirts and low corseges of their ballet costume. Mademoiselle Bertoldi, a laughing blonde, was in green; Mademoiselle Lombard, in scarlet; Mademoiselle Gillette, in yellow, and the premiere danseuse, Mademoiselle Rosa Guerin, was in black—black tights, black dress, and black gloves. The only bit of colour about her was the blood red radiance of the rubies that sparkled on her neck, on her arms, and in the masses of her dark hair.

The baron rose to receive his guests, but as he did so, his knees seemed to give way beneath his weight, and he clutched at the back of the chair for support. It was only for a moment, however, and then he advanced, smiling, if a little unsteadily, toward Rosa and her companions.

Laubeners nudged Vaumartin.

'Did you notice that,' he whispered. 'He is sicker than ever this evening.'

Vaumartin nodded.

'Ladies,' said Chevril, 'I cannot express the pleasure it gives me to see you, and—'

'Oh, cut that, my dear baron,' laughed Rosa. 'Why shouldn't they come?'

'Why not, of course?' chimed in the blonde, Marie Bertoldi. 'I could not resist coming, especially when I heard that there was to be lobster.'

'Yes, my dear,' said Chevril, 'lobster for you and cucumbers for Lombard.'

'And nothing for me?' asked Mademoiselle Gillette, with a pretended pout.

'Yes, indeed, for you there are truffles. I know all your tastes.'

'You are an angel!' exclaimed Gillette, enthusiastically.

'Yes, a perfect angel,' echoed the other two.

'Well, angel or not, I hope we sha'n't have to wait long,' said Rosa. 'I am simply starved. Ah! my dear Tirandol, did you really manage to make the exertion and come? By the way, how is the water-cure? Is not that what you are trying now? It seems to me that you are looking a little better.'

'Yes,' yawned Tirandol, 'there is a little improvement, I think.'

'Glad to hear it.'

'Madam is served,' said Ambroise, who had been directing the operations of two servants, as they brought in the supper.

'Ah!' said Rosa, with a sigh of satisfaction. 'Laubeners, sit at my left; you my dear baron, of course, on my right. I will reserve the place opposite for Doctor Cheval, who promised me just now, at the theatre, that he would come. Ladies, gentlemen, place yourselves where you like.'

Amid merry laughter, gay conversation, and the popping of champagne corks, the supper proceeded. Suddenly from behind the recess, the strains of an air from Traviata resounded through the room.

'Music, too!' cried Rosa, clapping her hands. 'How delightful!'

'Charming of you, baron,' chorused the others.

'You must all of you be as jolly as possible,' said Rosa. 'For, do you know, that frightful piece of news has completely upset me. Were we not all upset at the theatre to-night?'

'Yes,' said Gillette, 'it is terrible.'

'Shocking!'

'Awful!'

'But what do you mean?' asked Laubeners. 'What piece of news?'

'Why, that shipwreck of the Fulton, answered Rosa. 'To be drowned and burned at the same time is simply ghastly. And when I think how near I came to being there, myself. Juliani was very anxious to take me with him. Poor fellow.'

'Well, frankly,' said Laubeners, 'he is not the one I pity the most.'

'Oh, neither do I. If it had been he alone—but our poor comrades. And then that little society woman he carried away with him.'

'Madame de Targy?'

'Yes, how unfortunate. Just in the beginning of her career, too.'

'Those De Targys have had a very hard time of it all round,' observed Vaumartin. 'What a series of disasters has overtaken them. You remember, Chevril, don't you, that ball they gave, where we were all present?'

'Yes. Yes!' replied Chevril, shortly. The baron had not been particularly gay throughout the supper, and this conversation about the De Targys seemed to annoy him.

'Juliani was there, too,' proceeded Vaumartin. 'Well, the next day, they were completely ruined. Six or seven months later, flight of the young wife to America, and now, there she is at the bottom of the ocean.'

'Well, it is certainly very annoying to her,' said the baron, 'but it was the result of her own wrong doing.'

Tirandol laughed.

'Dear boy, you are superb,' he said, with lazy sarcasm.

'To run away with a flogger was so stupid,' said Chevril, frowning. 'Besides, they say that she made a terrible failure on the stage, and she deserved to. However, let us drop the subject; it does not in earnest me.'

'Poor little woman!' exclaimed Rosa, with genuine pity shining in her clear grey eyes. 'I forbid you to speak harshly of her. She suffered enough, it seems to me, without being reproached now that she is dead. Can't you see her in the middle of the flames at night, away out at sea? B-r-r-r! with a shudder. 'Why, baron, I prefer your love to a fate like that.'

This last remark was greeted with a roar of laughter, in which Chevril himself could not help joining.

As it died away, Ambroise approached the baron, and said, in a low voice:

'Monsieur de Targy has come, monsieur, with the papers.'

'Ah,' said the baron, rising. 'I will go to him.'

But Rosa, who had overheard the valet's words, laid her hand on Chevril's arm to detain him.

'Who did he say?' she asked. 'Monsieur de Targy? What, the husband of that little woman we were just speaking of?'

'Yes, he is in my employ.'

'And does he know the news?'

'Certainly, he was informed of it several days ago.'

'Oh! my dear baron!' exclaimed Rosa, eagerly, 'instead of going to him, send for him to come here, please. I would so like to see him!'

'Oh! yes, baron, do!' cried the other girls.

'But——' began Chevril, hesitating.

'Ah!' pleaded Rosa, with her sweetest smile, 'you cannot refuse me such a trifle as that.'

'Very well, so be it, if it will amuse you,' said the baron, resuming his seat.

'Ambroise, tell him to come here, and bring me pen and ink.'

'But tell me, baron,' said Rosa, 'since he learned of his wife's death, has he continued to go to the bank as usual?'

'Yes, exactly. He has adopted the most complete indifference.'

'After all,' said Vaumartin, 'it was a fortunate thing for him to be relieved of her.'

'Yes, now he can marry again.'

'Hush,' said Rosa, in a warning whisper. 'Here he is.'

As Henri caught sight of the supper and the guests, he hesitated a moment, as if doubtful whether to enter, and then he advanced quietly to the baron's side. He was pale and haggard, and there were deep purple rings beneath his eyes, but his manner was perfectly composed.

'You have the balance-sheets?' asked the baron, politely.

'Yes, monsieur, these papers must be signed before to-morrow.'

'Yes, yes.'

Rosa leaned over and whispered to Laubeners:

'He is really very nice. I like his looks.'

'There, said the baron, returning the papers which he had signed, 'I thank you for your trouble.'

Henri turned to go, but Rosa, as if impelled by some sudden thought, half rose:

'Monsieur, she said.

Do Targy stopped and faced about.

'Madam?' he said, questioningly.

'May I not offer you something?' said Rosa, a little timidly. 'A glass of champagne?'

'Thanks, no, madam.'

Rosa flushed scarlet.

'Oh, no, of course not,' she faltered. 'I understand—pardon me.'

Do Targy bowed gravely and left the room.

(To be continued.)

SEVEN POUNDS IN ONE WEEK.

NOT every man who is thin would thank you for fattening him. He doesn't want to be fat and for very good reasons. Unnecessary fat is a load to carry about; it interferes with a man's power to work, shortens his wind, and dulls his wits.

Yet, on the other hand, a certain amount of flesh is needed for health and comfort. For example: A man five feet high should weigh about 120 lbs.; a man five feet six inches, 145 lbs.; a man six feet, 170 lbs. It is a regular ascending scale. The insurance companies allow a variation of 7 per cent above or below it, and beyond those limits charge an extra premium. One shouldn't be much over or under his proper weight if he wants to be sound and hearty—and we all do want that.

Now we will tell you how Mr Thomas Crosby, being under weight, gained seven pounds in a week. He had lost 1 1/2 stone, which is too much off for a man who was never fatter than he naturally ought to be.

It was this way. He was right enough up to May, 1891. At that time he began to feel ill and out of sorts. He had a nasty taste in his mouth—like rotten eggs, he says—and a thick, slimy stuff came on his gums and teeth. His appetite failed, and what he did eat was, as you might say, under compulsion; and right afterwards he would have great pain in his stomach and chest. Painfully, something was amiss with him in that region. He was often dizzy, and cold chills ran over him as though he were threatened with fever. Of course we should expect a man who is handled in this way to lose strength. Mr Crosby lost strength. In fact, he got so weak and nervous that he took all over, and his hands trembled as if a current of electricity were running through him.

To use his own words: 'I rapidly lost flesh, was 1 1/2 stone lighter, and could hardly walk about. Once my parents thought I was dying, and sent in haste for the doctor. I saw two doctors in Epworth and one at Haxey, but they were not able to help me. Our vicar, Rev. Mr Overton, recommended me to the Lincoln Infirmary, where I attended for eight weeks as an out-door patient, without benefit.'

Soon afterwards Mr Sharp, a chemist, at Epworth, spoke to me of the virtues of a medicine known as Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. Being interested in what he said, I left off trying other things and began taking this Syrup. In a few days I felt better, and presently I gained seven pounds in a week. At that rate I soon got back to my work, and have had the best of health ever since. I tell these facts to everybody, and am perfectly willing they should be published. Yours truly (Signed), TOM CROSBY, Ferry Road, Epworth, via Doncaster, December 23rd, 1892.'

After reading Mr Crosby's story we scarcely need to ask why he lost flesh. The minute he stopped eating and digesting his usual allowance of food he began to fall away. Trees, they say, grow so much from the air by means of their leaves, as they do from the soil. But men don't. They've got to be built up through their stomachs. Indigestion and dyspepsia (Mr Crosby's complaint) stop this process and poisons those who have it besides. That accounts for all the painful and dangerous symptoms our friend speaks of. The doctors do what they can, but, unluckily, they don't possess the medicine that goes to the bottom of this disease and cures it. The remedy is Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and nothing else, as far as we know. It restores digestion, and digestion covers the bones with fat enough for health and good looks.

Do not ask if a man has been through college. Ask if a college has been through him.—Chapin.

Honey, by some sweet mystery of the dew, is born of air, in bosoms of the flowers.—Rucellia.

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