ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE

AGRICULTURAL.

MATTER PREPARED SPECIALLY FOR THE "RECORD-UNION."

Planting and Protecting Fruit Trees—Selection of Locality—Kinds of Fruit to Raise—Etc

The season for planting out fruit trees and orchards is rapidly approaching, and as fruit as a crop in California has been for a few years past among the most profitable crops of the farm, and as the prospect is good for this crop to continue profitable for an indefinite period in the future, it is probable that there will be a great many fruit trees planted this coming planting season. We have frequently discussed nearly all branches of the nursery and orchard and fruit business, so that those interested in all or any of these subjects are in possession of our views. Yet to even our old readers a new presentation of the different branches of the subject may not be uninteresting and unprofitable. But there are, we are aware, many people about to embark in the fruit business who have had but little or no experience in California fruit culture, and consequently are eager to learn all they can on the subject of their chosen business. We propose, therefore, for the benefit of this class, to take the subject up from its beginning and give such suggestions and instructions as will be advantageous to beginners. In the first place, then, we will give our attention to the selection of a locality.

It is very generally believed now, and we think the facts of the past warrant that belief, that in general terms California is the best State in the United States for large or small fruit-growing enterprises. It certainly is true that there is no country outside the United States that can present a little of the advantages for this business that are found here. We claim and have advantages arising from both soil and climate, but we are among those who believe our chief natural advantages are due to climate rather than soil. A good soil for any kind of fruit can readily be found in almost any country where general agriculture has been made even a fair success. Good soil for orange or citrus fruit generally can be found in great quantities in the New England States, or in the north of Europe, or even in the northern parts of Canada or in Greenland. The same kinds of rocks—granite, quartz, slate, sandstone and other rocks—are found in the frigid, temperate or torrid zones, in the northern or southern hemisphere, on the eastern or western continent. Vegetation is chiefly composed of the same ingredients, whether grown near or far from the equator or in the eastern or western longitude. Soil the world over, it is well known, is made up largely of decomposed rocks and decomposed vegetation, as to kind or quality depending on the character of the rocks and vegetation entering into its composition and the proportionate quantity of each. To make Norway or Sweden, or Greenland or Nova Scotia a good fruit country even for the semi-tropic fruits, you have but to give it a proper climate. To make the New England States grow the peach, the apricot, the nectarine or the orange, or lemon and lime, you have only to remove the cold, stormy, wintry climate that prevails there for six to eight months in the year; you have only to push away the New England climate and supply its place with the mild, sunshiny and equitable climate of California. The soil of New England, while not as rich and mellow as the soil of some of the valleys of California, is, notwithstanding, rich and mellow enough to give to all kinds of trees, fruit and otherwise, a vigorous growth, and when covered with a California climate these trees would produce, according to their kind, just as fine fruits and in just as great abundance as they would on California soil. It must be realized, then, that the climate has much more to do with the production of good fruits than the soil. We would not be understood, however, as placing a low value or estimate on the adaptation of the soil to different kinds of fruit, but there must be a junction or union of proper soil and climate to produce the best results. The best soil for the peach, for instance, is a light, sandy loam; but with the best peach soil, without an appropriate climate, even in California the peach will be an inferior fruit. The same may be said as to all kinds of fruit. We have in California localities where the soil is most favorable, and yet from the fact that the climate is not congenial, no good results can be obtained. In selecting a locality for a fruit orchard, therefore, while attention must be given to the soil, yet much more attention should be given to the climate. It must be borne in mind, however, that the composition or chemical properties of the soil may be just suited to any kind of fruit, as the peach or apricot, and yet the mechanical conditions may be such as to preclude the possibility of success. For instance, the best of soil for the peach, or any other stone-fruit, may lack drainage; water may become stagnant in the soil and thus produce unhealthy and unproductive trees, or the fruit may set and grow pretty well for a while and then be attacked by the mildew, blight or some other disease that will render them valueless and prevent their maturity. No orchard of any kind should be planted in a soil lacking natural drainage or the possibility of artificial drainage. This rule is imperative as to all kinds of stone-fruit, and we would make it almost imperative as to apples. Pear trees will survive more water about their roots than any other kind of fruit tree, and yet they will do much better and live much longer on a soil well drained, either naturally or artificially. On the contrary, soil may have all the necessary ingredients for the production of a healthy tree and excellent fruit, and yet from lack of necessary moisture the tree may become dwarfed and sickly and absolutely unproductive, or it may produce none but dwarfed or imperfect fruit. Under such circumstances, or when soil is so situated, the best way to do is not to plant out fruit trees upon it unless water can be brought upon it by artificial means. We should here remark that when good soil can be found under a favorable climate, and in a position that will allow of irrigation at discretion, without too much expense, we would regard this the most favorable possible conditions for planting out an orchard. There are very few localities in any country where nature supplies all the conditions requisite for the most successful cultivation and production of fruit for profit. Whereas a large share of these conditions are supplied by nature, and the rest can be supplied artificially with comparatively reasonable outlay or expense, it becomes a question of judgment, or perhaps experience, whether the locality should be selected. The matter of a market should always be taken into account in the selection of a locality for the fruit producing business. The best possible locality as to market would be one where there is a good local market for green fruit, and where green fruit can also be shipped rapidly and cheaply to good outside or foreign markets, and where there are at the same time a good supply of canning establishments conducted upon fair and equitable terms. With all these conditions favorable, there can be but one opinion as to the advisability of locating an orchard to make a profitable business.

Having weighed all the foregoing conditions and circumstances as to locality, the next subject for consideration may very properly be the kind of fruit to be raised, and how and what trees should be selected. When the advantages for market are as favorable as above pointed out or recommended, and the soil and climate are also favorable, it will be safe to set out a pretty extensive number of kinds of fruit—say apples, pears, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, cherries and figs. With such a variety of kinds, and the best varieties of each kind, the chances of failure would be but few. There is quite a difference of opinion between nurserymen and orchardists as to whether California raised trees or those raised in Eastern nurseries are the best for planting in this State. We know of some very successful fruit-growers who have imported all their trees from Eastern nurseries. They maintain that, as a rule, Eastern trees are more reliable and true to kind; that there is more system in the management of old-established nurseries at the East, and consequently more correctness in labeling. They say, also, that seed planted in a colder climate and cultivated till old and large enough to bud in such climate, are, when transferred into a warmer climate like that of California, more vigorous and hardy, and in many ways better; that larger proportions of them bring lifted and brought here in dormant bud, grow and make valuable trees. They maintain also that seed of fruit, as of the apple or pear, are more vigorous when grown in a country where the pulp is less perfect; that seed from natural or seedling fruit is preferable to seed from budded or grafted fruit. This, they say, is particularly the case in pit fruits of all kinds. Hence the best nurserymen East have long since followed the practice of sending to the Southern States, where nearly all the peaches are from seedling trees, for their pits to plant for budding or nursery stock. These points are at least worthy of careful consideration by all who are contemplating putting out fruit trees. We can see very good reasons for considering some of these points well taken. The one in favor of seed from natural or seedling fruit, seems to us particularly good. One of the most important functions of a tree or other specimen of the vegetation kingdom is reproduction. When this tree produces its seed in a natural way, when it has been least changed by art, the tendency to reproduction according to its kind is certainly more natural and stronger than when by grafting or budding the fruit tree when changed from its natural state.

FOR THE FARM.

A correspondent says he knows by two years' successful experience that a dash of soapsuds is death to current worms.—[Chicago Journal.

A New York State farmer says: "I consider rye, either cut green for soiling, or cut early and cured for hay, excellent forage for cows, and even horses. I feed to all these and they eat it greedily."

Take a new flower-pot, wash it clean, wrap it in a wet cloth and set over butter; it will keep it as hard as if on ice. Milk, if put into an earthen can, or even a tin one, will keep sweet a long time, if well wrapped in a wet cloth.—[Detroit Post.

A correspondent of the *American Agriculturist* claims that winding a string tightly around the body or a limb in June or July, will cause barren fruit trees to yield the following season. Let our readers try it on single limbs and alternate trees next summer. The string should be cut the following winter or early spring.

For several years I have used wood-ashes about my peach trees with marked success. About one peck of fresh ashes is applied each spring and fall about the stem of the tree in a little conical mound. The mound prevents the attacks of the borer and the dressing of ashes upon the soil stimulates the tree so that it is enabled to resist disease.—[James Wood, in N. Y. World.

Professor Blount, of the Colorado State College, makes this report to the President: "I would also call your attention to the black-bearded centennial, a winter wheat of extraordinary weight—seventy-four pounds per struck bushel—and whose grain surpasses anything all visitors have ever seen, and the straw is remarkable for its stiffness and its habits—better than any I have heretofore raised."

In commenting upon the fact that upwards of $8,000,000 worth of cotton seed meal is annually imported into Great Britain to feed cattle, English agricultural authorities style it the very best food imported, admitting that only by its use can English grazers compete with the Americans. It might be profitable for our cattle-raisers to take this hint and feed proper rations of cotton seed meal.

When weeds are ripening their seeds is the time to cut them down. Pile them up together as soon as cut down and burn them when dry. Do not leave them scattered over the ground or they will drop their seed as they dry and all the labor will be lost. Loose stone and rubbish can best be gathered up now and carried off out of the way of fall plowing and sowing.

A good egg will sink in water. A boiled egg, which is done, will dry quickly on the shell, when taken from the kettle. After an egg has laid a day or more, the shell comes off easily when boiled. A fresh egg has a lime-like surface to its shell. Stale eggs are glassy and smooth of shell. Eggs which have been packed in lime look strained, and show the action of the lime on the surface. Eggs packed in bran for a long time smell and taste musty. With the aid of the hands, a piece of paper rolled in funnel shape and held toward the light, the human eye can look through an egg, shell and all. If an egg is clean and golden in appearance, when held to the light, it is good; if dark or spotted, it is bad. The badness of an egg can sometimes be told by shaking near the holder's ear, but the test is a dangerous one. Thin shells are caused by a lack of gravel, etc., among the hens laying eggs. Many devices have been tested to keep eggs fresh, but not less than an egg is kept the better for the egg and the one that eats it.—[Rural Gentleman.

THE QUIET HOUR.

Answers to October 14th

1441. Tide, tied.
1442. News.
1443. Sunday.
1444. Armada.
1445. Preparation, reparation, aration, ration.
1446

OAT
ABRAM
OBLIGEE
ARIETTE
TAGTAIL
METIC
EEL

1447. Apemantus.

New Angles.

1454. Charade, by Gus:

I am black, blue red; indeed all colors.
I stand firmly.
I am something for other things to rest upon.
I am useful in all houses.
I am occasionally a weapon of offense.
I am known to all writers.
I am composed of two words.
I am a compound word.
I am colorless.
I am all colors.
I make impressions, when pressed to do so.
I am speechless, but contain the medium of expression.
I am known in all school-houses.
I dwell also in palaces.
I am used in the Quiet Hour.

1455. A Square. [Inter-Ocean:

A small State of Asia; vocalists; writes; to trouble; a kind of farmer in France and Italy; excuse; declares.

1456 Charade, by F. H. C:

I am a part of the United States Government. At first but little thought of, my services are recognized now by all. A part of the army, yet I never fight. I am officered, yet have no privates in the ranks. I speak to the nation, yet have no voice. I am a sign of warning. I am still peaceful in all my doings. I am intimately known and of use to the farmer, yet I never till the soil nor do I produce. I am a harbinger of both good and ill.

1457. Selected riddle:

I am omnipresent on earth, in air, and water. I can soothe or inflict pain, and relieve the sick. Man has invoked my aid to raise the dead; my mission has frequently been to destroy the living. I smooth the rugged path of the just and make hard the way of the fugitive transgressor. I harden the face of type, and give a smooth finish to rough metals. I can creep under the ocean wave and fly through the heavens. I more than once taught the Jews to fear God, and persuaded the Gentiles to serve the devil. I bring sorrow to happy homes and joy to sorrowing hearts. I am write, but cannot read. I split wood, light the lamps and run errands. I am, by turns, the slave and master of man, obeying his slightest wish, or ruling him with a rod of iron.

1458. Progressive half square, by Quest:

In Sacramento; an abbreviation; a writ; a genus of trees; harsh to the taste.

To the puzzle as to the contents of the keg of liquor, published September 30th, as an extra tangle, we have received three answers. Two are so obviously wrong as not to merit notice. The third gives as the answer: "Contents of the keg, 10,314+." This answer is by "Marysville Subscriber." Its accuracy is questioned. An algebraic solution accompanies the answer, but it is not necessary to print it.

INDIAN MARRIAGE LAWS.

A paper on this subject, read by the Rev. J. Owen Dorsey before the American Association, notices some remarkable customs in relation to marriage and kinship as prevailing among the Dhegitha Indians, particularly the Omahas and Poncas. When a tribe is hunting it camps by *gentes*, or nations, each *gens* bearing the name of some animal. All the members of one *gens* are relatives, and marriage between members of one *gens* is absolutely forbidden. Membership in a *gens* is by descent in the male line, not in the female. The relations of a man are denoted by colors; for example, black, grandfather or grandmother; blue, father or mother. His connections are denoted by mixed colors, such as a pink head and skirt, with light-blue triangle on the body, for sister-in-law. A man can marry his brother's widow, and her children call him father even before their father's death. His sister's children are only nephews and nieces. His mother's sister is always called mother for the same reason, and even his paternal grandfather's brother's son is his father. These, and many other distinctions, show that the terms of relationship are far more numerous. A man may marry any woman belonging to another gens, whether connected with him or not; though marriage into his mother's gens is also forbidden. A man cannot marry any woman to whom he is related by the ceremony of the calumet-dance. Sometimes a man may take the children of his deceased brother without their mother herself. Sometimes the dying husband, knowing that his male kindred are bad, tells his wife to marry out of his gens. If a widower remains single for two, three or four years he must remain so forever. Widows, however, must wait four years before remarrying. The same system prevails among the Iowas, Otoe and Missouria.

YESTERDAY.

It only seems like yesterday:
Why beats this heart? 'tis over now;
And those bright dreams of love and hope
Are in the far-off long ago;
Yet time hath wrought no change in me,
My love is linked to yesterday.

It only seems but yesterday:
How happily those days sped by!
At evening I was sure to meet
A sunset smile and starlit eye;
All those sweet smiles died out from me,
With that sweet far off yesterday.

I sometimes meet a smiling face,
A kindly word of sympathy;
But what are they to my crushed heart?
They only chain my memory
To those fond smiles that cheered my way
In that sweet far-off yesterday.

I wander back to those bright days,
When all was one untroubled sea—
My life a happy golden dream,
No mazes of perplexity:
Those golden dreams have died away,
With that sweet far off yesterday.

Ah, well! the past is over now;
And what there is in store for me
I do not, dare not wish to know,
Nor penetrate futurity.
I know that all things work for good
To those who put their trust in God;
And when I reach yon star-paved sky,
The yesterday will be to-day.

KESTREL: A CASTAWAY.

They were about to put up my fairy extravaganza of "The Queen of the Woodland Glades" at the Levity Theater. All the roles had been distributed, except that of Kestrel, the Castaway, in the tableau of the birdies' ball. As the kestrel is a small bird of the hawk species, I was anxious to have it represented by a small woman, with an aquiline profile, piercing eyes, and slender, sinewy lower limbs; in short, a woman who would realize the notion of a bird of prey.

On the afternoon of the first rehearsal the manager took me by the arm, and said, as we paced the boards, "I imagine I have caught your kestrel. An unfortunate little woman came here a month ago to look for an engagement, and I sent her away, as I feared she was too skinny. But she has superb peepers, the proper nose, with a desirable hook in it, a sympathetic voice, and bronze hair; her leg, it is true, may be too like a reed for my taste; but her foot must be all there. Galibert (that was our *regisseur*) took her address on chance. Go and see her after rehearsal, and if that's your bird, I don't mind taking her on for a twelvemonth."

I sought out Galibert, who gave me not only the name and address of the poor girl, but plenary powers to treat with her. I might even go so far as to offer her fifty francs a month—that is to say, about 10 shillings per week!

It was a nasty day; the snow fell softly in large flakes, which melted as they reached the sloppy asphalt. There was a moist cold in the air which searched out the marrow in my bones; so I took a voiture, and ordered the coachman to drive to Rue Monsieur le Prince.

Mlle. Eva lodged in one of those old students' hotels which are still numerous in the Latin quarter of Paris.

I pushed in a breast-high door, which set a bell jingling as it opened, and at the end of a somber passage I found an antique staircase, with thick carved oaken balusters.

As I was prying about for the porter's lodge a glass casement in the passage was drawn back and a coffee-house waiter, popping out his head, asked whom I wanted.

"Mlle. Eva."

"She's at home. Fourth floor, to the left."

I afterward learned that the landlord of the hotel kept a café on the ground-floor, and made one of his waiters do extra duty as concierge.

I ascended the badly-lit musty-smelling stairs till I reached a door with "Eva" on a card pinned outside it, and gently tapped twice.

"Come in," was the answer, after a moment's waiting.

The key was in the lock—a massive old-fashioned key, a key that would make a capital weapon in case of need.

I walked in, and saw, right in front, the lilac flowering of a bed-curtain, and, between the pillow and the white coverlet, two large eyes, which shone like beads of black onyx—the very pupils I had dreamed of for my kestrel.

Mlle. Eva, curled up under the quilt, half bashfully, half reproachfully asked me who I was and what was my business.

I answered that I was the author of an extravaganza in rehearsal, and that I had come to offer her an engagement.

At the word "engagement" she gave a bound as if stirred by an electric shock. She raised herself on her elbows on the pillow, and pointed, with a tiny, white, meagre hand to an arm-chair in the corner of the chimney-place, graciously praying me to be seated. As the arm-chair was occupied by a robe of black silk, a velvet jacket, a hat, a bodice, two petticoats, and a dainty pair of bottines, she asked me to throw them on the bed. I sat down at a respectful distance.

"Excuse me, sir," she said, in a shame-faced way, "if I am obliged to receive you thus. I came home very late, and as I feel rather ill this morning, I had not the courage to get up. The waiter was here a while ago to light my fire, and I am sorry I did not let him. It must be very cold for you. I only took this wretched room for a month, but I mean to remove to the apartment of a lady friend of mine in the Chaussee d'Antin shortly. So you have come to offer me an engagement."

While she was speaking I scrutinized her attentively.

Those superb eyes, of which they had spoken to me at the theater, were of that orange-tinted brown Titian loved to paint under the lashes of his Venetian beauties. They seemed to have the singular power of following laterally the object fixed with a mobile and searching gaze, which gave them a weird, almost supernatural expression. Her nose, long and centrally raised, as in the Jewish race, was of an irreproachable purity of design; her small mouth, heart-shaped like her oval face, smiled when her lips parted to speak. Her hair, a luxuriant dusky blonde, tumbled in flossy masses over her shoulders, and wound round her throat. Her skin, delicate and transparent, was of a clear, dead-brown tone.

As I looked at her, forgetting to frame an answer, she questioned me anew as to the engagement which I had brought her in my quality of plenipotentiary.

I explained briefly how embarrassed I had been to discover anybody fit for the role of Kestrel, and, after having described all the fine points in the character, I dilated on the advantages she might derive for her future on the stage from this engagement of 200 crowns a year.

I did not dare to say 50 francs a month; and if she had asked me kindly to inform her how much per diem 200 crowns a year meant, I really believe I should have run away like a detected thief.

But she was a disinterested creature, who loved art for its own sake and not for the money it brought.

With a brusque turn of her head she tossed back to her shoulders the wayward tresses concealing her forehead and encompassing her throat, and clapped her hands with a babyish joy.

"My dear sir," she said in a low, caressing voice, "since I become an artiste once more, a real artiste this time, permit me to treat you as if you came to pay me a visit in my room behind the scenes. Set a match under the fagots in the fireplace, and go to the window to investigate the signs of the weather. I only beg the grace of three minutes, to put on a dress and a pair of slippers."

So speaking, she let the bed-curtains fall, and I could hear the rustle of silk behind the lilac flowering.

I was enchanted at the welcome manner in which my offer had been received, and, anxious to see my kestrel on her feet, I found the matches on a shelf by the chimney, between a pin-cushion and a volume of Alfred de Musset, which served as pedestal to an instrument of cedar and ivory not unlike a miniature clarionet.

It was a stethoscope!

"It seems our artist has a friend of the medical persuasion," soliloquized I, as I kindled the logs on the hearth.

The fire alight, I went to the window and surveyed the landscape of roofs of worn tiles, varnished by the thaw.

On a fragment of lead piping, projecting from the side of the sash, stood a sparrow, a very chilly-looking sparrow, with rough bedraggled wings. As soon as he caught sight of me he cocked his wee head on the left side, and, staring at me with his sharp eyes, burst into a roll of ascending chirps.

"Do you hear, sir?" said Mlle. Eva, from the other end of the room; "that's Jolicœur, my pretty day boarder. We breakfast together, when I do breakfast. I'll let him in presently."

"Jolicœur seems jolly impatient," I said.

"Then open the window a little; he'll come in."

I began to think—I could not help thinking—that this house, where the keys were left outside the doors, and the sparrows pecked at the windows for alms, was a branch of the antique Roman Temple of Concordia.

I observed Mr. Jolicœur, who first flew to the ceiling, and then fluttered across to the bed-curtain, stuck his claws into it, and began twittering with a volubility of throat that betokened a mighty choler indeed.

At last Mlle. Eva made her entry by springing lightly on the floor of the room—an entry to music; for the moment her feet touched the boards, an invisible piano overhead executed a Hungarian march with remarkable vigor.

The kestrel was even more pretty than I thought her. She made me a formal courtesy, and held out her hand. We sat ceremoniously down before the crackling wood, she in the arm-chair, I on an ordinary chair widowed of its back.

"What o'clock is it?" she suddenly asked, glancing at the window, which admitted less light now than flashed from the fire.

"Four."

"Ah! I understand why Jolicœur was so enraged. But he'll wait for dinner patiently now," she added, pushing back with her foot some cinders which had rolled from the andirons.

I looked everywhere for the bird.

Eva laughed mischievously, and said:

"Guess where he is hid?"

At a hardly perceptible movement of her corsage I divined where the selfish Jolicœur was drying his wings.

The piano still resounding overhead, I remarked to Mlle. Eva, indicating the stethoscope with my hand, "You have an instrument of music here."

"That is not a trumpet, as you may think," she answered artlessly; "that is an instrument used by doctors for listening to the beating of the heart. It belongs to my neighbor, M. Garnier, who forgot it the last time he came up to see me. He is at present at the Hospital of the Charity, and has only one examination more to pass before he is admitted doctor. He is a good-hearted gentleman, and is very kind to me."

"You're ailing, then?" asked I, after a moment's hesitation.

"Oh, that will not prevent me from being exact in my attendance at rehearsal," she replied quickly, a rosy wave coloring her cheeks. "Yes, some days I feel a great pain in my chest; it seems as if my heart is mounting to my throat; it throbs so loudly that I fancy I can hear the noise of a fountain when I lay my head on the pillow. M. Garnier does not give any medicine for that; he only tells me I must not dance, or take fatiguing walks, and that I must live as quietly as possible."

"And you follow his advice?"

She lowered her head, looked into the flames with an anguished attempt at a smile, and murmured, "When I can! It is the old story of prescribing fruity port and carriage exercise to paupers."

My mouth was shut; one cannot make marvels of economy on a salary of one franc and sixty centimes a day.

I thought for a moment she was about to relate to me the history of her life, which, I am free to admit, might have destroyed, in all probability, the little retrospective romance I had already built up for her in my mind. I did not imagine her to be the daughter of a Colonel, assuredly, but I declined to entertain the belief that a refined-looking creature, with eyes gleaming like carbuncles, such a type of nose, and the hands of a Duchess, could be the daughter of a coarse vendor of cakes or a *dame de la Halle*.

She only told me that she was not a Jewess, as I had supposed; that her mother lived near Tours, and she had already appeared on the boards at the Delassements-Comiques and the Luxembourg.

It was a Saturday. I informed her that she could come to the theater on the following Monday to sign an engagment, and rose to take my leave.

During our conversation the piano had not ceased playing, and the artist, under whose supple fingers the chords were vibrating, struck up at the moment a charming melody, which was new to me. The touch was masterly, and there was a singular alternation of the sweet and the sorrowful, with an odd burst of what might be defined as rebellious joy, in the notes.

Seeing that I was listening with pleasure to the musician, she pointed to the ceiling with a finger, and said:

"'Tis 'the Great Green Guzzler,' as we call him; but his real name is Nabal—a friend of mine. He is a Jew. All he plays is of his own composition. He is a great artist, who is without bread three days out of the seven."

I bethought me of a ladder and a trap I had noticed on the landing coming in.

"How were they able to get a piano through that hole?" said I, puzzled to solve the geometrical problem.

"They hoisted the case of the instrument to a level with the garret window, and Nabal, who understands all about the mechanism of pianos, took the pieces asunder and remounted them inside. It was a music publisher he works for lent him the piano. He used to give a few lessons a month ago; but as he has neither linen nor shoes that can be shown now, he hardly ever comes down but early in the morning and after nightfall. The hotel keeper lodges him for the lessons he gives his little daughter. Nabal's compositions are played in nearly all the cafes concerts but another name is put on the bills. Oh, his is an extraordinary career."

The wretchedness of the room I was in must have been luxury to that of the garret. I felt my heart capsized, as our sailors say, at what I had heard.

"Why," I asked, "do they call this poor fellow 'the Great Green Guzzler?"

"Oh, it's the students who come to the cafe below who gave him the nickname because he drinks huge glasses of absinthe and water when he is searching for new ideas for his compositions!"

There was a knock at the door as she finished her explanation.

"Come in!" she exclaimed.

A pale face, fluted with care-worn wrinkles and bordered with long black locks, flat and shiny, was inserted between the half-opened door and the wall.

"Come in, Nabal," said she, rising and approaching the new-comer.

"Excuse me for disturbing you, Mlle. Eva," said the Great Green Guzzler, throwing an oblique glance of mingled timidity and defiance in my direction; "I came to ask you to let me write a word on this music-sheet."

She took an inkstand and a pen from a drawer and pushed the arm-chair toward him, but he obstinately refused to be seated, and wrote on his knees at the table a dedication at the top of a *chansonnette* embellished with a lithographed frontispiece.

"Nabal," said Mlle. Eva, when he had done, "will you be good enough to take my key from below this evening and light my fire? I shan't be back till ten, but it will be as well if the room gets time to be warmed before I return."

He made a sign of the head, which served both for salute and acquiescence, and went out, shutting the door behind him.

While he was writing on his knees, I could only remark the prominent shoulder-blades, which projected under the bleached texture of his seedy coat like the pinions of two clipped wings, and made one think of the clothed skeletons in the grotesque death dances of Holbein. I had not the courage to study the details of his countenance as he retired, walking backward.

In the Hell of Misery—if such a region there be—the Great Green Guzzler would be named Prime Minister, on the strength of his anatomy, his voice, his gestures, and his paletot.

"I asked him to light my fire," said Mlle. Eva in a half-confidential tone, "to give him a chance of warming himself before he goes to bed. Besides, that may keep him from drinking absinthe this evening."

Her visage wore such an angelic expression of goodness as she spoke that I was half inclined to take her in my arms and give her a cousinly kiss on both cheeks. Recollect, I am no beardless boy; my age, compared to hers, almost gave me the uncle's, not the cousin's, privilege.

I grasped both her hands, which she abandoned to me with a somewhat disquieted astonishment, and said:

"*Au revoir*, Mlle. Eva, I shall never pester you with my addresses—because—because—well, because of sundry reasons, good and bad; but I will try to serve you in the theater, and so help you to follow the prescriptions of your doctor."

She looked at me, with her large black pupils dilated by surprise, and answered:

"'Tis curious! Nabal and Garnier have spoken to me in the same way. Ah! I see; you must have a good heart, too! All who really like me don't speak to me like to other girls. Here I am, like a male comrade, only smaller and weaker than the others. I am never afraid to leave my key in the door."

* * * *

Mlle. Eva had rehearsed the role of Kestrel for eight days.

She was so intelligent, docile, and painstaking that I had added several lengths to the part, and the stage manager seriously thought of promoting her to be the principal fairy in the piece.

At the fourth rehearsal he doubled her salary, stipulating that there should be a forfeit of 5,000 francs in case she failed in her engagement; for he already divined that he had caught a coming star, and was taking his precautions.

As I passed one night about ten o'clock through the Rue Monsieur le Prince, I saw a light behind the window curtain of the future Dejazet. Having a few alterations of her role in my pocket, I determined to call upon her in spite of the lateness of the hour.

Mlle. Eva had not returned; but I discovered the Great Green Guzzler stooping over the chimney, and puffing with all his might at a bundle of fagots, which smoked but would not be coaxed into flames. He was so absorbed in his occupation that he did not hear me coming in. As soon as he perceived me, he stood up quickly, and said, by way of excuse:

"Mlle. Eva hasn't too much money to spend, you see; and sooner than let her fire burn away at a loss, I only light it at the hour she is expected home."

These two poor creatures had in their hearts the springs of that modest charity which veils its face when it opens its hands.

I promised myself the satisfaction of searching and finding the opportunity of repaying Nabal a hundred-fold the value of the wood he had saved.

I had a mind—I cannot tell why—to ask him certain questions about his neighbor, but I was rather embarrassed how to open the subject.

I suppose he divined my intention, for his countenance suddenly darkened, and he wished me good-night in a voice curt and significantly sharp.

I held him by the arm as he was about to pass the threshold of the room and said, as I handed him a packet of paper:

"My dear M. Nabal, as I have not the pleasure of finding Mlle. Eva at home, will you kindly take charge of this manuscript? It is her role, in which I have made a few alterations to-day."

His features relaxed, and I could see, by the light of the candle he held to show me down stairs, that his cheeks were crimson.

"Humph!" said I to myself in the street, "it looks as if the Great Green Guzzler were jealous of the kestrel."

The following day Mlle. Eva was absent at call; and in the evening I read a letter from M. Garnier, the *interne* at the Charite, saying that the poor girl had been suffering for months from an aneurism of the aorta, and that she had just had an accident to serious that Dr. Nelaton, who had examined her in the morning, considered the case hopeless. He prayed me to come round at once to cheer up the poor child a little, and added that he should like to have a talk with me before I went up to her. His room was exactly beneath.

The news gave me such a shock that I could not sleep a wink that night.

The following day, at 10 in the morning, I was with M. Garnier.

Two of his friends, medical students like himself, stretched on ottomans, blew big clouds of tobacco smoke aloft as they indolently lounged.

M. Garnier gave me such a clear—I might say such a mathematical—diagnosis of the ailment of his young neighbor that I could not but see he countersigned the sentence of death pronounced by Nelaton.

While he was speaking one of the students, the youngest, listened with half-closed eyes, and, when he had finished his remarks, he took up the tale in his turn, and, in the strident, jerky style of the Gironde, like that of a brass wire made to vibrate by a toothpick, he proceeded to give his opinions thus:

"I can't make out, I can't, why they don't make a puncture between two ribs—exploratory, you know—and inject twenty drops of perchloride of iron, you know. Damation! Operation's successful on aneurism of the limbs; don't see why it shouldn't be all round. I—I myself would undertake it; don't see why I shouldn't succeed!"

The *interne* sent back this conceited bore to his pipe and his beer-jug in very quick time indeed.

M. Garnier, to whom the kestrel had apparently disclosed my platonic profession of love, made plain to me then why she had none but friends in the hotel. For all of them she was an innocent being under the capital sentence—a shadow, which might, from one minute to another, fade from the floor—a leaf trembling to its fall—a blade of corn under the reaper's keen, inevitable sickle. Betwixt her soft black eyes and their hot youthfulness rose, like chiseled doom on a churchyard slab, the grim words, "Aneurism of the aorta."

"She is enamored of the stage," continued Garnier, "and the thought that she will have to give up her part to another is fretting her soul out. That's why I wanted to see you. You must tell her a little story; tell her you're waiting till she's recovered; in short, humor her with the idea that she must and shall play Kestrel. She won't go down to see the posters, poor child, and I shall pass the word to our comrades. While she thinks like that she will die easy. Come, let us go up to her." As we were on the staircase he whispered, "Won't poor Great Green Guzzler be afflicted?"

When we entered the sick-room the bed-curtains were drawn; Mlle. Eva was asleep.

Nabal was stepping about on tiptoe, and dusting the table and shelves.

Cheap as the furniture was, its cleanliness was Dutch.

Camped on a perch stuck into the rim of the looking-glass, Jolicœur preened his wings.

While M. Garnier lent an ear to the breathings of the patient through a slit in the curtains, I went over to Nabal, and said to him in a muffled voice, as I slipped into his palm the purse I had brought with me.

"The manager of the theater desires that the new member of his company should not want anything in her illness; here are three hundred francs he charged me to give her." Pressing his hand, I added, "Don't be so economical with other things as you are with—the firing."

As he stammered an awkward thanks, he took the money and locked it up in a walnut drawer, which was completely empty.

A colored lithograph, fastened near the glass, inspired me with the happy thought to prepare a surprise for the poor child on her awakening. I told M. Garnier and Nabal I was going as far as the theater, and would be back in two hours at the latest. I left the place as quickly as I could. A painter friend of mine had made some exquisite designs of all the costumes in my extravaganza, and the kestrel was one of the most graceful in the collection. They were at our costumer's, and I made up my mind to bring back to Eva the water-color, showing how she would look when made up as the Castaway; much as one would bring a present of a new doll to a baby one wished to cheat from suffering. Had not M. Garnier advised me to amuse her a trifle with the things of this world of pasteboard and tinsel she loved so much?

When I returned with my sketch, pasted on stiff Bristol board, Mlle. Eva was wide awake and sipping a basin of broth.

Her lips struck me as being rather more of a violet tint, and her eyes as more protuberant.

My inspiration was lucky. The sight of her kestrel's costume sent her into ecstacies.

She called her friend, the Great Green Guzzler, to her bedside, and said, as she showed him the sketch:

"Look, Nabal! shan't I be prettily dressed in the tableau of the 'Birdies' Ball?"

Almost snatching the sketch back from his hands, she proceeded to read aloud the notes penciled on the margin:

"Head-dress of feathers, descending to a point on the back; corsage of bright brown velvet, sloped on the breast in form of a 'V' reversed; petticoat much longer behind than before, and shaping into long wings crossed at their extremity; under-petticoat of yellowish-white satin, to the knees, with zebra bands of tawny-brown; straw-colored silken hose, with *bottines* to match, and steel heels with sharp wings at each side, to imitate the talons of a bird of prey."

These steel-heeled and winged *bottines* particularly took her fancy, and she was so enchanted with herself in her costume as the kestrel that we had to pin up her likeness to the curtain of the bed.

Garnier having persuaded her, when she awoke, that I had come to tell her that there would be no more rehearsals of the tableau of the "Birdies' Ball" during the few days of repose she required, I had only to confirm his assertion.

I felt seized with a deep friendship for my poor mortally wounded kestrel and the two companions who cared for her with such a womanly tenderness.

Twice a day I sought her place to make inquiries, always taking care to say aloud, either to M. Garnier or the Great Green Guzzler, that there was no hurry about rehearsals, and that the piece would not be produced for a month. I saw plainly that the fatal hour was not far. The respiration of poor little Eva grew longer and more labored, and more like a sigh. At almost every minute there was an interior spasm, which tremulously lifted the muslin habit-shirt crossed over her bosom.

Dr. Nelaton told Garnier she could not last over a week.

The sketch of her costume had made her so happy that I wished to give her a new joy. I arrived in the Rue Montieur le Prince one evening with a parcel carefully wrapped and concealed under my paletot. I must note that, in passing, I overheard a great uproar in M. Garnier's room, and could distinguish the coppery *timbre* voice of the Girondin, who was proposing the health of the illustrious Savinien Garnier, *savantissimus doctor*.

The fact was, the gay good fellow had got his diploma as doctor that day, and they were draining bumpers in his honor.

Mlle. Eva was chatting with Nabal, and was radiant.

"Did you hear the good news?" she asked, as soon as she saw me. "He has passed!"

"I heard it from the echoes of the staircase," I answered. "Bravo! bravissimo!"

"Oh, how nice!" she cried. "Another treat for me!" and she extended her trembling fingers to the parcel.

"No; it is for another little lady, but I want your opinion on it."

She tore away the twine, opened the paper, and cried, "No, no; it's mine! it's really mine!"

And she shook over her head two pretty yellow satin *bottines*, whose heels of polished steel glistened and made a merry tinkle, like mule-bells.

"Kestrel's *bottines!* How good-natured of you to have thought of that!" and she dissolved into tears. "I must kiss you for the pleasure you bring me; and you too, my poor Nabal."

I leaned over the bed to press my lips against her forehead, but the head she had raised dropped suddenly on the pillow, and the *bottines* fell on the tiled floor with a crystalline crash. It was like the snap of the silver cord.

Nabal rushed like a madman to the staircase, shouting, and was back with Garnier in an instant.

Believing only in a swoon, I looked on the chimney-piece for a flask of vinegar or a *carafe* of water, when they entered.

"A light here," said Garnier, hurrying toward the bed.

He had already lifted the patient under the arms when I came near with the lamp. But he immediately cried, "Go away! Don't look! Take away Nabal! Take away Nabal!"

But I had looked. I had seen the mouth of Eva and the hands of Garnier stained with blood, and a long carmined streak trickling on the counterpane.

Nabel, his arms planted on the wall, was striking his forehead and groaning in a half crazed monotone, hollow from despair, "My God, my God! she is dead—dead!"

We had to ransack the trunk and search in every corner of the bandboxes and baskets of the deceased before we obtained the indications exacted by the authorities previous to burial. We only found the certificate of her birth, but that was enough to enable us to discharge the indispensable formalities. She was 18 years of age. Her name was Evaline Carteret. Nabal knew the village where her mother lived; the hotel-keeper wrote to her, but when she arrived all was over. A brave, honest woman she was, and seemed more pained and humiliated at the misery her daughter had voluntarily supported than at the mourning she had to wear. The poor kestrel might have lived a couple of years longer in the fresh country air, and would have needed dependence on no stranger.

Garnier and I endeavored to draw the Great Green Guzzler from his garret; but he was anchored in his penurious retreat like an oyster on a rock, and we had to give up the effort to rescue him. It is almost an act of charity to-day to give him a few sous to spend on absinthe.

I kept the sketch and the *bottines* of the kestrel; and Garnier stuffed and preserved as a souvenir, Jolicœur, who had been found on the mantelpiece on his back behind a cup, his claws stiff, his beak open, his body cold, on the day after the funeral.—[Tinsley's Magazine.

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