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PRAYER OF THE BRETON FISHERS

Lord of the sea, the sunshine and the pale God of the brooding ocean and the stormy Father of those who brave the treacherous main...

PARALLEL LINES.

The bright morning sun shone on the tawny bushes, and sparkled like jewels in the fresh dew on the grass and flowers.

Herr Reinhard von Montgre, the young tutor of the house, sat upon the rustic seat with the little Graf, Alphonse, instructing him in the first principles of geometry.

"Alphonse, I will be obliged to punish you if you do not put your mind on this lesson. I have told you already three times the definition of parallel lines, and you don't comprehend it yet."

"Parallel lines," began the little Graf, "are lines which—well, which extend indefinitely, always—always—always—that stork-legged Excellenz is coming across the grass. Look what a figure he cuts—ha! ha! ha!"

"Excuse me, Herr von Montgre; I declare I could not help it, because—"

"Because I can't bear this strange Graf," was the positive answer.

"And why don't you like him, Alphonse?"

"Because he has come to marry Sister Edith, and will take her back to the capital with him."

"How do you know that?" asked the tutor, so suddenly and so anxiously that Alphonse dropped his book in fright.

"The gardener told me, Herr von Montgre," he answered.

"Go to your room now, Alphonse, and resume your studies; I will come to you later."

"Are you angry with me, Herr von Montgre?" asked Alphonse in deep concern.

"No, although you deserve it; you were inattentive and impertinent," said the tutor as Alphonse turned away.

By this time the "stork-legged Excellenz" had approached, and the gentleman greeted one another.

Excellenz Graf Pogendorf, chamberlain to her majesty, the queen, had for several days been the honored guest of the inmates of the castle. He appeared to be over 40 years of age, not at all prepossessing in his manner, having that air of arrogant loftiness often met with among the members of the queen's household.

"By the way, Herr von Montgre," said the Graf, in nasal, condescending tones, "I remember meeting once, in Paris, a Marquis Montgre de Chevalange, very wealthy and of noble family—rank—not related to you, I believe?"

"Certainly, Excellenz; he sprang from that branch of the Montgres who after the raising of the Edict of Nantes went back to the old faith, while my ancestors, firm in their convictions and true to their religion, sacrificed their homes and possessions, and emigrated to Germany."

"Particular people, these fanatical refugees," said the Graf, "ruined themselves and their descendants to gratify a fantasy. They took advantage of the circumstances, and today are a most highly honored and powerful family, while—"

"The descendant of the emigrant is a poor, dependent private tutor, obliged to earn his daily bread among strangers. Speak it out, Excellenz; I am not ashamed of these facts, rest assured," said the tutor.

"Tut, tut, young man, as if you ought to be, in these days when the principles which were once the creed of the aristocracy are ridiculed as prejudices; it only means that it is inexplicable how some people will denigrate their whole lives under such circumstances."

"I agree with you perfectly, Excellenz," said Montgre, sardonically. "The chamberlain rewarded him with a penetrating glance, and said: 'The ladies have not yet arisen, Herr von Montgre.'"

"On the contrary, Excellenz, they are taking a walk to the village, and will soon return."

"Ah, of course, you are all early risers in the country; Montgre, this little comtesse is a charming creature—some of those peculiar beauties which grow continually more bewitching; she will create a furore at the capital, without doubt."

"I don't believe, Excellenz, that the comtesse would enjoy creating a sensation at court," said Montgre, angered by the careless manner in which he spoke of Edith.

"Oh, who can understand a woman? She will be admired and sought after by all, and admiration is just as essential to their existence as eating and sleeping. Comtesse Edith will gladly exchange this monotonous country life for the gay society of the capital."

"Comtesse Edith has already consented," faltered Montgre, controlling his voice with great difficulty.

"Not exactly; but I am sure of gaining my point. Her mother favors it quite

decidedly, and I know I can complete the conquest with my persuasive powers."

"I congratulate you on the certainty of success, Excellenz," said Montgre, bitterly.

"Thank you; a diplomat is always more skillful than knows how to make use of every advantage. It would have been painful in the extreme for me to be obliged to return without accomplishing my undertaking, because—entirely—my dear Montgre, it is the special wish of the queen."

"Oh, is it?" ejaculated poor Montgre, despondently.

"Will you go with me to meet the ladies?"

"No, thank you, Excellenz; I have some work to do."

"Work? You have neither book nor writing material; do you call this doing your work?"

"I am thinking, Excellenz—a task that is always performed without instruments of any kind."

"You want to think, do you? Well, then, I won't disturb your meditations any longer. Bon jour, my dear Montgre, bon jour!"

When his excellency had disappeared behind the hedge, Montgre laughed bitterly to himself. That, then, was the man who was selected for Edith's husband!

For her, the blooming child, full of soul and life; to have to live with him through the desert of a loveless marriage; to become assimilated to that of such a creature! Must he let it take place, he who would readily give up his life to save her pain? Must he allow her future to be one of abject misery, when he knew that she loved him, although not a word of love had passed between them?

Foolish questions! As if it were possible to have it otherwise! She was a member of an old, royal family, the heiress of an ancient name and a princely fortune, he a poor dependent private tutor, the last scion of a race of "fanatics."

According to his excellency, were stupid enough to ruin themselves and their descendants to gratify a fantasy—he to hope for such happiness? If the queen wished especially that the ancient trees in her domain should grow together, what did it matter if the comtesse and the descendant of the emigrant did love one another, and were consumed with a longing desire, and the chains thrown around them were unbearable? The fates had directed their ways through life; for them there was no meeting point—none whatever.

Montgre's glance fell accidentally upon the parallel lines which he had drawn in the sand for Alphonse.

"Parallel lines are those which extend indefinitely always the same distance apart," he said, suddenly to himself.

"Your fate in a geometrical figure," he murmured.

So much was he taken up with his gloomy reflections that he did not notice the young lady of remarkable beauty, of face and grace of figure who was stealing carefully on his tip toe from behind the shrubbery at his side, with a roguish smile of innocent amusement playing around her pretty lips.

"Good morning, Herr Philosopher."

"Comtesse Edith!" you gasped. Montgre cried, almost speechless with surprise at seeing so suddenly the object of his dreams before him, her hands stretched out toward him in her anxiety to reach him unseen.

"Your morning greeting, sir; you have forgotten your politeness," she said, jestingly. "You remind me forcibly of the words of the wise Archdeacon of Syracuse, 'Don't destroy my circle.' My dear problem do those lines represent that render you so oblivious to everything around you?"

He looked into the deep grayish blue eyes which were gazing into his so inquiringly.

"It is a problem, comtesse, that I despair of ever solving."

"And may not the pupil share the master's trouble?" she asked, jestingly, taking a seat beside him. "Explain to me, please, the meaning of those lines."

"Oh! Shall I tell you?"

"Oh, I am incapable of comprehending it, am I? I beg your pardon," she interrupted.

"On the contrary, comtesse, you of all persons can understand it—you alone. These lines—"

"Well, proceed," she said, resting her charming little head meditatively on her hand.

"These lines," continued Montgre, hesitatingly at first, then speaking more emphatically and desperately, "are the embodiment, in my mind, of two animated beings, wonderfully similar in nature, thoughts and feelings—as congenial as two beings could be. A consuming desire fills them both to approach one another, to unite in a blissful unity, but it does not lie in their power to satisfy the inward longing. Some inscrutable law—God or the fates—has laid out the way that they can't forsake, although in following them they never will be able to meet. In the customary formula these are termed parallel lines, which extend indefinitely in the same direction, but which must always be kept the same distance apart; and so they must be reconciled to the inevitable, and conceal from the world their cravings, and go on alone through the desert of eternal space."

"That is indeed a gloomy picture you draw," she said.

The bright winsome face clouded for an instant as she looked down thoughtfully at the ground. Then she shook her waving locks and said, smiling:

"Oh, no, you are wrong—a very poor figure of speech. Why," she said, positively, "if the lines were really animated beings, then they would have minds of their own, and they could easily gratify their desires, like this," taking his cane and extending one of them in a short curve until it ran into the other, which she continued to prolong, dragging the stick in the sand deeply, as she walked backward.

Montgre was obliged to laugh at the unexpected cutting of the Gordian knot.

"These are, however, comtesse, circumstances under which a man is helpless—absolutely helpless."

"You are right," she said. "I have myself, in the last few days had much to trouble me."

"I know, comtesse, I know what you fear—they are about to lay unworthy chains upon your beautiful, noble life—to compel you to a step which will cost

you your life's happiness. And I am obliged to stand helplessly by, and am powerless to defend you from the intruder."

"What do you mean, Herr von Montgre?" asked Edith, looking at him in surprise.

"Don't try to mislead me, Edith; I know all. I know that they want you to marry this worthless chamberlain; he told me so himself just now—the scoundrel!"

While the young tutor was blustering out the above words in the greatest indignation and was beating the sand with his cane emphatically, Edith concealed her face in her lace handkerchief, to prevent him from seeing the glad look it wore at hearing his angry words.

"Oh, if it were true, why should you become angry about matters of no consequence?" she said with well assumed indifference.

"Can you ask, Edith?" he said, beside himself with passion. "Because I love you, love you with all the ardor of my soul, and because I know that you love me."

It was then Edith's turn to lose composure.

"I don't understand you, Herr von Montgre," she said, with a poor attempt to speak reprovingly, her beautiful face covered with blushes.

"Edith, he said, taking her hand and tenderly pressing it in his, 'you do love me; I feel it, I know it. It was in this spot, that I discovered it. I had been telling you a story of my mother's—my blessed mother now in heaven—and had brought you a portrait of her. When you thought you were alone you covered it with tears and kisses. I saw you through those bushes there without intending to do so. Edith, when I witnessed that silent confession, I knew that your heart was mine—mine through all eternity!'"

"Reinhard!"

She stood before him, as she softly spoke his Christian name for the first time, like an angel of light from heaven; from the tear glistening eyes shone beams of holy felicity, the confirmation of his words.

"No, no, Edith, darling, my lost one, not the seductive picture of happiness! It can never be! I am your mother's tutor, a servant in your house; to hope would be madness. Our fates are there in the parallel lines—ha! ha! ha!"

"Reinhard, you are deceiving yourself; there is nothing between us except your indomitable pride; conquer that, and I am yours."

"My pride! As if that were all—the wish of the queen—the proposal of the chamberlain—the traditional pride of your family!"

"You are mistaken, my dear friend. The queen's chamberlain does not dream of marrying me. He has a wife and five children."

"Edith, but how was it then? He said to me a few moments since that he had already gotten your mother's consent and would make you a formal proposal today."

"Oh, yes," laughed Edith, "a proposal to become one of the ladies at court to the queen, who did me the honor to interest herself somewhat in me during my stay at the capital. And who knows but I may yet accept of a certain gentleman, out of silly obstinacy, continues to—"

"Edith!" said Montgre, blushing with the new found happiness. "Do you think your mother would ever consent to it?"

"Yes, Reinhard, I not only think it but I know it; you would, you have been, since the death of my father, her truest friend and adviser; she respects and honors you, and admires your character, and I know that she would be proud to call such a man son."

"Edith—really—O heaven! Then I may call you sweetheart—wife?"

"Yes, Reinhard," she whispered, while he drew the graceful figure into his arms and covered the pretty mouth with kisses.

Next day his excellency returned disappointed to the capital, bearing the unwelcome message:

"The Comtesse Edith most deeply regrets to decline the high honor conferred on her by her most gracious majesty the queen, but her engagement with and her approaching marriage to Herr von Montgre would render it impossible."

Her majesty was somewhat piqued, but graciously presented the happy couple with a costly tea service with her best wishes.

Nobody at the castle was so much delighted as little Graf Alphonse that the "stork-legged" Excellenz had to return without Comtesse Edith.

The day after their return from their extensive bridal tour, the couple had sought the quiet seat near the cascade where their first words of love were exchanged.

"Are you thinking of that problem of the parallel lines, Reinhard?" she asked, smiling.

"Which extend indefinitely in the same direction—always the same distance apart," she quoted, playfully.

"There are exceptions," he said, as he drew the sweet, sunny face toward him until it rested on his shoulder, and the deep eyes gazed into his full of happy confidence and love.—Translated for The Waverley Magazine by W. N. Harben.

Bolivia's Mineral Wealth.

Bolivia is doubtless the richest in minerals of any land on the globe, and millions upon millions of precious metals have been taken out of her mines by the primitive process which still exists and must exist till railroads are constructed to carry machinery there. Every ounce of ore that finds its way out of the Andes is carried on the back of a man or a llama, and the quartz is crushed by rolling heavy logs upon it. By this method Bolivia exports from \$15,000,000 to \$15,000,000 of gold and silver annually, and the output would be fabulous if modern machinery could be taken into the mines.—Harper's Magazine.

How to Stick a Stamp.

A postoffice employe says that the gummed surface of a postage stamp should never be placed on the tongue. Moisten the other side of the stamp and the corner of the envelope, or the latter only, and the stamp will stick for all it is worth.—New York Sun.

French Conversation.

"French conversation," said Mr. W. C. Brownell, "is really conversation, and is practiced for what it is and not to pass away the time. It is made up of interruptions, and is thus full of epigrams and repartee, is artistic, not utilitarian, and far freer than ours, and is outspoken without being brutal."—New York Times.

Queer Names in the Northwest.

There is a "wealth" of queer names all through this region. It is but a little while since we passed Rat Portage, and now we come to Medicine Hat, the origin of which names I could not get the origin of, but the second I did, and commonplace enough I found it. Medicine Hat was an old medicine man of the Blackfoot tribe of Indians, who had his wigwam on the site of the present town, and so when the town was laid out they "honored" him by calling it "Medicine Hat," thinking, probably, that "hat" was higher toned than "cap!"

Appropos of the change of names, I hear that the Ottawa parliament recently changed the name of Boundary peak to Pope's peak, in honor of the minister of railways; Mount Hermit to Mount Tupper, after the minister of finance; Mount Carroll to Mount Mackenzie, after the premier; Mount Cunningham to Mount Mackenzie, after the ex-premier, and an unnamed mountain to be called Mount Macpherson. Boundary peak and Mount Hermit should never have been changed, as their titles are significant and possess a certain degree of poetry; but the others mean nothing, and are no heavier than the people now honored are said to have been intimately connected with the inception and execution of the Canadian Pacific railway. I should prefer to see such names as Rat Portage, Kicking Horse and similar monstrosities changed to something understandable. And then think of such a name as Hicillwaet! Even Boston culture would stagger at such a name as that! What then could be expected in the wild untamed "rowdy west?"—Cor. Detroit Free Press.

The Reputation of Wealth.

Next to the possession of wealth in inconvenience is the reputation of having it. A friend tells with a good deal of drollery how he has suffered this summer from the undesired fame of fortune. "You know," he says, "that the X's went abroad in June, and they offered us the use of their cottage at Wareview for the summer. Of course we were delighted, and if I hadn't made a mistake in the first place we should have had a beautiful time. Such a trifling thing, too. It was only buying a dollar's worth of postage stamps at the village postoffice, but it came very near spoiling our whole summer." Of course he was asked to explain, and did so by saying that in a place where people bought a single stamp for a letter after the epistle was written, the purchase of fifty stamps at once took on all the magnitude of a magnificent financial transaction. The purchaser was from that moment regarded as a man of enormous wealth. He was charged extravagantly for everything, his steps were haunted by committee soliciting subscriptions for the church and charity, and he was, in a word, subjected to all the annoyance of being wealthy without the satisfaction of having the reality of which this was the unpleasant shadow. "And hereafter," he concluded, "I shall never buy more than a single stamp in the country."—Boston Cor. Providence Journal.

Some Facts About Ferrets.

"Ferrets are not common in this country and we have hard work to introduce them," said the first importer and largest breeder of ferrets in New York to a reporter. "In England hunting with ferrets is a popular sport, and every country gentleman has several pairs trained to come at his call."

"What is the cost of a ferret?" "That depends principally on their age. Their average life is twelve years and the average price per pair \$25. We generally sell them outright, but are glad to buy them back when the purchaser is through using them. Occasionally we make contracts to keep a mill or a ship free from rats at so much a year, running the ferrets as occasion requires."

"There is a curious superstition regarding ferrets. It ascribes to them the power of curing whooping cough. I have sometimes had as many as twenty people in here in a single day to take advantage of the little creature's supposed miraculous power. The people bring pans of milk and bits of food. This they allow the ferrets to partake of, carrying away the remainder, firmly convinced that there has been imparted to the substance an infallible remedial virtue."—New York Evening Sun.

Protect Against Small Windows.

A St. Louis physician says: Every time I see one of the new style of houses in the course of erection, I feel like telling the owner to take out the small windows and have more light. I have entered my protest many a time against small windows. Let there be light is the warning of every physician. It is absolutely necessary to health that a house be well lighted, and a great deal of the sickness of a city is to be attributed to dark rooms. It may be called refinement for a woman to be pale and thin, but it renders her unfit to bear the burdens of life and powerless to resist disease. A plant cannot grow in a dark place, and why should a human being? Children brought up in these modern houses, with their small windows and dark rooms, become unhealthy and puny. Style is to blame for this evil. Every house should have as much sunlight as possible.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Degenerate Scions.

Appropos of Quaker bonnets, I was told last year that some antiquarian, wishing to obtain a complete dress belonging to this sect, asked the younger member of an old Friend family for some of their grandparents' garments. One can hardly imagine the horror inspired by the answer: "Oh, you can have all the broad brimmed hats, but there are no bonnets left, as we took off the silk, and used them as footlights shades in our theatricals last holidays." Am I so sorry, that they did, capitally? Oh, that the descendants of the old Quaker stock should have so little reverence for the memory of their ancestors!—Caswell's Family Magazine.

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