

THE HEADLIGHT.

A. ROSCOWEE, Editor & Proprietor.

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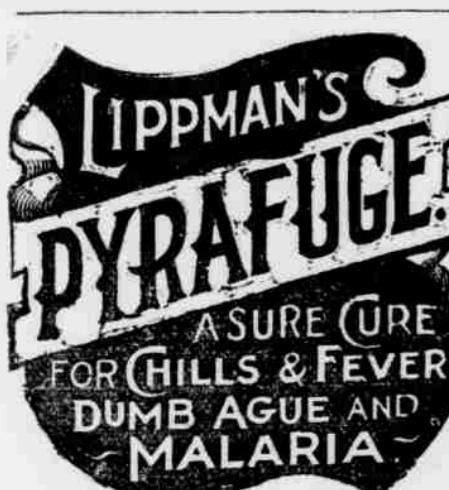
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LIFE AND DEATH.

What's for the babe?

Why, mother's eyes,
Twin patches of those summer skies
That beamed on him in Paradise.

What's for the child?

With fays to skip,
To taste the honeysuckles' lip—
The butterfly's companionship.

What's for the boy?

The haunted wold,
The squirrel's nest in leafy hold,
The rainbow's fabled pot of gold.

What's for the youth?

To dream of fame,
In shifting sand to write his name,
With sighs to fan a passion's flame.

What's for the man?

Courage to bear
The load of wisdom and of care,
And some true heart its weight to share.

And what's for age?

Pain's prison bars,
Comfort that every trifl' mars,
Pimness and fear—and then the stars!

—George Horton, in Harper's Weekly.

A SPOT OF INK.

T was seven or eight years since I had seen my friend George Breval when I met him one day at the Bois de Boulogne, in the Avenue des Acacias. We shook hands, and, as we were talking over old times, a little Italian beggar, carrying an

accordion, came up to ask alms.

"Get away with you!" cried George, with a brutality that shocked me me.

"Why, old fellow," I said, as the little girl ran off confused and frightened, "You were not always so hard on the poor. It seems to me that we even thought you soft-hearted!"

"I had not seen life in those days," he answered, with a sardonic smile. "I know now that existence is a struggle for all classes. Besides, kindness is weakness, a morbid condition, a beginning of brain-softening. That is a scientific fact, a recognized fact, and for my part, I believe that kindness leads—"

"Leads to its own reward!"

"No; to a lunatic asylum, or the poor house."

"Oh, nonsense!"

"Would you like a page from my own experience? Ten years ago, while I was still in my teens, I was studying law, and lodged as you know on Rue Racine. One winter evening, when it was snowing, I was about to enter my home in company with Andre Filsac—do you remember him?"

"Perfectly. He used to carry tales at school, and he died of jaundice, didn't he, when one of his brothers fell heir to a fortune?"

"That's the man. Well, we were at

the front door, when I saw a child lying

across the threshold, a little Italian like

the one who begged just now with an

accordion slung around her neck. She had fallen asleep on the snow, and the snow lay white above her, and was growing deeper every minute. Of course she

was in danger of freezing to death.

With the greatest difficulty we awoke

her, and then she began to cry and said

she was afraid to go back to her master.

For as she had not the fifty sous he re-

quired her to bring daily, she was sure

he would beat her. There was no use

in giving her the money and sending

her away, for her eyes were closing

with sleep, and we knew that she would

lie down again and never awake. We

looked about for a policeman, but there

was not one within sight. I said some-

thing about taking the child up to my

rooms."

"Don't do that, replied Andre. You

know nothing about this little vag-

bond. You will only be the dupe of

your own charity."

"Just like Filsac," I interrupted.

"He was not sympathetic; but he had

good sense. However, I took no heed

of his observations, but led the girl up

stairs, warmed her by a good fire, and

gave her some tea and biscuits. I let

her sleep in my own bed, and I slept

myself on an old lounge in my little

ante-chamber."

"You did well, George!"

"Wait a minute. The next morning,

when I rose, I found the child up and

dressed. She bid me good-by, thanking

me prettily, and I sent her away with a

gold piece in her hand. But, after her

departure, I found my room in horrible

disorder. She had rummaged through

everything. Worse than that, she had

stolen one of my handkerchiefs."

A handkerchief!

"Yes—a hideous, ridiculous, red embroidered object, sent me by my aunt, Mine de Kermadec. It was a present I kept piously, but never used."

"A small loss, then. Not! What of it?"

"What of it? The theft had dreadful results for me. My aunt came to Paris. She asked why I never used the handkerchief she had embroidered for me. I grew embarrassed, hesitated, tried to explain and contradicted myself. She insisted that I had given it away. She grew angry and refused to be pacified. She died and disinherited me!"

"Poor George!"

"It makes you laugh? I don't think it funny myself. And since then everything has gone against me. I am a lawyer without a client. I placed myself with a banker who absconded, and, to crown my misfortunes, I have fallen in love!"

"Then, why don't you get married?"

"Impossible! She is a princess!"

"Oh! then—"

"Look! yonder she goes!" exclaimed my friend. "Do you see that ladau near the old gentleman with white whiskers and a hooked nose? She is here at this hour every day—our eyes have met—and judge of my folly! It seems to me that there is something singular—marked—in the way she looks at me."

"Why, that is the Princess Olga Dragomiroff."

"You are acquainted?"

"Very well acquainted. Her grandfather is the millionaire Neopolitan banker Ghirlandi. There is to be some grand 'tra-la-la' to-morrow afternoon at their house—musicals, followed by a dance. Shall I present you?"

"Could you!"

"Nothing easier. Our families are very intimate. Ghirlandi's friends are our friends."

"Then I shall be delighted—to accept. But what's the use, since I love without hope?"

"Who knows! Princess Olga is rather eccentric. She is, perhaps, capable of taking a fancy to you."

"Thanks—much obliged."

"Don't be vexed. Will you go with me?"

"Yes, I will go."

Olga and her maternal grandfather, the immensely rich Orlando Ghirlandi, lived at Paris in a fine house on Rue de la Boëtie. They moved in the most select circles and entertained with magnificence.

People sometimes wondered why the princess did not marry. Everyone agreed that she was virtuous, charitable and devout, after the manner of Russians, who still keep a certain depth of mysticism in spite of the friction of nineteenth century cynicism.

But the young lady was odd to the very limits of eccentricity, even, some people said, to the limits of rudeness. She was a good musician and played well on the violin. But, after excusing some classical concerto so as to excite the admiration of connoisseurs, she would dash off into an absurd refrain of a popular melody and would seem delighted with the annoyance of her audience.

When she went out walking with her grandfather, or her prim English companion, she never failed to stop

the little street musicians and ask them a torrent of outlandish questions in an outlandish Italian patois she had learned

dear knows where. One of her most

unaccountable eccentricities was that she persisted in appearing everywhere, even

in a ball dress, with an embroidered handkerchief bearing initials not her own, and stained with a spot of ink that

was beginning to turn yellow. One or two of her most intimate friends had ventured to ask her why she carried such a strange object, and she had answered very gravely: "Hush! it has a history!"

She treated all remonstrances with indifference, even those of her grandfather, who spoiled her. Pretty and rich, the singular little princess might easily have made a good match; but she declared that there was only one man in the world she would marry, and that it was extremely unlikely he would ever ask her hand.

Affairs were these, when I received Signor Ghirlandi's permission to present my friend George Breval. George was already very much in love. Olga received him prettily and granted him the waltz he begged. But although he was said to be the most graceful man in Paris, he behaved like an awkward

schoolboy, and was so afraid of saying anything foolish that he scarcely opened his mouth.

"Mademoiselle," he remarked at last, "the more I look at you the more certain I feel that I have seen you somewhere—that we have met before."

"You are right," she answered seriously; "we have met before, and if we ever grow well enough acquainted I may tell you where."

"Won't you tell me now?"

"No; not yet."

"Is this the mysterious handkerchief that is supposed to be your fetish?" he queried. "May I look at it? It reminds me of one I lost under peculiar circumstances."

She drew it gently away, turning it so that the initials could not be seen. "Some other time," she said, "I may tell you all about it."

George had to wait her good pleasure; but his curiosity was piqued, and he thought of little beside the charming princess.

One day, some weeks after, he repeated his questions and pressed for a reply. "Tell me," he said, "where have we met before?"

Olga seemed strangely embarrassed. She colored deeply, looked down and twisted a corner of her hideous handkerchief. Then, raising her clear, candid eyes to his, she answered: "It was in your room, don't you remember? Take this, and then you will know." She held out the handkerchief. "Don't you recognize it?" She added: "Those are your own initials."

"It is mine! my handkerchief! Then that little beggar—was