

A LESSON IN GRAMMAR.

One night an owl was prowling round Looking for mice, when on the ground He spied a cat, and straightway flew Quite close to it. "To what, to whom?" Quoth he, "may I again ne'er stir, If here, dressed in a coat of fur, I do not see a four legged owl, O, what a very funny fowl!

"You're much mistaken, scornful sir," The cat said, as she ceased to purr; "For though, like one, I often prout About at night, I am no owl. And if I were, why, still would you Be queerer creature of the two; For you look, there's no doubt of that, Extremely like a two legged cat. As for your grammar, 'pon my word (Excuse this giggle), he-be-he-be, It be, it be, it really be, The very worst I ever heard."

THE FAIR UNKNOWN.

The opening of the grand industrial exposition had brought me to the city in the early part of the spring of 1878. Tired from long standing and walking around; more tired still by the shows and wonderful exhibitions of the mighty progress of civilization at home displayed at this exposition, I turned my steps homeward one afternoon earlier than usual. I had taken leave of my friends, making an engagement for a reunion later on in the evening, and directed my course to one of the quiet quarters of the city in which my hotel was situated. The less frequent the bezars and show windows became so much more insignificant became the number of foot passengers on the streets. But it seemed to me a much more stylish looking part of the city than the public drives of the central portion, because here the high, grave looking houses were either government offices or were inhabited by city officials or wealthy private citizens.

Before me walked for some distance a young and elegantly attired lady. At a curve of the street I succeeded in getting a fleeting glimpse of her profile, and felt myself thereby urged to observe carefully even the knot of golden blonde, sunshiny hair, half covered by the dark English hat, as well as the extremely delicate, graceful figure of the still youthful girl. Suddenly her step faltered, she half turned, lingered for a moment, and then walked hastily towards me, past me, and back over the road by which she had just come. Not far ahead of me came sauntering along an officer, with a lady on his arm, gaily chatting and laughing. Could they have frightened my Unknown? A saddened interest stirred within me; I wished to gain some insight into her strange conduct, and therefore made a hasty turn, following her and keeping only a few paces behind.

Then I saw how she pressed the little clenched hand passionately to her heart, and with tears in her violet eyes, and a half sad, half scornful expression, murmured something to herself which my excited imagination fancied to be: "O, foolish heart, why art thou not quiet; why mounts the blood to my cheek, and compels me to turn back lest I betray myself?"

The childish ebullition moved me unconsciously, and a feeling of jealousy stole over me against that officer whom I had involuntarily thought of in connection with this young girl. If I had only dared to address her; but that I could not bring myself to do. She evidently belonged to the first class of society, and nothing was further from my thoughts than a desire to insult or intrude upon her. But fortune favored me. A small package which she had hitherto carried slipped from her arm without her having remarked it. Quickly I picked it up and gave it back to its fair owner, with a few polite words. She looked at me with a surprised, somewhat haughty glance, as I remained standing before her rather longer than was absolutely necessary. Her large, violet, childlike eyes were still filled with tears, and the delicate face was deathly pale.

"I thank you," she said, briefly, taking the package from my hand. But I did not glow myself to be dismissed thus quickly.

"You are not well, my dear young lady," said I. "Will you not command my services?"

Something in my voice, perhaps also my quiet, respectful manner, seemed to inspire her with confidence. She looked at me with wonder in her beautiful, tearful eyes, and said, less curtly than before:

"You are very kind, sir; I would like to have a droschke."

I bowed, and, while she stood at the window of a flower store, I hurried down the street and soon found an empty vehicle, in which I joyfully and with a gentle feeling of expectation of what would happen next, drove back to my little Unknown.

Meanwhile she had regained her self command; only her hand yet trembled as she in entering the carriage hid it lightly in mine, and it felt ice cold through her glove.

"Your residence?" I asked. She named one of the elegant streets in the west end, and as I called the address to the coachman I knew how certain I would be not to forget it myself. I closed the carriage door; she then bowed her lovely head at the open window and thanked me for my service; but she spoke confusedly, and in her embarrassment her pale cheeks colored with a rosy blush, so that she appeared even much more charming than before.

larily. I was a riddle to myself; however, I made the firm resolve to find out by to-morrow some particulars about this new street acquaintance.

A few hours later I sat with a number of pleasant friends in one of the best restaurants under the lindens. The conversation was lively and cheerful, and there were many ladies and gentlemen continually going in and out.

In the neighborhood of the table at which we sat and made ourselves merry was gathered a large party, joyous and gay like ours.

Some young girlish faces before us having attracted me, I involuntarily looked around for my Unknown, but there—yes, certainly, there he was next to the little blonde coquette, with the seductive little snub nose, and the showy white felt hat—the officer of Lutzower street, the same before whom my little friend had taken flight, for although I had no foundation for the idea, since we had met many other men on that street, I could not help thinking of the large, showy, handsome, but utterly base and insolent looking lieutenant of infantry in connection with her.

"Who is that pale officer?" asked I of my friend Erich.

"Where?"

I indicated the direction to him. "The one with the black beard, next to the little blonde lady."

"He?" said Erich, and laughed. "Why, he is the lately betrothed, the handsome Paumwolf. I thought you surely must know him."

"No, no; but what is the story about him?" I inquired.

"Well, nothing more than that yonder blonde has—with much trouble, it must be admitted—captured him for life, after he has caused nearly ninety-nine others to dream of the same happy fate. For myself, I never could have attained such an elegiac calm, after breaking off a love affair. But he has been unfortunate. Young ladies with and without pedigree, with and without money bags, bow down to him, after he has devoted himself to them for half an hour, entirely conquered by his irresistible fascinations. And it is just the same with the old ones. Many, to be sure, allege, indeed, that behind that titanic brow there is nothing but a cornfield, and that a thrashed out one."

While Erich had been speaking my eyes had wandered away from Paumwolf. His pale face, framed in by curling black beard and hair, reminded me, in fact, of the Zeus of Oricoli. To me it was in the highest degree repugnant.

"Enough tears have recently been flowing from beautiful eyes, since his betrothal with Fraulein Josepha Maier has appeared in The Gazette."

"Maier?" I involuntarily asked.

"Yes, yes," laughed Erich; "simply Maier with an 'a', but passably pretty and immensely rich, of course. And since Fraulein Josepha does not look Jewish, Paumwolf can endure that his father-in-law in spe should have formerly been a cloth merchant in Frankfurt-on-the-Main."

The conversation having once turned on the handsome Paumwolf, it did not soon leave the subject. On the other side of our table the people were whispering about him, and one said:

"It is quite incomprehensible to me that he did not rather take little Gerdshof, whom he so recently courted. The girl is of altogether different stock from the Maiers, and she seems to be head over heels in love with him."

"Yes, but the money—the money!" cried another.

"Well, at all events, this one is a blonde, too, and a very rude one," remarked a third. An idea suddenly seized me.

"Where does Fraulein Gerdshof live?" asked I of Erich.

unknown to me. And yet it was not timidity alone that caused the blood to fly like lightning through my veins, which made me remark with almost tender interest the elegant brass plate with the name engraved: "Von Gerdshof." Now! Courage! The bell is pulled! I am in for it!

An old servant dressed in livery answered my ring, and on my asking if the master was at home, took my card and left me with the conventional "I will inquire," but soon returned and opened for me the lofty folding door to the left of the entrance. His assurance that the master would be pleased to see me sounded very consoling to me.

Within the elegantly furnished salon I found the general an old, dignified gentleman, with erect, military bearing, martial but not unfriendly countenance, and a long, gray beard, which, however, was carefully shaved from the broad chin. After I had expressed to him my pleasure at being able to help his daughter in her dilemma, and he had thanked me for the slight service—he seemed to be informed of everything, and to have expected me somewhat—we passed from the usual forms of politeness to a lively conversation that extended over every possible topic. The time passed as if on wings; almost an hour thus passed in chatting with the amiable old gentleman, and yet Fraulein Eveline had not appeared. But when at parting the general said he hoped to see me often at his house during my stay in the city, I could not refrain from pressing his hand in deep, heartfelt gratitude.

Not long afterwards I received a delicately written card—decidedly a lady's—assist that angel, somewhat conventional looking lady in doing the honors of the house—the general's wife had been dead many years—and I could not help admiring the tact and self-possession with which she, in spite of her youth, so charmingly filled the position of hostess. Here she asked an old gentleman after the health of his sick spouse; there she whispered some pleasant remark to a young lady about her tasteful toilet, or repelled a too gallant cavalier with a scornful glance or a saucy answer. With each and all she knew just the right tone to take. She was surrounded by all. Every one flocked about her, who, like an apparition out of a story book, moved around among these modest fashion plates. And yet there lay in her violet eyes, when she believed herself to be unobserved, a sad expression which did not accord with the conventional smile of the sweet, small mouth.

At length the signal for dinner was given. Eveline hid the tips of her dainty fingers on the arm of a tall, blonde cavalier, a cousin of the family. To my great annoyance, my portion was Countess Soundso, no longer in the first bloom of youth. I must add that I had secretly hoped to see Eveline's angelic head at my side. With a man which was certainly not very amiable, I offered the countess my arm and led her to the places designated for us. Though otherwise a most estimable lady, she almost drove me to despair with her loquacity, and while she even before scorp inspired about my recent journey in the East, and expressed a desire to hear something about my last new work, my glance strayed impatiently past the questioner in a vain search for Eveline. I had not had the opportunity to exchange one word with her. She had only nodded to me from across the room, pleasantly and confidently, as to an old acquaintance.

Pretty soon I felt a gentle touch on my arm, and a voice. I only too well remembered asked, shyly, and at the same time meekly:

"Does mein Herr no longer recognize his protégé?"

I turned quickly, and, yes, there indeed was Eveline who had been sitting next to me for full five minutes without my having observed her. My neighbor, the countess, and Eveline's escort, the cousin in the Guards, very soon understood how much they might expect to be entertained by Eveline or myself during the four or five hours passed at the table. How the time sped and what were the general topics of conversation we never knew. But I was entirely happy during the whole time. Not once did I discover in her eyes that melancholy drooping which had before made me anxious. Oh, if I could only succeed in making her forget Paumwolf! To this end, proud thought I concentrated all my mind and efforts. With rapture I noticed how her eyes hung so earnestly on my lips as I told her of my travels, and my restless wandering about from one distant land to another. And when I spoke of my dear solitary Barwalde, with its somber fir trees and its rush grown ponds, of my immense library and the beautiful grand piano which I often trusted to the hands of my overseer, just to have some accompanying instrument to my beloved violoncello; when I said, "Surely Fraulein Eveline also plays on the piano, and very much better, too, than my overseer," a thoughtful smile spread over the dear, sweet face. She loved music very much, she replied, and it would give her pleasure to accompany me some day.

"I hope you will do that at Barwalde," I cried, passionately. She dropped her lids over the clear, violet eyes, and a deep blush spread over her cheek.

Eight days afterwards Eveline was my betrothed. What did I care for all the Paumwolves in the whole world!

On one of the very first days of our engagement we met the betrothed pair, Maier and Paumwolf, on the street.

"Shall we turn back, Eve?" I asked, playfully, though I could not prevent a slight feeling of anxiety from rising in my heart. She became very grave for a moment; then nestling closer to my side looked up at me with her innocent, childlike eyes.

"You know I have left all that behind me," she said, softly.

I pressed her arm more closely to me. "O, Eve! my own sweet Eve!" I was so happy, so proud, that even the bold curiosity with which Liecht, Paumwolf stared at us in passing could not irritate me.

Eveline and I have lived many years at our quiet old Barwalde, where the sun never seemed to have risen until Eveline's blonde head flitted through the house and grounds. But the happiest hours in our blissful life are those in which we sit confidingly together after the cares and duties of the day are over, and the tones of the piano and violoncello mingle their sounds on the clear evening air.

Translated from the German for The Boston True Flag.

Appreciated Honesty.

During the war Miss N., a beautiful and spirited Virginian, whose brother (a Confederate soldier) had been taken prisoner by the Union forces, was desirous of obtaining a pass which would enable her to visit him. Francis P. Blair agreed to secure an audience with the president, but warned his young and rather impulsive friend to be very prudent and not let a word escape her which would betray her southern sympathies. They were ushered into the presence of Mr. Lincoln and the object for which they had come stated. The tall, grave man bent down to the petite maiden, and, looking searchingly into her face, said: "You are loyal, of course?" Her bright eyes flashed. She hesitated a moment, and then, with a face eloquent with emotion and honest as his own, she replied: "Yes, loyal to the heart's core—to Virginia!" Mr. Lincoln kept his intent gaze upon her for a moment longer, and then went to his desk, wrote a line or two, and handed her the paper. With a bow the interview terminated. Once outside, the extreme vexation of Mr. Blair found vent in reproachful words. "Now, you have done it!" he said; "didn't I warn you to be very careful? You have only yourself to blame." Miss N. made no reply, but opened the paper. It contained these words: "Miss N.; she is an honest girl, and can be trusted. A. Lincoln."—San Francisco Argonaut.

A Lesson in Grammar.

One of the stumbling blocks to the fine writers is the old grammatical error of the "Two first." This is all wrong according to the school teachers. The Herald received and answered a question last week touching the grammatical accuracy of Bishop Berkeley in the much quoted verse:

Westward the course of empire takes its way; The four firsts need scarcely say;

Should it not read first four? asks the querist. Not at all. "But," says the school teacher, "there cannot be four firsts, there can only be one." Oh, yes, there can, there can be as many firsts as people want. The pretense of the grammarians is, that when you say first four you speak more correctly, for you have in mind a second and third four, but this is precisely where they are mistaken. In the passage in question there is only reference to five acts altogether, and if you say the first four there cannot be a second four in the thought. And yet the hard headed grammarians labored over this problem for years, until the newspapers showed them it made no difference in the thought whatever in what order you placed the words.—Chicago Herald.

Is Dry Rot Contagious?

There appears to be such a thing as a diagnosis of disease in wood, and the botanical physicians, according to The Northwestern Lumberman, profess to know that it may be contagious or sporadic. Dry rot is called contagious, and it is said that the germ of that disease may be communicated to sound wood by tools which have been at work in diseased wood. It is thought possible that this theory accounts for many incomprehensible breakages of timbers. The suggestion is that sound lumber should not be cut with the same saw that has passed through stuff affected by dry rot without cleaning.

Color and Taste.

The peculiar association of a color with a sound by which a certain sound will at once vividly arouse a definite color, is quite normal and has of recent years been frequently described. The association of color with smells is a much rarer phenomenon, and of color with tastes perhaps rarer still. Dr. Fere gives an account of a woman, who, after taking vinegar, saw everything red for a few minutes, and then everything as bright green for more than an hour. Dr. Fere explains this as due to a similarity in the subsidiary emotional effects accompanying the sensation.—Science.

Sore Death to Buffalo Moths.

Of the vast number of remedies tried for exterminating that most troublesome pest, the buffalo moth, the following is said to accomplish the object: Take strips of red or blue flannel (as these colors are particularly attractive to them), dip in liquid arsenic, and lay around the edges of carpets, or wherever the pests are troublesome. They will soon eat a desired amount and collapse, to the entire satisfaction of the housewife, without the least injury to her carpets.—Scientific American.

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