THE TWO SALOMES.

XVI.

QUESTIONING.

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Portia did not reply directly. The question put to her had something of the saddenness and the force of a blow. As soon as she could speak she said:

"If I had done that, and if I were engaged to marry Randolph Moore, I should take great precautions lest he should know of it."

Salome could not imagine why these words should make her immediately think more seriously than ever that she would tell Moore.

She dropped the shells and the pebbles she had been gathering. She thought that Miss Nunally had never before said anything which really repelled her.

"Let us go up there and sit down on that piece of driftwood," she proposed after an interval of silence. "I am tired."

As the two walked slowly through the heavy sand, Salome asked when was the very earliest that her mother could reach home.

After a little calculation Portia replied. She spoke somewhat coldly. She had a suspicion that her companion was trying to play upon her credulity.

The two sat down on the old timber.

"I really did do it," said Salome after another silence. She was sure that Miss Nunally had not believed her, and she was now fully resolved to try the effect of a confession on this girl who, Salome believed, was going to do a far worse thing than she had done.

The kind of sin to which we have no inclination, which does not hold for us the least temptation, is the kind of sin which shocks us greatly.

Miss Nunally was leaning forward on one elbow, her face turned so that she might gaze fully at the girl beside her. At last she laughed and said:

"I don't believe it." Then she laughed again and continued, "When you go back to the hotel, look in a mirror and tell me if you believe it yourself."

"I don't know anything about that," responded Salome, "but it is true."

"Good heavens!" cried Portia. She lifted her head and looked about her. She turned to Salome and said kindly:

"I'm afraid you are worrying too much about your father's illness."

"And so am not quite right in my mind? Is that what you mean?"

"Yes."

"Then you are entirely mistaken," with great dignity. "I'm perfectly right in my mind. And I have forged."

Miss Nunally's effort to be calm and judicial was evident.

"Perhaps," she said, "if you give me particulars, I shall be able to understand. Particulars are sometimes very convincing, when a broad, general statement has no effect."

"Yes," promptly answered Salome. "I see that. It was Mrs. Darrah's name I put on a check for my father. He needed money immediately. It was for $800. I'm going to pay it back."

Portia was still trying to be calm and not "let her feelings run away with her."

"Now do you believe me?" asked Salome.

"Yes; I believe you. I wish you hadn't told me."

"Why do you wish that?"

"Because I don't like to be so confused as I am now."

"Confused? Oh, I suppose you did not expect me to be a forger?"

"No, I didn't. Really, Miss Gerry, you make my head go round so that I can't think."

"I will not speak for a few minutes, then your head may stop going round," was the reply.

In the silence that followed the two figures sat almost motionless, with faces turned toward the ocean.

It was Salome who spoke first.

"It was for father," she said. "But I don't mean that for an excuse. I'm not excusing myself."

"Does my aunt know?"

"Yes."

"How did she discover it?"

"Why," in surprise, "I told her."

Portia leaned her head on her hand again.

"Your character is just as puzzling as your face," she said. "I suppose after you had done this thing, what you call your conscience stepped in and made you confess it."

"I don't know," said Salome.

"Do you know why you tell me?" was the next inquiry.

Salome hesitated.

"I wanted to know how it would strike you," she at last answered.

"Well, how does it strike me?"

"Oh, you are greatly shocked and repelled."

Salome gave this reply in tones so sorrowful that Miss Nunally's face softened perceptibly. But she did not give way to this feeling in words.

"May I ask why you did not request Aunt Florence to lend you the money?"

"It was so sudden, you know. And I had heard you say she thought a good deal of her money. And father must have it directly. And there was her check book, and I could imitate her hand. And really, it did not seem so dreadful."

"There was nothing in you that held you back?"

"No; there didn't seem to be. Something sprang right up me that said, 'Do it,' just as if it had been waiting, you see, to spring up when the right time came. I suppose I ought to have shrunk, but I didn't."

"But where was your conscience?"

"Oh, I don't know," with some weariness.

Portia was looking with the keenest interest at her companion.

"Then it wasn't what as children we would have called a real, truly conscience, after all, that you used to have?" she inquired.

"I don't know," Salome said again. "I suppose it was only my bringing up; and bringing up sometimes drops away from one. Mine has, I think."

"And it is now that you are the real Salome Gerry?"

"I believe so; I'm almost sure of it."

"Don't tell Mr. Moore," Portia said sharply. "Don't try any of these effects on him."

Salome said nothing. When they were in the boat and Portia was rowing steadily back, Salome asked the question which had been in her mind all the time.

"Miss Nunally, could you have done it?"

"No."

Salome shrank a little. It was some moments before she said:

"And yet——"

"And yet," Portia took up the words, "I am going to marry Major Root. It seems to me I wrong myself most of all. But you, when you forged——"

Salome interrupted in her turn:

"When we sin it is always ourselves we wrong most of all, isn't it?"

Miss Nunally made a false stroke with one oar and the boat veered almost into another craft. When she was going on steadily again she said that it was of no use talking. One might talk forever and come right back to the same place again. There were some things one felt.

Salome leaned forward timidly. There was a quiver on her mouth as she asked:

"Now I have told you that, do you feel repelled by me?"

Portia held her oars poised in the air. The two girls gazed at each other. Portia's face softened still more.

"I ought to feel repelled," she said.

"But do you?" persisted the other.

Miss Nunally's eyes suddenly filled. She could not see the face before her, with its piercing pathos of expression. She drew in an oar and held out her hand, grasping tightly the hand given in response.

"No; you don't repel me in the least," she replied with strong emphasis. "More than that, I cannot imagine being repelled by you, whatever you had done."

Salome's look grew brighter. She would not release the hand she held. But immediately a cloud came over her.

"Still that may be a mere matter of personal presence or influence," she said. "That has nothing to do with morals, after all."

"No, indeed," was the response, "not anything to do with morals."

Salome let go her companion's hand. Her whole figure seemed to droop for a moment.

"I cannot understand things," she explained at last. "I try to reason. When I recall the old teaching I received, I try to repent. But I don't repent in the least."

"But don't you feel sorry that you did that?" asked Miss Nunally.

"No. I only feel sorry if those I love are going to be grieved when they know it."

"Then don't tell them. I judge that my aunt has condoned the offence. It all rests with you whether it be known or not."

"Yes," said Salome, "it all rests with me."

After this nothing more was said on the subject. Indeed, hardly anything was said on any subject. The two girls landed at the wharf and walked up to the Ponce de Leon. Salome went directly to Mrs. Darrah, feeling that she had been very remiss. But that lady was not disposed toward reproof of any kind. She had been dozing among her cushions, but she thought she had been thinking over her novel. This thought gave her a sense of having been attending to duty, and consequently made her good-natured. Besides, she never saw Salome without an awakening of keenest interest in her as a specimen of the human race. As a specimen, Mrs. Darrah often told herself Miss Gerry exceeded anything she had ever had occasion to study. The elder woman was always thinking of the forgery, and trying to see some indications in the girl's face or manner that she had done such a thing.

While she thus furtively watched her, the authoress made a great many notes in that book devoted to feminine traits. But when she looked over those notes she found them particularly inane and pointless. Once she dashed her pen through a page of them, thinking as she did so that she had never before found words so inefficient.

"And yet," she said aloud, "there is the girl with that baffling face that yet seems as clear as a lake, and here am I with nothing to do but to study her. I wonder what Portia thinks of her. Portia is a sharp kind of a girl. I will ask her."

And she did ask her niece that very night, after Salome had gone to bed in the room provided for her near Mrs. Darrah.

"I suppose you feel acquainted with Miss Gerry, don't you?" was the inquiry.

"Are you asking that question for the sake of material, Aunt Florence?" was Miss Nunally's response, "or just in a human kind of way?"

Mrs. Darrah flushed with anger.

"We will call it a human kind of way," she answered. "What do you think of Miss Gerry?"

Mrs. Darrah thought there was some agitation in her niece's manner. The girl rose and walked to the desk; she began lifting some leaves of manuscript which Salome had written. The clear handwriting flashed up at her somehow like a glance from Salome herself. She stepped away; but still her eyes remained on that writing and it influenced her something as the presence of the writer influenced her.

"I could be very fond of her," she said at last.

"So could I," returned Mrs. Darrah quickly. "But that isn't of any consequence."

"Pardon me, Aunt Florence," said Portia with her touch of insolence, "but it is of the greatest consequence to me whether I can be fond of any one or not. For instance, think of the difference it would make if I could be fond of Major Root."

"Pshaw! That isn't necessary. You will be fond of the diamonds he gives you."

"Yes; and so, perhaps, I shall spare his life—for a time."

Portia turned again and walked about the room. It seemed impossible for her to keep quiet.

"What do you think of Miss Gerry?" persisted Mrs. Darrah.

Miss Nunally paused with her hands clasped behind her. She did not smile in the least as she replied:

"Think of Miss Gerry? I think a thousand things; and five hundred of those things contradict the other five hundred."

Mrs. Darrah sat upright, as she did when particularly interested.

"That is exactly as it is with me!" she cried. "How strange! But, Portia, I'm sure I know the secret of it all."

"Do you? Then I wish you would tell me; for I don't know it," was the response.

"It is this—do hand me that blue notebook—are you listening?"

"I am certainly listening. Don't put me off like one of your continued stories."

Mrs. Darrah did not notice this remark. She held her pencil poised over her book.

"Miss Gerry is a New-England girl."

Portia nodded impatiently.

"She was brought up by a typical New-England woman."

Another impatient nod.

"But," said Mrs. Darrah with great impressiveness, "Miss Gerry had a great-grandfather who was anything but a New-England man."

Portia began walking again.

"That is very convenient," she said. "When I do anything evil I shall ascribe the tendency to some grandparent; but when I do anything good, which rarely happens to me, I will say the deed comes from my own individual self. I suppose we have individual selves, Aunt Florence, as well as inherited proclivities, haven't we?"

"I don't know," replied Mrs Darrah blankly.

"Then write a book about it," said Portia, flippantly repeating the advice she liked to give her aunt. She turned toward the door. She paused with her face averted. There was a decided look of pain on that face, but her tone was still flippant as she said:

"I could sometimes wish most earnestly that I had had a great-grandfather; and that people would remember him when they judge me. Good-night, Aunt Florence."

Mrs. Darrah gazed at the drapery that had fallen over the door by which her niece had left her.

She was thinking that it would be a great deal better if Portia did care a little for Major Root, since she was going to marry him. But she concluded her thought by saying to herself:

"It is her own choice, however," and then she added, "It was Miss Gerry's choice to forge."

And by this time she had fully decided not to make any entry in her notebook. When the mind travels in a "vicious circle" the mind is not in a condition to make clear notes upon a topic.

Meanwhile the subject of this conversation was lying with enforced stillness upon her bed.

She had been sure that she could not sleep, but she knew that she must assume the position for sleep. She held herself almost rigid until the noises in the hotel had gradually subsided, and she could hear distinctly the swelling of the tide on the outside of the island opposite the city.

When she had been awake in the cabin where she had been living, she had always listened for the sound of the tide. She liked to hear it. In the midst of her happiness it had made her still happier. Now she wondered that, in her wretchedness, this roar of the waves should make her still more wretched.

Her thoughts followed her mother through every mile of the desolate journey. Her thoughts leaped constantly to the end of that journey; to the dreary farmhouse where her father was lying ill; or perhaps he was lying dead. Dead. That word came to her incessantly, until at last it was like the toll of a bell in her ears. She felt that she could not wait and live until she could hear. But she must live.

When her mother had left her Salome had longed for the presence of Moore as for something that should partially assuage the agony she felt at parting, and at parting for such a cause.

She had never been separated from her mother a week in her life. Constant familiarity and intercourse had knit their love into something stronger even than such love usually is. It was not merely a parting; Salome felt that it was a rending. She stretched out her arms in the darkness.

"I cannot bear it," she whispered.

Oh, happy is that human being who has never yet had occasion to cry, "I cannot bear it!"

But we bear things. Somehow we bear them; though that endurance leaves us forever after with a mark upon us.

So Salome lay there. She thought many thoughts, but she seemed to herself to be thinking only of her father and mother. She remembered how her mother had told her to be truthful. The girl prayed fervidly that it might be given to her to speak the truth. Unconsciously she used the old phraseology that she had heard in the pulpit at home, "that it might be given to her." She believed that the prayer brought her spirit yet nearer her mother.

It was very dark. But under the door of the room leading into Mrs. Darrah's chamber there was a faint bar of light.

Once the girl heard a swift dash of rain on the little balcony outside of her window. The sound made her want to get up and go out and stand in that balcony so that the rain might fall upon her. The window was widely open, and it let in the sweetness of the Florida night. Salome heard a bird nestle among the leaves of a magnolia that now and then, in the breeze, touched the sash. She heard the bird's indistinct murmur, as if it were dreaming of its daylight song.

Being young and well, Salome after midnight fell asleep. But she slept lightly, and did not, when she wakened, think she had slept at all.

The door under which there had been a bar of light was now open, and a soft brilliance filled her room.

Mrs. Darrah was standing in her wrapper near the girl's bed.

"I could not sleep," she said gently, "and I was sure you were awake and suffering."

Salome sat up quickly. She pushed her hair back from her face. She could not help holding out her hands, which were instantly taken.

"You are so kind," murmured Salome. She tried not to sob; and the effort seemed to hurt her more than the sob itself would have done.

Looking at the figure sitting there in its white gown, being aware of the struggle Salome was making that she might be calm, Mrs. Darrah for the next few moments entirely forgot that she was an authoress with an inexhaustible craving for "material." She was only a woman whose kind heart was deeply touched. Still it could not be expected that she should become unconscious of the absorbing curiosity which this girl roused in her.

"You are worrying; you are grieving," she said.

As she spoke she sat down on the bedside. "If we could only attain to a philosophy whereby our intensity of feeling might come only upon joyous occasions." She spoke as if to herself. Salome did not attempt a reply. She sat there trembling both from chilliness and from excitement. She was glad Mrs. Darrah had come in. The voice and the touch of a sympathetic human being were much to her just now. She wanted to speak, to give words to the dreadful anxiety upon her; but she remained silent. It did not appear to her that she had any right to afflict this woman who was kind to her.

Finally, however, she asked in a whisper:

"Mrs. Darrah, do you think I can bear it?"

"Certainly you can. When you are older you will be astonished at the number of things you have borne, and that you can still be happy."

"Is that true?" piteously. "But you know my mother will be suffering, and I not near to comfort her. I can always comfort my mother."

The last sentence was broken by a heavy sob. Salome withdrew her hands and pressed them upon her chest as she used to do when her breath came painfully from another cause.

"And if I should never see my father again!——"

Here the agony in the young face showed so plainly, even in that light, that Mrs. Darrah said with some sternness:

"It is wicked of you to yield like this. You will presently be wrought almost into an irresponsible state."

Salome made a great effort. She even smiled as she said:

"Mother says we are always responsible, and that we can bear anything; and that really God loves us, only it doesn't always seem as if He did. My mother is so strong, Mrs. Darrah."

Salome turned toward her pillow and put her head down upon it.

"I beg your pardon," she went on in a moment, "but I have been lying awake and I 'got all worked up,' as they say at home. I am going to behave better now."

"That's right. Let me give you something to quiet you. You can't hear from home for two days at least; and you must rest."

But Salome would have no sleeping draught. She had something of her mother's horror of opiates. She thanked Mrs. Darrah fervently. That lady bent down and kissed the girl's cheek, and then she walked out of the room.

An hour later, being wakeful and uneasy, she softly stepped back to that bed. The girl lying upon it was sleeping.

The next day Portia came for Salome to go driving with her, but Mrs. Darrah announced that she intended to dictate a great deal.

"Work is the best thing for Miss Gerry now," she said.

Salome looked gratefully at her employer. Miss Nunally went her ways and Salome sat at the desk hour after hour while Mrs. Darrah dictated in the most copious manner.

The amanuensis was not in a condition to take in the meaning of the words she wrote, or she would have known there was very little meaning in them, and she would have suspected that her companion was only spinning sentences to keep her busy.

At last Mrs. Darrah looked at her watch. She suddenly remembered that her niece had once told her that Mr. Moore was in the habit of walking home with Miss Gerry after her work.

But since Miss Gerry did not now go out beyond the Maria Sanchez—at this point in her thoughts Mrs. Darrah asked abruptly:

"Do you expect to see that young man to-day?"

"You mean Mr. Moore?"

"Certainly. There is no other young man in the world, is there?" smiling slightly.

"Perhaps he is waiting for me," was the reply. "He doesn't know that my mother has gone."

"Does not?" in surprise. "Well, go to the post-office for me. He is no doubt lurking somewhere. Tell him to call here after this. Now go."

But Moore was not lurking anywhere near.

Salome walked swiftly to the postoffice. She would not acknowledge to herself how her heart sank as she went on. And she would not look either to the right or left.

She was surprised to find a note from Moore telling her that business had called him to Palatka again; that he might be gone a few days. The note was rather cold; only a last sentence contained a passionate regret that he must go without seeing her. And he knew nothing of her father's illness.

Salome hurried on to the Plaza and sat down upon one of the benches, holding this note in her clasped hands. Her heart was so heavy that she could hardly think. She was dully thankful that she was, in a way, stupefied. She did not want to think.

She did not know when she should see Moore. A few days he might be gone. A few days sounded like a few years. And she needed him so. That strong, robust cheerfulness of his; that protecting and sustaining tenderness—and he was to be gone a few days. Everything might happen in that time.

Yes, she was truly grateful that she was partially demented.

She saw vaguely the people passing in front of her. She heard vaguely their voices.

She began to make an accurate calculation of the number of hours that surely must pass before she could receive that telegram from her mother.

Still absorbed in this calculation, she walked back to the hotel and to her own room.

It seemed to her that she kept up this study all the next day when she wrote almost incessantly for Mrs. Darrah.

At last the telegram arrived. Salome was surprised at her own strength when it was put in her hand, and she opened the envelope.

"Better than I expected. Will write."

Those were the words she read. She turned with a little cry toward Portia, who had brought the message, and who was standing watchfully near. Salome thrust the paper toward Miss Nunally, and then ran to her own room.

When at last she came back her face had such an expression of thankfulness and hope that Portia could not bear it, and walked away.

"Why should we all suffer with that girl in this way, and rejoice too?" impatiently asked Miss Nunally of herself. "There is no reason in it. And she no better than she should be. No, there is no reason in it."

Mrs. Gerry's promised letter came at the earliest possible moment. It was concise. It said that Mr. Gerry did not seem dangerously ill, and that Salome need not worry. It bade the girl find a cheap but comfortable lodgings, for they could not accept so much from Mrs. Darrah. Mr. Gerry might need his wife's care for some weeks, and it would not do for Salome to remain at the Ponce de Leon. Still, Mrs. Gerry might be able to return in a couple of weeks. It was too soon yet for her to be able to judge. She was glad that she had not allowed her daughter to come home with her. It was very cold; it was sleighing. There was so much snow that the roads had been "broken out."

Salome shivered as she read. But she laughed also. She was sure now that her father would soon be better, and her mother would come back to her, perhaps in two weeks. Even when Mrs. Darrah tried to remind her that often typhoid fever was of long duration, Salome could not be depressed. She said she felt almost certain that her mother would be with her in two weeks; and when she had this feeling about anything it was nearly sure to come to pass.

In two days Salome had another letter; this time it was only a note. It prayed the child to take care of herself, and it commanded her not to worry.

Salome read this in her room at the back of a house on Bravo-st.; for she had lost no time in leaving the Ponce de Leon, as her mother had directed.

This room was small, and the one window looked on nothing particular. But nothing mattered so long as her mother was away.

The girl read this note so many times that the words lost all meaning. But they had left a deep gloom upon her. She did not know why they had done so.

She put on her hat and hurried out of doors. When she was in trouble or when she was in joy, Salome wanted to be under the sky. She could not bear a roof above her.

She walked quickly among the little highways until Artillery-st. had led her to George-st. Then, without any intention, she sped along in the direction of the railway station.

Moore had not returned. He had written every day, however, and she had replied briefly. But she had told him nothing of her loneliness or anxiety. It seemed to her it would be like pleading for her to do so.

As she walked the thought of her lover came to her with a sudden sharpness of longing. She heard the train from Jacksonville coming in. She was now within a few rods of the station. What if he were upon that train?

She hesitated an instant. Then she hastened forward. She was on the platform as the train slowed up. She stood back a little, now fully expecting to see Moore alight. She was already aware of the expression that would come to his face when he saw her. Yet she shrank a little, asking herself if she were bold. Would he think she was bold?

He had written that he might come at any time now.

It was not Moore whom Salome saw stepping from the car nearest her. It was Walter Redd who put foot on the platform. He held a satchel which the girl, with a thrill, recognized as her mother's satchel. She saw him turn and help a woman behind him. Then she saw that the woman was her mother, pale, worn, exhausted.

In an instant the girl had glided among the people. She reached her mother and took her arm, pressing it to her side.

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A QUAINT WEDDING GIFT.

From The Manchester Times.

A watch which the Kaiser is giving as a wedding present to his sister, Princess Margaret of Prussia, on her marriage with Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse has a curious history. It originally belonged to Queen Louise of Prussia, the mother of Kaiser William I. The watch was looted by French soldiers after one of the victories which practically placed Berlin as a conquered city in the hands of Napoleon's troops. Being taken to Strasbourg, it was, a year or two later, won as a prize in a barrack lottery by the cook of the officers' mess. This man gave the watch to his sister, who subsequently obtained a domestic position in the Palace of Potsdam, where Queen Louise, noticing the watch in the woman's possession, recognized it as her own, and obtained repossession of it in exchange for a generous sum of money. The late Empress Augusta intrusted the watch to the present Emperor, with an expression of her wish that it might always remain the property of a Prussian princess.

DEVOURING AFFRONTS.

From The Manchester Times.

The most miserable of lives, probably, is that of the "barnstormer" or commedian who goes about with others in a company performing in small towns and villages. Not infrequently these people encounter audiences which express deserved contempt for them in ways which are not kind. "I suppose," said a friend of one of these performers at the close of one of his expeditions, "that you get pretty much everything thrown at you?" "Oh, yes; apples, principally. And now and then turnips, and frequently potatoes." "And occasionally cabbages, I suppose?" "Unfortunately, we were seldom hit by a cabbage." "Unfortunately? What do you mean by that?" "Why, bless your soul, it was the best luck we had when people threw those things at us. We had so little to eat that we were thoroughly glad to swallow their insults."

THE OLD MAN'S REGRET.

From The Boston Transcript.

Apropos of quaint speeches, they tell of a well-known player, lately called to the far South to attend his father's funeral. Sitting alone after the ceremonies were over, lost in sad musing, to him entered an old darky servant. A yearning to say the kind and appropriate thing was in every line of the kind old black face. "An', O Mars' Charlie," said he, "O Mars' Charlie, 'pears like dis is moughty serious fo' yo' po' pa!"

ZOLA ON MARRIAGE.

From The London Globe.

Emile Zola, in a curious article entitled "How Folks Marry," expresses extreme disapproval and disgust of the French marriage system. He contrasts with a good deal of rough power the different lives led, after the age of ten years old, of the boys and girls who till that time had been playmates and leading practically the same existence. After this happy natural sort of life the paths of the brother and sister widely diverge; the son goes to the lycée, which has been described as an "Inky Styx," where some may swim but many drown, whilst the daughter is either brought up in a tender sheltered home or sent to a good educational convent, where she is, if possible, even more protected from outside evil influences than when under her mother's wing. M. Zola makes it quite clear that he leans to the American system of education. It would be interesting to know what course he pursues with his own children, two bright-faced little people who were much en evidence at the marriage of Leon Daudet to Jeanne Hugo.

A NEW IDEA IN APARTMENT HOUSES.

From The Philadelphia Record.

With practically all the necessities and luxuries of life within an elevator ride of one's parlor, the structure planned by Architect Willis G. Hale will be a town under a single roof. Mr. Hale's completed plans shows a great house of a thousand rooms. Whether the edifice will be ten or fourteen stories high depends upon which site is finally selected.

The entire first floor of the building will be given up to stores and offices, all of which will open upon a rotunda, or arcade, which will be a thoroughfare or general meeting place. All manner of public conveniences, such as a large and well-appointed café, spacious reading rooms, consultation booths and parlors will be provided. Beside there will be a telephone and telegraph office, news stand, a stenographer, stock ticker, bulletin boards and writing desks at convenient points. In the basement a Rathskeller will be fitted up, along with a complete Turkish bath, gymnasium, swimming pool, barber shop, bowling alley and shuffle-board outfit, the remaining space being given up to the engines, boilers, dynamos, coal bins and store rooms.

The second floor will be given up entirely to a billiard hall, a large assembly room for meetings, banquets and other entertainments, public and private parlors and single rooms.

All the floors above the second, except the topmost, will be divided into suites of from two to seven rooms, which will rent for sums ranging from $20 to $60 per month. Some of these suites will include a kitchen and bath, others will have a bath but no kitchen; while still others will have a kitchen without a bath, the idea being that those who desire it can do their own cooking and those without baths can patronize the public baths in the building. On the top floor the main dining rooms, kitchen and laundry will be located, all being reached by the four elevators opening upon the rotunda. Heat and light will be furnished those who desire it, but as extras, so that the tenant can regulate his expenses to suit himself in this as well as other particulars.

The stores on the first floor will be rented only to merchants who will agree to supply such goods as the tenants would be likely to require, and no two stores will be rented to persons in the same line of business.

The new flat house will be called "The Universal." One capitalist will invest $40,000 in the enterprise, and another has agreed to subscribe $60,000. Mr. Hale is confident that the necessary total will be forthcoming as soon as the subscription list is offered to the public.

Mr. Hale is now pushing the plans for the Augusta apartment house, to be erected at the southeast corner of Spruce and Sixteenth sts.; the Lorraine, which will occupy the site of the old Lincoln Market, at Broad-st. and Fairmount-ave., and the auditorium to be built at Twenty-third and Chestnut sts., all of which are sure to be built during the coming year.

NOT TO BE FOOLED.

From The Detroit Free Press.

The tramp wanted something to eat and the lady of the house wanted the snow cleaned off.

"Can you work?" she inquired.

"Yes, ma'am," he answered with some degree of doubt, "if I am given something to do that I'm handy at."

"Well, I want this snow shovelled away."

"I'm afraid, ma'am, I can't do that kind of work."

"What kind can you do?"

"I'm mighty handy, ma'am, with a lawn-mower, and if you want your lawn mowed I'm just the man to do it."

He thought the old gag would go, but somehow it didn't.

"That's just the thing," she said exultingly. "You'll find the lawn-mower over there in the barn and you can mow the whole of the yard."

THE COLUMBIAN EXPRESS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD makes the tour of the Keystone State in broad daylight. The wild mountain scenery viewed from this train is peculiarly attractive. The train leaves New-York at 9:00 a. m.

He started to say something.

"Oh, yes, I know there's snow on it," she chipped in, "but you can mow right under it if you don't want to take it off, and I'll get somebody else to do that."

"Madame," he said, "you are cruel," and he stalked out with dignity in his tread, and the cruel creature laughed.

BRIGNOLI, THE TENOR.

SOME OF HIS ODD CHARACTERISTICS.

ANECDOTES OF HIS LIFE, GATHERED FROM MEN WHO KNEW HIM WELL—HIS ANGER AND HIS ECCENTRICITIES.

A remarkable and peculiar man in many ways was Pasquale Brignoli, the great tenor, or "Don Pasqualino" Brignoli, as he liked to be called. "Pasquale" sounded harsh to him, whereas there was sentiment and refinement in "Don Pasqualino." In his later years he took offence when addressed by the former name. He came of an excellent Neapolitan family, was a gentleman by birth and education, and in America was a welcome guest in the homes of people of high social influence. Some anecdotes are contributed here by men who knew him intimately, and they will give an idea of what manner of man he was.

Signor Ardavani, well remembered in New-York as a barytone of considerable merit and a capable teacher of vocal music, had a bad temper and a jealous disposition that could see nothing good in a rival. He could not like Brignoli, and never was known to say a kind word of him. Brignoli, in his proud way, always looked over Ardavani's head, which only widened the breach between them. The barytone, finding himself in reduced circumstances, was forced to borrow $50 with which to pay the rent of his house. Several friends failed him, and in a moment of desperation he called on Brigeoli for the loan.

"You must have this money to-day?" said the tenor. "You have no friend who will lend to you?"

Ardavani assured him that he had tried several without success, and only came to him as a last resort.

"But," urged Brignoli, "you must try again. You will find some one who will lend to you."

"You are the only man in the city whom I could ask now," said Ardavani.

"But $50 is a great deal of money. Are you sure you have no friend who will lend you?"

"I have none," said Ardavani. "If I do not get the money my wife and my child will be turned out of doors."

"Then," Brignoli returned, "I will lend you, but on one condition. Here is $50. Take it. But remember, you must continue to talk about me as you have done in the past. You must never say a good word of me so long as you live, and you must never return the money. There, take it. Go! Get out at once, if you please. Go!"

Ardavani promised, took the money and departed.

In Philadelphia, Nilsson, on a certain occasion when "Il Trovatore" was to be sung, disappointed the manager, who was none other than dear old Max Strakosch, and after much persuasion Brignoli was induced to go to the front and make an explanation to the audience. He began thus:

"Ladies and gentlemen, Madame Nilsson is a little hoarse this evening"—pronouncing hoarse as if it were "horse." The audience began to laugh, whereupon he stopped. "What is the matter with you?" he cried, filling with anger. The laughter increased with his discomfiture, and, muttering under his breath, he stalked off the stage.

On another occasion Bianchi, the noted teacher, went on the stage to see Brignoli, whom he found pacing up and down like a madman, humming over his part.

"Why, Brig, what is the matter with you? Are you nervous?" he asked.

"Yes, I am nervous," was the reply, as he walked harder and faster than ever.

"But, Brig, you ought not to be nervous. I've heard you sing the part 200 times. I heard you sing it thirty years ago."

"Thirty years ago! Who are you that should know so much?"

"Who am I? You know who I am, and I know who you are."

"Very well; you know what I am, but I am sure you do not know what you are, and if you wish I will tell you. You are a fool!"

No man could have been more sensitive about his age. He tried by every means in his power to conceal it. He could not bear to think that he was considered old. A sweet young woman, thinking to say something complimentary, remarked:

"Signor Brignoli, I have known you ever since I was a little girl."

Turning upon her in a fury he replied:

"Yes, and I have known you ever since I was a little boy!"

She could think of nothing else to say and walked away, leaving him to nurse his wrath.

Clara Louise Kellogg's company, of which Brignoli was a leading member, was "billed" for Rochester. Major Pond was the manager. The house was packed to the doors. At the last moment a dispatch was received from Miss Kellogg announcing her indisposition. Major Pond was almost in despair, but decided to go on with the concert if the other artists would support him. All willingly agreed except Brignoli, who pranced up and down the stage trying his song. Mr. Pond urged him and argued with him, but to no purpose. Brignoli was obdurate; he had a cold, his voice was bad and he could not possibly sing that evening. At last threats were tried.

"See here, Brig," said the Major, "I don't often get mad, but when I do I am a dangerous man. I insist that you sing to-night an extra song."

Brignoli walked up to him and looked in his face.

"You say you are a dangerous man, Mr. Pond?" he said. "Very well; then, if you be a dangerous man I go away." And buttoning up his coat he left the theatre and went to his hotel. Tagliapietra, Adamowsky, Miss Clara Poole and others were willing to go on with the performance, so Major Pond did not despair. Tagliapietra, after singing a song, went to the hotel and persuaded Brignoli to return. The tenor was still in a rage, and his selection proved it, for he sang "La Mia Letizia Infondere," which in English means "I would like to transmit my happiness," giving a very broad translation.

Though one of the most nervous singers that ever went before an audience, Brignoli in his way was one of the most conscientious. He refused to sing if he did not feel that his voice was in a condition to do justice to the song and to himself. He was a firm believer in homoeopathy, and was never without two small vials, one containing bryonia and the other spongia, which he used alternately. His body servant, Barbagelata, usually administered the drug. On one occasion it happened that Barbagelata gave him a larger quantity of bryonia than he had asked for, but, like the faithful servant that he was, he informed his master of the mistake. Brignoli was furious. He thought he was a dead man. He raved and stormed and swore, as only he could swear. Barbagelata, thinking to relieve his mind, swallowed the entire contents of the vial.

"You see, Signor Brignoli, there is no harm in the medicine," he said.

"Ah, my God!" cried Brignoli, forgetting his own danger at once, "you are a dead man. What have you done?"

All the doctors in the neighborhood were sent for, and all had to testify that the drug was harmless before Brignoli would believe that Barbagelata could survive.

He was intensely jealous of all other tenors, never admitting for an instant that any one of them could sing even passably well. When the handsome, talented Tom Karl burst upon the New-York stage Brignoli turned up his nose.

"What do you think of Tom Karl?" Tagliapietra asked him one night.

"Oh, he is a very nice little boy," he replied, with a shrug. "I like him very much, but he has missed his vocation. I think he was born to be a policeman!"

Karl was tall and of fine proportions, and was singing at the time with Titiens in "La Favorita."

JOSE ZORRILLA.

THE LATE POET LAUREATE OF SPAIN.

Not for many a day has the public of the Spanish capital made so impressive a demonstration in honor of a single individual as on January 24 and 25, at the funeral of Jose Zorrilla. On the former day the much-loved poet's body lay in state in the great Sessions Hall of the Spanish Academy. It reposed upon a catafalque completely covered with flowers, among them being a beautiful wreath personally laid at the foot of the bier by the Queen Regent. More than 50,000 persons, including all the Cabinet Ministers and the foremost statesmen, scholars, generals and prelates of Spain, and thousands, also, of the humblest poor, reverently filed past, looking upon the features of the poet for the last time, and nearly all of them uttering some incoherent word of regret, praise or farewell.

The funeral occurred on the 25th, when an enormous multitude followed the honored dead to the grave in the Cemetery of St. Justus. Besides the members of the Cabinet, many ex-Ministers, the municipal authorities, commissions and representatives from the universities, the Spanish Academy, the Academy of History, the Athenaeum Club, the Society of Authors and Artists and many others attended. The pallbearers were the Director-General of Public Instruction, representing the Government; the Mayor of Valladolid, the poet's native town, and six representative members of the literary and artistic societies and of the press. All the public functionaries were in uniform. The mourners on foot were followed by many carriages, among which were one from the Royal Palace and the State carriages of the Ministers and other authorities. Pickets of mounted Civil Guards, which led and brought up the rear of the imposing procession, formed the only military display.

Zorrilla was the poet laureate of Spain, technically as well as by virtue of genius. The ceremony of his coronation took place in the famous old city of Granada something less than four years ago, and it was a festival which commanded the attention of all Spain. The Queen sent a personal representative, a great host of Grandees were there, every man of importance in Spanish literature and art was there, and the Alhambra was the scene of banquets and other functions of the most splendid character. This was but tardy recognition of the greatness of one who in earlier years had been sorely neglected and ill-treated.

Few literary men have had a more picturesque and varied career than he. Born in 1817, and educated for the bar at Valladolid and Toledo, he early showed a bent for poetical composition, and at the age of twenty sprang into public notice in a most extraordinary manner. It was, as described by M. de Tannenberg, at the grave of a young and promising author who had committed suicide. The whole of literary Madrid followed the hearse; speeches were made by able orators, and at the moment when everybody was turning away from the grave a young, unknown man, with an inspired face and long, flowing hair, was pushed to the front by some friends, and read in a musical voice which was every now and again almost broken by emotion, a piece of poetry. Some hours later, with the usual rapidity with which news is spread at Madrid, Jose Zorrilla's name was in every mouth.

Seven years of hard work, of incessant production, followed, and in 1845 Zorrilla had become the most popular of the writers of the time, having written ten volumes of verse and some thirty plays, with all of which he had parted to his publishers for trifling sums—a fact which he only regretted when his father, ruined by the Carlist conspiracy, died in 1849, leaving, instead of his former fortune, nothing but debts. The poet went to Paris, and thence to Mexico, where he was enthusiastically received, and where for twelve years he lived without writing anything, devoting his time to shooting expeditions and bodily exercise, till private business called him back to Spain, after he had for some time been director of the Court Theatre in Mexico, under the special patronage of Emperor Maximilian. Then, for the third time, he began life again under what were by no means favorable conditions.

He returned to this country an old man, whom everybody believed to have been dead for many years. Romanticism was no longer the literary fashion, and there was no taste for poetry; it was the era of a great revolution. There was a Zorrilla about whom people talked a great deal, but it was Ruiz Zorrilla, the politician; the poet had been forgotten. But Don Jose took up his pen with courage, and did not think himself above doing the humblest and often the most uncongenial work. A Barcelona publisher had bought in England Dore's illustrations to Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," and Zorrilla undertook to write a volume of original legends to serve as text to the illustrations. Meanwhile his pecuniary position became more and more precarious, till King Amadeus charged him with a mission to Italy in compensation for the fact that the poet's play, "Don Juan Tenorio," was played in every theatre of Spain and South America, year after year, without any compensation being paid to the author. Presently a sudden wave of sympathy with the old man went over the country; the whole press took up his cause, and the best journal in Spain, the "Imparcial," published his memoirs. He went on a lecturing tour, which became a tour of triumphs, through the length and breadth of the land. Castelar's eloquence was employed at court to secure him a pension from the civil list, and while the proposal was considered with characteristic official deliberation the Duchess of Medina-Coeli made a collection among her friends to secure his immediate deliverance from many difficulties.

Shortly before the coronation of Zorrilla, M. de Tannenberg visited him in his home at Valladolid. "I entered," he says, "a very small drawing-room, very dark, hermetically closed to prevent the sun from coming in, dainty, with a profusion of white curtains, and furniture kept under white covers. . . . On a small table several photographs in frames—that of the Emperor Maximilian, of the present Queen Regent, and of Alphonso XII, the latter with an autograph dedication 'to the great poet, Zorrilla, in recognition of his personal disinterestedness.' The sound of an approaching footstep outside made me put down the frame, and in came the poet, with smiling face and outstretched hand.'

"'How short he is!' was my first impression. And he was, indeed, a very little old man, but thin and agile, and his seventy years sat very lightly on him. His head was very fine, with white hair brushed back from the forehead, dreamy eyes and a well-cut mouth; his mustache and beard a l'Imperiale gave him at first sight a military look—the air of a retired general. 'I was expecting you,' he said. 'Castelar had told me that you were coming; you are charmed with our literature, and you have made this pilgrimage to see an old poet? I thank you for coming; how long can you stay with me?'"

M. de Tannenberg had only a day to spare, but he made the best of his time, and was presently introduced into Don Jose's sanctum, where breakfast was laid for the two.

"You must pardon the simplicity of the menu," said the host. "I am alone at home; my wife is taking the waters at Santander, and I have to keep house. I am a very bad housekeeper." His room was a real study. There was not much furniture besides a large table covered with papers, a mahogany desk and two or three chairs; at the back there was an alcove; some hanging lamps were suspended from the wall, but not a single book was to be seen. "His scanty library was in the antechamber; and when in passing I glanced over it I did not notice a single one of the poet's own works. No one could be less inclined than he to make a vain show of books."

Then the two went wandering through the streets of Valladolid, the old man pointing out the beauties and curiosities of the town of which he was a native, and to which, after many years' absence, he had returned to spend life's eventide. Occasionally, as they walked on, a shopkeeper, or an old female hair-dresser, "la coiffeuse de ma femme," engaged Don Jose's attention; to each of them he had something to say which sent them on their way with smiling faces.

"We had a champagne luncheon at his house, together with a band of young students. I was astonished to find my host brimming over with youthful spirits. After luncheon we went into his room, where we were soon engaged in an animated conversation; he, carried away by his enthusiasm, invoked quite a world of reminiscences; I, with a question always on my lips, while through the window there came, together with the characteristic odor of a Spanish kitchen, the song of the kitchen-maids, with the ever-recurring popular refrain——

Noble judge and mayor,
Take the robber's part;
For you have a daughter
Who steals every heart.