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**Conductor Bradley.**  
Conductor Bradley (always may his name be said with reverence) as the swift doom came.  
Smitten to death, a crushed and mangled frame,  
Bánk, with the brake he grasped just where he stood  
To do the utmost that a brave man could,  
And die, if needful, as a true man should.  
Men stooped above him; women dropped their tears  
On that poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,  
Lost in the strength and glory of his years,  
What heard they? To! The glaucous lips of pain,  
Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again:  
"Put out the signals for the other train!"  
No nobler utterance since the world began  
From lips of saint or martyr ever ran,  
Electric, through the sympathies of man.  
Ah, me! how poor and needless seem to this  
The sick-bed dramas of self-consciousness,  
Our sensual fears of pain and hopes of bliss!  
Oh, grand, supreme endeavor! Not in vain  
That last brave act of falling tongue and brain!  
Freighted with life, the downward rushing train,  
Following the wrecked one, as wave follows wave,  
Obeyed the warning which the dead lips gave,  
Others he saved, himself he could not save.  
Nay, the last life he saved. He is not dead  
Who in his record still the earth shall tread  
With God's clear aureole shining round his head.  
We bow as in the dust, with all our pride  
Of virtue dwarfed the noble dead beside.  
God give us grace to live as Bradley died!

## A LEFT-HANDED JOB.

"I never saw but one liberal *gaucherie* in my life," said Frank DeLamare, as we leaned over the balcony and watched the quaint old houses of Panama melting into the receding background of forest; "and this was how it happened. On my first visit to New Orleans, I fell in with an Englishman by the name of Montfort. I had got lost—no very difficult matter in this city, but I was asking my way of a negro, who seemed to know rather less about it than I did myself, when, luckily for me, this fellow Montfort happened to pass by. The moment he saw that I was at a loss, he stepped forward, and very politely offered to pilot me; which he did, going some thirty or forty blocks, and then, when we got to my hotel, of course I couldn't well do less than ask him in; we got talking, and his talk amused me somehow, so that, when he got up to go, I begged him to look me up again when he had nothing better to do. He did so, and in a little while we became pretty intimate—as intimate, at least, as any one could get to be with him. Not that he was what you would call reserved; he would talk freely enough about the things he had seen and done, and the strange places he had visited, and the strange people he had met, and when you came to think it all over afterwards, you would begin to notice that he had not said a word about who he was, or where he came from, or what he did; and although we were so constantly together, I knew no more of him the last day than on the first, except that we were fellow-countrymen."

"Another of his queer ways was doing things that nobody else did, and not things that everybody else did; and that, too, not at all like an affectation, but as if it came quite natural to him. He used to walk the most unheard-of distances in the heat of the day, when all the rest of the town was having a siesta; and he used to bed early in the evening, just when every one else was going out; and then to get up early in the morning, just when every one else was going to bed. Then, on the other hand, he neither smoked nor drank, never played cards, and (which was even more astonishing to the New Orleanser) never made love! At New Orleans, you know, you make love to every woman you meet, as a matter of course; but this fellow (though, to do him justice, he was always perfectly polite to them) seemed hardly to know whether they were women or men."

"You must suppose from all this, though, that he was unpopular. Let a fellow once get a character for that sort of thing, and it's ten to one the women like him all the better for it. Then, too, his feats in the athletic line, and the reports that were afloat of his wonderful adventures, and above all, the kind of mystery that enveloped him, were points in his favor. He wasn't ornamental, certainly—a square, heavy-built fellow, with a big, bushy forehead, and a long, hooked nose, and a hard mouth half-covered by a thick moustache and beard; but he had a strange odor of the way, picturesque style, and talking that was rather attractive; and with all he had seen, and all he had read, he was worth listening to. But it will save you a great infliction, if, instead of describing him any further, I just quote you part of a conversation we had one day."

"I suppose you'll be here some time yet?" I inquired.  
"Oh, likely," he answered; "I've been here six weeks already, and that's too long for any man to stay in one place, without special object. New scenery renews individuals, just as new blood renews races; and besides, I've been far too comfortable here as it is."

"What the deuce do you mean?" I asked, fairly puzzled.  
"I mean," he said, "that too much ease relaxes the muscles of the mind as well as those of the body; you need hard work, and danger, and adversity, to come and find cold water on you, and rub you down with rough towels, and stir your blood into action once more. When anything goes wrong with me, it's just like a shower bath; and after the first shock, I feel ten times fresher and stronger than ever; but prolonged enjoyment, with nothing to ruffle it, is not good for any one. Just think what a burden life would be, if there were nothing to fight against!"

"Well," said I, "I really couldn't help it; there's no fear but I'll have enough to fight against, if you always go in the teeth of established usages as you've done here!"  
"Very true," he answered, as coolly as if I had paid him a compliment. "I can't expect every one to think as I do, and very likely it would be a bad thing

if they did. But when a thing has got to be done, done it must be!"  
"I can't give you an idea of the way he brought out that last sentence; every word sounded like a nail driven into a wall. I didn't say any more to him that time."  
"Now I must tell you, that at this time the bell of New Orleans was a certain Miss Georgiana De Courcy, the handsomest girl, and the greatest heiress in Louisiana, and—what counts a good deal in the Southern States—of one of the oldest families in the South. She was certainly a splendid woman—without an atom of heart or conscience, beautiful, a leopard, and a peacock, and greedy of admiration as a well as a woman; one of the finest creatures altogether that I ever saw in my life! Well, as you may imagine, before she had been in town a month, all the young swells of the place were at her feet; and the most notable of all was a young Frenchman, Henri Le Vaillant, by name, a man of good family, and originally of good fortune; but he had contrived to run through such a lot of it before he came of age, that as Paddy says in the song—

"When he came to man's estate,  
It was all the estate he had."

This being the case, it was only natural that he should think it a good idea to recoup himself by winning the favor (and fortune) of Miss De Courcy; and, to give the devil his due, he was just the man to make any girl like him if he had a mind that way. To begin with, he was a very handsome fellow—slim and graceful as any statue in Rome, and with *le nez du diable*, which you see so often among high-caste Frenchmen; then he could sing first-rate songs, and dance like any Taglion; and, to crown all, he was the best rider, and what was more to the purpose, the best fencer in the town. Indeed, he had picked so many men in various quarrels, that his chums, in a kind of chaff upon his double capacity of lady-killer and duellist, nick-named him "Perce-cœur." So, when it was known that the "Pierce-heart" had got his eye upon Miss De Courcy, you may think that her other suitors began to fret about it.

"Now it so happened that I had brought an introduction to the girl's father, Colonel De Courcy, whom she ruled as completely as she ruled every one else, and he had invited me to a grand ball that he gave a little after midnight, and I was, of course, invited. My first sight of Le Vaillant—a slight, delicate-featured man, with a little black moustache, but supple as a grey-hound and active as a tiger. Of course, he was horribly conceited, as these fellows always are; but barring that, he struck me as a man who might do me some good, and I couldn't help thinking that if he really meant business as regarded the De Courcy, he stood well to make his game."

"Well, the ball was like every other ball—plenty of heat, and crush, and chatter; lots of dancing and flirting, and a few champagne, a few people were talking to, and a great many better worth leaving alone. About two in the morning (having just made my escape from a dreadful woman who had never been to Paris, and would insist upon knowing all about it), I went out upon the balcony, and, as I was leaning over, I came bump against another man who was just coming in. I turned round to apologize, and saw—Montfort!"

"I don't think I was ever more taken back in all my life. Here was a fellow who neither danced, drank, nor flirted; who was rather reserved, a few people were talking to, and a great many better worth leaving alone. About two in the morning (having just made my escape from a dreadful woman who had never been to Paris, and would insist upon knowing all about it), I went out upon the balcony, and, as I was leaning over, I came bump against another man who was just coming in. I turned round to apologize, and saw—Montfort!"

"Hollo, Montfort!" said I, "isn't this rather a violation of your principle?"  
"What would you have? One must do in Rome as the Romans do. Here it's the fashion to go to balls, and I go to them. In the Andes, where I'm going presently, it's the fashion to climb peaks, and scramble along rock-ledges, and I shall climb and scramble with the rest. Good-night—I must be going."  
"This," says Dickens, says something was "piled" it up rather too mountainous." The idea of Montfort, of all men on earth, doing a thing because other people did it, was a little too good; I'd as soon have believed in Tom Sayers joining the P.-E. Society. And my doubts were not dispelled by a fragment of conversation which I overheard just then from two men who were standing on the veranda a little way off.

"Who was that fellow who was out here just now with Miss De Courcy?"  
"Don't know; but fancy it's the same man who takes those wonderful walks—Moffat, or Montfort, or some such name."

"Well, he seemed to be making the most of his time anyhow." And the two passed on.

As for me, I went home very much out of temper with myself. I had been vent to brag that nobody could throw dust in my eyes; and yet this fellow Montfort had done it as thoroughly as one man ever did to another. To judge by present appearances, his former show of asceticism must have been all humbug; and upon my word, I was rather sorry for it. To me this man was a kind of rare specimen—a *Codex Situations*, a new hieroglyphic; and I valued him as much as a diamond. I thought that the one, or Sir Henry Rawlinson's other. In this easy-going age, bristling with every conceivable invention for making man indolent and luxurious, it was something to find even one living creature who seemed to defy, without an effort, every determination that can assail humanity; and now it appeared all at once that he wasn't the man I took him for. The only thing to be done was to find out at once how the case really stood; so, directly after breakfast, I posted off to Montfort's quarters, and found him near the window (as fresh as if he had been in bed all night) writing a letter with his left hand.

"Hollo!" said I, "is your right arm paralyzed with handling lemonade?"  
"No; but it's as well to keep in practice, in case I should hurt the other hand. That's one thing my travels have taught me—to be as handy with my left as with my right."

"Why, do you mean to say that you can carry and write and handle a pen or a single-stick, as well with one hand as with the other?"  
"Pretty nearly, so far as I have tried yet; one of these days I'll give you a specimen."  
(So he did—in a way that I little dreamed of.)  
"Well, look here," said I, coming to the point, "aren't you a pretty fellow to be by way never making love, and all that sort of thing—and then to go working on a veranda at two in the town?"  
"As I spoke, I looked keenly in his face for some sign of confusion. I might as well have looked at the Great Sphinx."

"Ah! you think I'm in love with Miss De Courcy?" said he, with a quiet laugh. "Well, you're not the only one who does me the honor to hold that opinion; but you rate my good taste too high. The whole of one's own will, an interesting study; but as for my admiring her, happily, even public opinion cannot turn that fiction into a fact!"

"Do you mean to tell me, then," cried I, "that you can't fall in love, even if you tried?"  
"I mean to tell you," he answered, drawing himself up, and looking really grand for the moment, "that I should not count life worth having, if I were overcome, even for one moment, by any influence that I could not shake off, which is what I understand by love. The greatest pleasure of life, take my word for it, is the feeling of being in love. But I now began to suspect (not for the first time) that my friend Montfort wasn't quite right in the head; and when you hear the rest of the story, I think you'll agree with me."

"Well, for about a month after that everything went on as usual. The season was well advanced, and I had my hands full—balls, masquerades, musical soires, private theatricals, and what not. Once or twice I lighted upon Montfort in the very thick of it; but for the most part he seemed rather to fight shy of going about, in spite of his theory about being in love. However, he occupied a good deal of my attention just then; for, to tell the truth, I was rather riled at the way he had thrown dust in my eyes; and I determined to find out, by hook or by crook, whether he was really upon his feet, or whether he was just a humbug, as well have said. But I wasn't to get on so easily. I had to look as sharp as I might, and I was just as wide at the end of the month as at the beginning. One thing I found out, though—that Montfort and Le Vaillant liked each other about as well as a badger and a terrier, and that the least thing would kindle a row between them. Le Vaillant had managed, by dint of his duelling renown, to exact a kind of deference from everybody he knew; whereas Montfort made no more of him than it had been a crossing-sweeper, and, indeed, had rather shut him up once or twice, when he was out, and, I must say, extensively. Now, I needn't tell you that you may do anything to a Frenchman rather than make him look small before a whole roomful of people, especially when half of them are ladies. Then, again, Le Vaillant's blustering ways riled Montfort; and so, bit by bit, they came to hate each other like poison."

"Now, I should tell you that while all this was going on, I had become rather thick with Colonel De Courcy, Georgiana's father; not that I had any idea of her, but at that time I was rather mad on sporting, and the old colonel seemed to have hunted and shot every beast that came out of the Ark. So, presently, I was invited to a grand party, and I was just thinking of going up to the house to look for him, when, all at once, just on the other side of the high shrubbery behind which I was standing, I heard voices; and they were the voices of Miss De Courcy and Montfort!"

"Of course, you'll say I was a confounded snob for listening, and I don't deny it; but, at the same time, I could not help it. Through the leaves I could see them standing in the sidewalk; and though they spoke low, I heard every word."

"Mr. Montfort," says she, "I have a great favor to ask of you; and although people call you ungallant, I cannot believe that you will be so unkind as to refuse me. Will you do what I ask?"  
"Talk of witchcraft! you should have heard her voice, and seen the look she gave! It was enough to give a man stark mad; and I know it made me tingle all over, as if I'd fallen into a bed of nettles."

"I await your commands," said Montfort, as coolly as if he'd been reading Euclid. (I couldn't have done it in his place, I know that.)  
"Well," says she, "I find that Mr. Le Vaillant—that young Frenchman whom you met here the other day—has been showing to all his friends a likeness of myself, which I was foolish enough to give him, and has the insolence to boast of it, as if—as if I had—in short, as if more importance might be attached to it than it really deserves. (The way she did that little bit of bashfulness would have made her fortune on the stage.) 'You are the only man whom I can trust to check his impertinence, and all the rest seem afraid of him. May I count upon you to defend my reputation?'"

"She took both his hands in hers, (I suppose to add emphasis to her petition,) and cast her eyes on the ground. It was well that she did; for there came over Montfort's face such a look of killing contempt as made me fairly shake. He drew himself up, as if he could have trampled her under his feet; and for that moment he looked really splendid

—just as I had seen him look when I chuffed at him about being in love with her, the morning after the ball."

"I am at your service," says he, bowing; and with that away he went, without another word. As for me, I stood like a fool for good five minutes before I could recollect myself, the whole thing took me so aback. This was worse than I had ever dreamed of. All that I ever bargained for was a little flare-up between Montfort and the Frenchman, which would blow over and leave all clear again; but here was a far more serious business. Whether the De Courcy had got tired of having Le Vaillant always hanging after her, and wanted to get rid of him, or whether it was only her confounded vanity that was tickled at the idea of setting men fighting about her, I can't tell; but I've always thought (though it seems a horrible thing to say of any woman) that she was tickled at the very idea of not having down to her every one else did, and that she meant to punish him by getting him knocked on the head. Look at it which way I would, it was a very bad business. Apart from my liking for Montfort, I couldn't abide the thought of an Englishman being killed in France, and the whole thing was crowding over it, as they'd be sure to do. And yet—how was I to stop it? I and the other two men were invited that very day to dine with some Virginian bigwig (Fortescue, I think his name was), and then to go to a ball that was to be given at the house of some evening; so that, even if they missed each other at one place, they were sure to meet at the other. Altogether, it really seemed as if the powers for mischief had contrived it; and I went home feeling bad all over."

"Well, to Fortescue's I went, and didn't get near Montfort till dinner was done, but when we turned out to have our smoke in the garden (a famous big place, with a fountain in the middle, and dark shrubberies all round with colored lamps, just like a scene in a theatre), I got hold of him, and, as I was about to say something, at least, to stick by him all the evening, in case of anything happening. But just then, as I'll-luck would have it, who should come swaggering past but that beast Le Vaillant, with his chorus of worshippers about him, and of course that fellow coming up to me, and saying, 'I suppose, then,' said I, 'that if you did fall in love, and she played fast and loose with you, you'd kill yourself?'  
"Not myself," he answered very quietly; and then he put away his waiting, and asked me to come out for a stroll. And so, as you may imagine, dinner was done, but when we turned out to have our smoke in the garden (a famous big place, with a fountain in the middle, and dark shrubberies all round with colored lamps, just like a scene in a theatre), I got hold of him, and, as I was about to say something, at least, to stick by him all the evening, in case of anything happening. But just then, as I'll-luck would have it, who should come swaggering past but that beast Le Vaillant, with his chorus of worshippers about him, and of course that fellow coming up to me, and saying, 'I suppose, then,' said I, 'that if you did fall in love, and she played fast and loose with you, you'd kill yourself?'  
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