

me, and whom you will treat very deferentially and encouragingly, for she is extremely timid. Now go and bring me a little wine, of the sort I like best."

At last the bell rang. She must indeed be very timid, he thought, when he heard the faint sound, and then his fancy dreamed of tapering, little fingers, and of a delicate, white baby-hand, hidden beneath pearl-gray, well-fitting gloves. Casting a quick glance at the ticking pendule, he noticed that the hands indicated ten minutes after four.

With a slightly trembling and well-perfumed hand, he gave his light mustache an artistic, enterprising curve, and created an aesthetic sort of disorder among the cushions of his divan.

"The lady is here," announced Edmond.

"Good; conduct her hither."

A feminine silhouette, exquisite, insinuating, supple, ravishing, attracted his eyes. "Oh, master," she stammered, faintly, behind a sombre veil, which failed to hide a beautifully rounded chin, suggesting the crescent moon appearing from under a dark cloud.

He made two steps in advance towards her; seized her fragile-looking fingers, and imprinted thereon the longest and most fervent kiss that he had in his repertoire.

"Do you forgive me for intruding and for depriving you of part of your so valuable time?" she asked. Her voice betrayed more confidence and firmness.

"Why, of course, dear madame; I am really and inexpressibly delighted at your visiting me in my humble apartments."

"For ever so long a time, venerable master, have I desired to meet you. I am so fond of your writings. Many passages they contain I have committed to memory. You possess such a delicate, tender fancy, and then your style is so gracefully masculine, and your ideas are so much in sympathy with mine. How charmingly you describe the passionate love which throbs in the heart and veins of Loys. The current story, I believe, is your chef-d'oeuvre. It made such a deep impression upon me that I could not resist any longer the desire to write and to see you. If you only knew how wildly my heart beats!"

"Really," he asked, and then he made a movement with his hands as if he were anxious to make an investigation into the alarming condition of his fair interlocutor's little heart.

"Vertigo seized me in your ante-cham-

ber. You know, it is so intimidating to call upon a man of genius. I really believe my eyes are troubling me, that the walls are turning round me."

"I think you had better remove your veil," he suggested tentatively.

"Do you think so? Well, then . . . I think I had better take off my hat, too, for it is so heavy!"

"A capital idea, and I would suggest that you likewise take off your cloak. Now, don't you feel relieved? Be seated upon the divan. This cushion shall caress your beautiful shoulder, and this one I shall place beneath your divine feet. Now, what do you think of this? Does your heart still beat so fast?"

"It is a little quieter. Thank you ever so much, dear master!"

"Oh, happy heart; if I only could say the same thing of mine; the beating of mine almost deprives me of the power of breathing!"

"I am so sorry, monsieur."

"No, call me Loys, since my hero appears to have captivated you so completely. I cannot tell you how glad I am to see you before me, to have made your acquaintance! Do you know that I adore you?"

"Impossible!"

"Believe me, when I say that I adore you, that I love you, love you as only he can love who has never known the divine passion before."

She sighed, and with eyelashes lowered, softly whispered: "And I love you!"

"Ah," he wildly exclaimed. He stretched forth his arms to seize her in a passionate embrace, but, to his immense surprise, she drew away from him, and, resolutely, took up her hat and arranged her veil.

"Why, explain; have I done wrong; have I hurt your feelings?" he finally managed to ask in a stammering fashion.

"Don't touch me; I am done with you; you don't love me at all; you are an impostor!"

"But, dear madame, let me assure you that I am sincere, that you are all the world to me; that my love for you is overwhelming, is . . ."

"Fiddlesticks! I know better; you only feign, you try to fool me!"

"Dear madame, let me explain, let me tell you that . . ."

"No use," she snapped out, excitedly, and then, pointing with her finger towards the almost inaudibly ticking pendule, and slightly shrugging her beautiful shoulders, she added:

"You have not even broken the spring

TO WED YOUNG MILLIONAIRE



Society is anxiously awaiting the announcement of the coming date of the marriage of Miss Kathleen Nielson to Reginald Vanderbilt. No definite date has yet been given but the happy event is expected to take place somewhere around Easter time. The bride to be is now preparing her trousseau.

of the pendule! Hypocrite, impostor!" and out she sailed, indignation vibrating in every inch of her enticing body.—Adapted from the French for the St. Louis Mirror by Francis A. House.

Artist—What do you think of those charcoal sketches of mine?
Friend—It seems too bad to waste the charcoal when fuel is so high.—Yonkers Statesman.

THE POPE NOW NINETY-THREE



POPE AT THE TIME OF HIS ELECTION. Pope as he appeared two years ago.

On March 2, Pope Leo XIII reached the ripe old age of ninety-three years. All over the world Catholics celebrated the happy event. The above portraits of Pope Leo at various ages offer an interesting contrast.

POPE LEON XIII
AS HE IS
TO-DAY.