

A GOUTY COURTSHIP.

HIS DIARY.

Royat, July 4th.—Arrived here to-day from London, condemned by doctor to twenty-one days without the option of a fine! In other words, I have to swill tepid water at a bubbling fountain, soak myself daily in a running bath and undergo a gentle massage treatment at the hands of an expert Swede for three consecutive weeks, and all because my forefathers drank too much port, and left me as a heritage the most unmistakable signs of gout. Yes, in the flower of my youth (I am only thirty-three) I find myself extremely "dicky" on one leg, and my hitherto angelic temper is rapidly changing to chronic irascibility. Gout at thirty-three! It is sickening, disgusting, absolutely ridiculous. I was told that I should find Royat delightful. Two casinos, two theatres, bands playing all day, baccarat and *petits chevaux*, health restored—in fact, a perfect little Paradise on earth. I have already seen all the former attractions. I have lost a few louis at the "little horses," I have been politely invited to become a member of the Baccarat Club, but I experienced a shock on hearing a lady, who was dining at the next table to mine, say, "It is my seventh season here—the waters are so good for gout!" But why seven years if the waters are any good? Shall I have to come here seven years? I who already grumble at the prospect of twenty-one days? I must make this lady's acquaintance, and find out what she means. Surely she must have been talking nonsense, or perhaps she has gout on the brain. It seems to me that you ought either to be cured, or not, in your first year. Why persevere seven years?

Royat is empty; the bands play to rows of unoccupied chairs, a few sepulchral looking *cocottes* walk listlessly round the *petits chevaux*, and you can inscribe yourself for any hour you like at the baths. The hotel proprietors say, "*Les Anglais nous manquent cette année!*" I should think so! France has been so inviting to English people lately.

I have noticed one pretty girl here, and she is staying at this hotel. But what is the good of thinking of pretty girls when you have gout, and a prospect of spending seven seasons at Royat? I close my Diary with renewed feelings of despair.

HER DIARY.

Royat, July 4th.—This is papa's tenth day here, and he is no better. Our excellent doctor, the type of the courtly English physician, tells him that the waters show no beneficial signs at first. Papa asks him, with a sarcasm even more suppressed than his gout, at what period they do begin to show beneficial signs, and our dear old doctor smiles goodnaturedly and tells him not to be impatient. All the same, Mamma says Papa's temper has certainly improved within the last few days. His grumbling, which he feared was becoming chronic, is certainly less violent and the intervals between the outbursts of fury are becoming longer. I hope he will really be cured soon. Royat is so dull, and every second person one meets is an invalid. By the way, we have got a new man at the hotel. He is rather nice-looking; but he, too, looks delicate. He is too young to have gout, although he certainly walks a little lame. Perhaps he has been wounded in the Transvaal. That would make him rather interesting. We want interesting people in the hotel—there are only about six men all told, and they are all what the shops call "damaged goods." I wonder what a dance would be like here. There is a lawn-tennis club, but I never hear of anyone playing. Perhaps it is kept up by charitable contributions, like the hospital. I went to one little *soirée dansante* at the Casino, but there were only the shopkeepers from Clermont who danced, and Mamma was so afraid that one of them would ask me to dance that she hurried me away after the first valse. Ah, well, we have fifteen days more to spend here. Ordinarily the "cure" is twenty-one days, but it appears that Papa's case being an obstinate one requires

four days more. "Your father always was obstinate in everything," Mamma said when she heard this prescription. And to think that gout is hereditary!

HIS DIARY.

July 5th.—Took my waters, my bath and my massage; feeling worse—furious.

July 6th.—The same as yesterday. Decidedly that English girl is pretty. Her name is SOMERVILLE—MAUD SOMERVILLE. She has red hair, her father has gout. She looks sad and devoted. Poor girl! What an existence!

July 7th.—She dresses well and has a pretty figure. There is a mother, a faded, nearly obliterated portrait of the girl. I should like to make their acquaintance; but they seem to know no one, and not to care to. After dinner they take their coffee on the terrace of the hotel and then go to their rooms. I am not allowed coffee. Took my treatment as usual.

July 8th.—Am I overwhelmed with vanity, or do I fancy that she looks at me sometimes? Perhaps she pities my lonely condition. I wonder if she knows what I have the matter with me. I sat very near them at the band this afternoon, but with no result. Treatment as usual.

July 9th.—My *masseur* masses her father's stomach, to aid his digestion. Scarcely a sufficient introduction. I could not very well say: "I think we have a mutual friend, who masses your father's stomach." I must find some other means. Of course, the usual treatment—which is doing me no good.

July 10th.—Did not see her all day. *Masseur* said she had gone for an excursion with her mother. What silly things excursions are, and how I hate Royat!

July 11th.—It appears they have gone to Vichy for two days. Royat is perfectly loathsome.

July 12th.—She has come back, looking more charming than ever. She almost seemed to recognise me, and appear pleased when she saw me at luncheon. It is fine and the place is looking brighter, people arriving every day. Fancy my knee is a little better.

HER DIARY.

July 5th.—Papa is certainly better. Mamma says he swears with less volubility, and experiences a difficulty in finding fresh oaths which she has never known before. It really looks as if the waters were doing him good. The new invalid looks very dull, and as if he was boring himself to death. Perhaps he is longing to be back again at the war.

July 6th.—I rather fancy the new invalid would like to make my acquaintance. Naturally it is very dull for him, but Papa won't know anyone. He says it is quite enough to be bored with people at home, without coming abroad to have fresh inflictions thrust upon one.

July 7th.—His name is GORING—PERCY GORING. He is not in the army. He has gout! What a disillusion. Still, I can't help pitying him. He is so young to suffer. I hope the waters will do him good.

July 8th.—We have had an invitation from the DENTONS to spend a couple of days at Vichy. Neither Mamma nor I wanted to go, but Papa insisted on our going. He said it might do him good not to see us for two days. A new kind of cure! He has tried almost every other one. Mr. GORING looks very ill and sad. I hope he will be looking better when I come back.

July 9th.—He looked so piteously at me to-day. I wish he was going to Vichy. Mamma says perhaps he drinks—it is very unusual for a man of his age to have gout. Papa went further, and said of course he was a confirmed drunkard. He could see dissipation written in every line of his face. I can't—I can only see resigned suffering.

July 10th, Vichy.—Arrived here this morning. It is very like Royat, only ten times bigger and more crowded. I don't think I should like to stay here.

July 11th.—Decidedly, I hate Vichy! Thank goodness, we go back to Royat to-morrow!

Royat, July 12th.—It seemed almost like seeing an old friend when I saw him coming in to luncheon. He limps a little less, but not much. I fancied he looked reproachfully at me, as much as to say, "Why did you go away?" I tried to look as if it wasn't my fault, as if I would have given *anything* to stay here. But all that was rather difficult to get into one look, and I am not at all sure that I succeeded. Papa is still making improvement. I think he ought certainly to prolong his stay, as it is doing him so much good. I have told Mamma to tell the doctor so. She seemed surprised, and said she thought I disliked Royat. I said I thought it better to make the sacrifice a complete and unique one, instead of having to return here year after year. She agreed with me.

HIS DIARY.

July 13th.—What rotten things introductions are, and to what a corrupt state Society must have arrived to require them! Why can't I speak to her without being introduced? I think she would like to know me and sympathise with my miserable condition. She has a very sweet voice. I am sure she would soothe me, and I want soothing very badly. If I don't make her acquaintance in two days, I shall finish my treatment at one gulp and go away. I shall sit in a bath for twelve hours at a stretch, and drink thirty glasses of water.

July 14th.—She has gone to Clermont to see the National fête. I shall go to Clermont to see the National fête. Hang the treatment!

July 15th.—No good! They got lost in the crowd, and I never saw them. At dinner the waiter brought her father the wrong water—St. Victor instead of Cesar.

Old man furious; let loose choice Billingsgate. I jumped up and promptly offered my bottle of Cesar, which waiter had just brought me. Old man still more furious. "I was not speaking to you, Sir; I was addressing the waiter." Tears of mortified humiliation in *her* eyes, apologies from mother; but I had to retire defeated. I shall certainly finish my treatment tomorrow. I shall order a bath for the day!

HER DIARY.

July 13th.—It seems very hard that we can't talk to each other without being properly introduced. I am sure he is *dying* to know me, and that we should have a lot to say to each other. He has lovely eyes, and they look at me so reproachfully sometimes. But what can I do?

July 14th.—We went to Clermont to see the sports, and the

review, and all the stupid things of a National fête. In the morning, I said in a very loud voice as he passed us: "I think it will be very hot at Clermont," with a strong accent on Clermont; but he never came, or if he did he must have been lost in the crowd.

July 15th.—When I have written my day's diary I am going to bed and have a good cry. We had such a terrible scene at dinner. Papa was very thirsty, and ordered a bottle of Cesar water. The waiter brought it and poured some out, and Papa

took a gulp, and suddenly sent it flying in every direction, accompanied by the most horrible language, partly French and partly English. Papa's French is very elementary; he can't get much beyond *Sacre!* and *Imbecile!* "Vous voulez poisoner moi?" he yelled at the waiter. "Vous savez que l'eau St. Victor il est plein d'arsenic et moi je dois pas prendre ça!" And then English came to his relief, and he sank back in his chair purple in the face, and emitting verbal fireworks of a very fiery nature. Then my angelic martyr came to the rescue with a bottle of Cesar, which he promptly and graciously placed at Papa's disposal. But this only made him worse—he curtly refused it, and glared at Mr. GORING as if the bottle he had offered him was really a deadly poison. So poor Mr. GORING retired, followed by pleasant little mutterings such as "D—d cheek!" "Infernal snob!" "Mind his own blank business," etc., etc., and so now I am going to bed to cry. The DENTONS are coming over to spend the day tomorrow. Such a nuisance!



'CHAOS IS COME AGAIN!'

Or, Things very much Up in the City.

["The following streets were 'up' on July 3:—Old Broad Street, Threadneedle Street, Lothbury, Princes Street, Bishopsgate Street, Gracechurch Street, Leadenhall Street, Cornhill, Lombard Street, Fenchurch Street, Cannon Street, Cheapside, St. Swithin's Lane, and Queen Victoria Street."—*Times*, July 4.]

HIS DIARY.

July 16th.—Hooray! I have made her acquaintance! She is adorable, perfectly bewitching, and she gains tremendously on acquaintance—even the acquaintance of a few hours. It appears that the DENTONS—excellent angels of mercy!—are staying at Vichy. I have known them all my life, and they actually came here to spend the day with the SOMERVILLES. It was not an opportunity to let slip; so the moment they came and spoke to me, I whispered, in hurried, tragic accents, "You must introduce me to the girl with the red hair—I mean the SOMERVILLES." "Is it as bad as that?" laughed Mrs. DENTON. "Of course we will, in good time. But you might ask us how we are, and what we are doing here. JACK has had awful dyspepsia. He can't digest a simple biscuit, so we are at

Vichy." "How sad!" I answered. "But don't let's talk about symptoms. I am much worse than Jack. Tell me about the SOMERVILLES." So then I quickly learnt that she was an only child, adored by her parents, rich, attractive, gifted, and very hard to please. "I don't know how many men she has already refused," concluded Mrs. DENTON. "It is either morbid, or a mania with her." This, of course, is discouraging, but after the introduction had been made I felt less disheartened. I sat at the band with them in the afternoon, and I was quite charmed with her easy, unaffected conversation. We carefully avoided the waters, the baths, and other usual topics of conversation here. She asked me once if I drank the waters, and I replied with evasive lightness that I had had a slight accident to my knee and took them occasionally. Then I adroitly got her back to safer topics. The DENTONS went back in the evening. I was rather glad—they had served a very useful purpose, and I would rather have her to myself. Mrs. DENTON is loud and cheery, and horribly energetic. Even her husband's incurable indigestion doesn't seem to have damped her spirits. I am looking forward to tomorrow and every day until she goes, which, alas! is to be very soon. I counter-ordered the all-day bath, and resumed rational treatment. F. C. PH.

(To be continued.)



FANCY.

The kind of figure you see on Posters inviting you to the French seaside resorts.

RÉCLAME A LA RÉJANE.

DURING Madame RÉJANE's stay in London everyone must have seen her pair of very handsome mules drawing a carriage of a form sometimes seen in Paris, and resembling, according to one London newspaper, a hansom cab. Seeing that it has four wheels, the box in front, and a pole for a pair of animals there semblance is not very apparent. It is, in fact, a victoria with a fixed wooden hood instead of a movable leather one. It is extremely unlikely that this eccentricity of genius on the part of Madame RÉJANE will pass unnoticed or unimitated by the other leaders of the theatrical world. Next summer we may expect to read the following amongst the "Society" paragraphs.

Madame SARAH BERNHARDT was in the Park yesterday, in a yellow barouche drawn by four superb zebras, with postillions in amber silk liveries and gilt hats.

Mrs. LANGTRY was at Hurlingham in the afternoon. She had come down in her miniature green cabriolet drawn by two large antelopes of matchless beauty driven tandem. A negro page, wearing a green satin turban and green dress studded with emeralds, stood as "tiger" behind.

Mons. COQUELIN (the Society paragraphist would certainly write "Mons." instead of "M.") was noticed in Piccadilly in his scarlet *charrette anglaise*, drawn by a remarkably fine ostrich.

Mr. TREE drove through the Park. The dashing dromedary in his elegant pink Irish car excited general admiration.

Mlle. LIANE DE PUGY was shopping in Bond Street. Her palanquin, painted pure white, and lined with white velvet and pearls, was suspended on the backs of two white sacred bulls from India, led by Hindoos entirely clothed in white garments with pearl ornaments.

Mr. DAN LENO was riding in the Row on his hippopotamus. An unexpected incident occurred. The animal suddenly dashed over the footpath and rushed into the Serpentine. Mr. LENO scrambled off, and struggled out of the water with some difficulty. He was at once charged by the police with having a horse not under proper control, with riding on the footpath, with sending an animal into the water, with bathing in the Serpentine during prohibited hours, and with other breaches of the Park regulations. As he explained, however, that the animal was a river horse, and therefore ought to be in the river, and that he had not bathed in the Serpentine but had only stepped in with his clothes on by mistake, his name and address were taken and he was allowed to go home. The Royal Humane Society's men, after two hours of fruitless efforts, desisted from their attempts to rescue the hippopotamus, which left the water later on and trotted quietly home to Mr. JAMRACH's stable. H. D. B.

THE POINT OF VIEW.

["It is just in the south that the mists of the north get their full effect on the northern imagination."—*St. James's Gazette*.]

OH, folk on distant journeys bent
In search of Nature's rich delights,
Who seek earth's rarest spots, intent
To view her fairest sights,
Come, since your aim is beauty's quest,
And spare your pains, and save the cost,
Which, experts say who know the best,
Are useless waste and labour lost.

He to the highest who aspires
Humbly his object best attains,
He who the mountain's charm admires
Should view it from the plains;
The ocean's spell he best can prize
Who inland gives his fancy scope;
The sun is brightest in his eyes
Who in a dismal grove must grope.

Ah! then, why squander wealth and time
In costly visits to the sea?
Why perilously mountains climb
In quest of scenery?
Nay, beauty's lover, rather go
Among surroundings poor and mean,
And learn fair Italy to know
In Bermondsey or Bethnal Green.

"IFS."

HAPPY the child "who takes after his father," IF the child isn't thirsty, and IF his father is a teetotalter.



FACT.

The kind of figure which comes nearest to the ideal you have formed.

A GOUTY COURTSHIP.

HER DIARY.

July 16th.—Oh Joy! Joy!! Joy!!! Dear, darling diary, we have been introduced! Sweet Mrs. DENTON, whose visit hung over me like a nightmare, was the officiating angel. She knows him very well; she says he is of *very* good family, tolerably well off, rather a *malade imaginaire* she fancied, and he has no parents. What could be nicer? He certainly improves even in appearance when you talk to him. His features light up, and his sad eyes almost sparkled once or twice. I am afraid he is not very truthful. He told me that he had had an accident to his knee, and the *caissière* of the hotel distinctly told Mamma that he was following the treatment for gout. But he does not like to talk about himself. He asked me so many questions about the things I liked and the sort of life I led, and it is extraordinary that we agreed on every subject. We have exactly the same tastes. He does not care much about society, and not at all for dancing—no more do I. He likes golf and all out-door sports. So do I. Oh! I wish it was to-morrow!

HIS DIARY.

July 17th.—A terrible thing has happened. They are going away very shortly. Some idiotic doctor has decided that Mr. SOMERVILLE has had sufficient baths, and they have decided to leave on the 22nd. I shall decide for myself when I have had sufficient baths. It will probably be not later than the 23rd. I am certainly better. Royat is a wonderful place. The air is perfectly delicious, and the Park so green and smiling with its perennial orchestra. How could one be dull here? I sat with her twice yesterday—she can tell fortunes by palmistry. I begged her to tell mine. At first she objected, and asked me if my fortune was not already told; but as I persisted she took the tips of my fingers in hers and read some really wonderful truths. It was an ecstatic moment. First of all, she said I had "a very good heart"—(Quite true); that I had more heart than "head"—(I am not quite sure of this); I had natural gifts for the Arts—(I suppose this is true also); I had a good temper—(This I know to be an absolute fact); I was perhaps not always quite truthful—(Who can be in a world full of shams and deceit?). Finally, I should live to a good old age, and she added, rather maliciously, I thought, "notwithstanding the accident to your knee." I couldn't help asking her, in rather a shaky voice, "Shall I ever marry?" She looked very steadily at the lines of my hand, and then said, "I hope so. People are happier married, are they not?" I felt almost like making her a declaration on the spot, but the band was playing a particularly loud selection from *Lohengrin*, and the moment was not propitious. I should like to have asked some more questions; but her father came back from the fountain, where the waters had evidently not improved his temper. "Do leave off that tomfoolery, MAUD," he said. "A hundred years ago you would have been burnt as a witch." "It is a very harmless kind of witchcraft," I said apologetically. "I don't choose my daughter to do it, Sir," he said with a gouty glare.

Naturally, we both collapsed.

In the evening I managed to say: "Will you complete my fortune to-morrow?" "I don't think I have anything to do with your fortune," she answered simply. "You might have, if you liked—if you would condescend," I said very humbly, and then of course there came the usual interruption in the shape of her mother. I am thinking of nice things to say to-morrow. Usually, I don't find it difficult to talk, but when I am with her I find myself tongue-tied or making inexpressibly idiotic remarks.

HER DIARY.

July 17th.—I have only four more days to spend here. A week ago I should be delighted at the prospect of leaving, but now I am almost miserable. I suppose we shall meet again, but everything is so uncertain in this life. I told his fortune by

palmistry yesterday. He has nothing but *good* lines in his hand. I was sure of it before I looked. His "heart" is immense, and he is affectionate and true in love; but I couldn't tell him all that. I went very far as it was! He talks *brilliantly*, and at the same time very sensibly. I could listen to him all day. There is just a little sadness in some of the things he said, but I don't know if that is caused by the past or the present. I rather fancy it is the latter. Mamma likes him, but Papa says there must be something radically wrong with a man who has gout at his age. "God knows what he has been up to!" he said. I turned crimson, and said: "Were you very wicked, Papa, that you are being punished by gout?" I was very near the door when I made the remark, and I didn't wait for the reply.

HIS DIARY.

July 18th.—Things are reaching a crisis. I can't sleep now. All night long I tossed about thinking of brilliant things to say to her, and the more I strived after epigrams which should have a slight tinge of sadness in them, the more my mind became a blank, and I could only repeat, "She goes in three days! What will become of me?" Of course, I am in love—more so than I have ever been—and, mingled with gout, it is a terrible disease. And she is in love too. Why does her hand tremble when it touches mine? Why does the colour mount to her face whenever we meet? Why do we both prefer to be silent when we are together? Because we cannot talk of the things which are in our minds, and so we prefer to *think*. The idea of ever gaining her father's consent seems to me preposterous at the present moment. If I could only save her life, or her mother's—not his—something that would entitle me to his gratitude. But people never are grateful. It would probably make him hate me more than he already does if I rendered him a service. I must think of something else. But what? In vain I beat my brain to think of something that will show me in a favourable light to him. It is no use sitting here writing—I must go to bed—back to the hot pillows which I turn again and again, till, in desperation, I throw them on to the floor and lie flat on my back, staring up at the ceiling in blank despair.

HER DIARY.

July 18th.—Papa dislikes him more and more, and I am sure his affection for me increases in proportion. What is to be done? I have started a cough—a little hacking cough; and if they are very unkind to me I mean to develop consumption. Papa is already irritated by my cough. He said, "You have caught cold, MAUD. How the devil did you manage to do that?" I said, "I don't know. I daresay it's nothing—only—I always feel tired now." Mamma was really uneasy, and said I must see a doctor. If the doctor would only recommend me the waters to gargle and inhale, I shouldn't mind. It would keep us here till the end of his "cure." What will he do without me! He told me yesterday that his movements were uncertain, that he should probably not stay after the 23rd, and he threw such meaning and sadness into the date. It would be terrible if I were the cause of shortening his treatment and preventing his restoration to health. I should never forgive myself. How I wish I had gout, then Papa couldn't say anything. I might imitate the faces Papa makes when he gets a twinge, but nothing would induce me to imitate his language. Only three days more, unless a miracle takes place.

HIS DIARY.

July 19th.—Only two days more, and she is ill. How inhuman of them to take her away. She coughs, and has a drooping appearance. Can it be grief? We never have a moment alone! She told me yesterday that she had never been so sorry to leave any place. I managed to whisper that I liked it at present, but after she had gone it would seem like—I stopped for want of a proper simile. "I know the place you mean," she said; "Papa often mentions it."

I think I will write to her to-morrow. It may be dishonourable to do so without her parents' knowledge, but with such inhospitable parents one must deal differently. They are going to Paris for a few days, and from there home to their place in Sussex. It is all hopeless; I shall never see her again. I am decidedly better, but what does it matter how I am if I lose her?

HER DIARY.

July 19th.—There is not the slightest sign of a miracle, and I shall never see him after the 22nd of this month. I coughed till I really made myself hoarse, and then Papa and Mamma both decided that I wanted change of air. I have never coughed since, still they say that it is a warning that I have exhausted this air. What rubbish people talk about health! I almost feel as if I must confide in Mamma; I should like to throw myself at her feet and tell her that I love him, and that as she was young herself once, and I supposed, loved Papa at that period, she must have pity on me. She is very good and sweet, I think she would understand me; but Papa would be driven clean out of his mind, and probably have a very bad relapse. Besides, I don't know that he loves me. I think he thinks I am rather nice, and he certainly prefers to talk to me to anyone. He knows people here, and he has refused all their invitations; but is that sufficient to implore Mamma to stay another week? I can write no more—my brain is wandering.

HIS DIARY.

July 20th.—It is done. I have written to her! Without vanity, I think I may say I composed a beautiful letter. It was simple, manly and straightforward. I told her frankly that I loved her, that I had never loved anyone until I met her, and then I gave some necessary details of my position and past life, and, finally, begged for a few words of hope. I have just given the letter, together with a louis, to the chambermaid of her floor, and to-morrow morning I shall know the worst. Of course, sleep is out of the question; I don't even feel like going to bed. I have only been here sixteen days, and what a change has been effected in my life! How blindly one looks at the future. I came here thinking only of my gout and the wretched three weeks I should have to spend here, and now all is changed. I think only of her, night and day.

HER DIARY.

July 20th.—He has written to me! How imprudent of him, but how delightful to read his fervent, truthful words, and know that he really cares for no one in the world but me! He asks me to marry him, to be only his, to drag his soul from the slough of despair in which it is at present plunged. Nothing could be more beautiful or clever than his choice of words, and his handwriting is exquisite—firm and legible. What was I to do? I read his eight pages over and over again, and then I

decided to seek Mamma's assistance, so I tapped gently at her door, and begged her to come and talk to me in my room. It was very difficult, and poor Mamma was quite unprepared for my news. She said she was just saying her prayers, and thought she had finished with one day's miseries at any rate. But I explained to her that this was not sorrow; it was joy—unspeakable joy, for me. She seemed to think it very extraordinary that I should care for a man of whom I knew so little, but I told her that there was no reason in love; if people reasoned it wouldn't be love, it would be calculation. This argument seemed to strike her, and then, with many blushes, I showed her his letter. Of course, she couldn't help admiring

his beautiful phrases—although she didn't acknowledge it; but she shook her head, and said Papa would never consent to my marrying a gouty man. "Then I shall die!" I exclaimed. "And the sooner the better. You know I am ill, and I believe you want to kill me on purpose." Then Mamma cried, and I cried too, and finally I got her to consent to my going over to the DENTONS to-morrow; and he may come too, if he likes (by another train); and if we really seem to care for each other when we are without the restraint of third people I am to write, and then she will see what can be done with Papa. "It is better that you should not be there when the news is broken to him," she said, in her dear old complaining voice. "He might throw something at you." So then I hugged her for ever so long, and let her go to bed, and I sat down and wrote a very guarded, modest letter to PERCY—I shall certainly call him PERCY in my diary. I have looked out the trains; I leave at 10.0 and there is a train for him about 12.3. I shan't sleep to-night.

HIS DIARY.

Vichy, July 21st.—We are both here—she staying with the DENTONS, I at another hotel. She has consented, conditionally on her father's approval. Too excited and bewildered to write.

HER DIARY.

Vichy, July 22nd.—We are so happy; but all depends on Mamma's letter to-morrow. Vichy is such a pretty place, and the air perfectly delightful. As for the DENTONS, no words can express their kindness. I can't write, I have so much to think of.

July 23rd.—A very sweet letter from Mamma. She says the worst is over. She let Papa work off the superfluous language for at least half-an-hour before she interrupted him, and then she gradually explained to him that I was really in love with PERCY, and making myself quite ill at the thoughts of a separation—also that I must marry some day, and that Mr. GORING my own darling PERCY—was certainly a desirable *parti*, and a lot of other very clever arguments, and finally, towards the evening, Papa consented to interviewing PERCY, and if he can give satisfactory reasons for his gout he will perhaps consider



THE HAND OF THE CENSOR.

John Bull. "YES, I CAN SEE SOUTH AFRICA RIGHT ENOUGH; BUT, HANG ME IF I CAN MAKE OUT EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE DOING!"

an engagement. I can't expect more—I scarcely expected so much. PERCY is in the seventh heaven. I told him I kept a diary, and one day when we are properly engaged I would show it to him and he would see my first impressions of him; and, oddly enough, he keeps one too, and he said he would show it to me—and then he pulled himself up, and said he couldn't. I told him I should insist, and asked him why he could not? The reason was very simple. He took my face in his hands, and kissed it laughingly, and said, "Because I began by calling you the girl with red hair!" F. C. PH.

THE CULT OF CULTURE.

(An *Advance Chapter from my next "Garden-book."*)

On the grass yonder, between the apple-tree and the pansies I see—but, by the way, dearest reader, have I told you about the sweet old apple-tree? Ah, I thought not! Well, it shall have a nice, pretty chapter all to itself later on. Between it and the pansies, which I sowed myself in a light loam early in April and they haven't come up yet, though there are others among the potatoes which are tall and straggling, like this sentence, but it's only eleven o'clock on Monday morning, and I must spin out this morning's observations into a whole chapter, I see, as I said before—what do you think? A fallen leaf. A fallen leaf. Say that slowly and distinctly twenty-seven times, and if the poetry of it all doesn't sink into your very soul, I'm sorry for you. Alas, poor leaf! If it were still upon the tree, it would not lie upon the dark damp earth; stirred by the gentle wind 'twould murmur a thousand caressing messages to its little brothers! Fate willed it otherwise. Ah, complete, ah, mournful parable of life! The leaf is not on the tree. It lies upon the ground—lies between the tree and the dear pansies; forsaken, desolate, alone. The apple-tree is on its right—dread symbolism!—the pansy-border on its left. The leaf is on the ground.

(There, that's one good solid paragraph finished. This new fashion in literature certainly saves one a lot of trouble. Before it became popular, I used to write novels; now I don't trouble about a plot, or characters, or anything. I simply sit in the garden from ten o'clock to four—Saturdays, ten to one—and put down my thoughts just as they come, mixed up

with little bits cribbed from the *Journal of Horticulture*. In another hundred pages or so the book will be finished, and I shall bid my darling readers good-bye.)

Close by the greenhouse, four feet from the gooseberries, and two-feet-six from the second-best honeysuckle, I have dotted in a clump of dandelions. Such brave flowers, so sturdy and self-reliant! Oddly enough, they have all turned out yellow with me. Why are none of them purple?

ILLUSTRATED QUOTATIONS.

(One so seldom finds an Artist who realises the poetic conception.)



"AND FOUND THE PRIVATE IN THE PUBLIC GOOD."—Pope.

Perhaps it is the soil. But they are not difficult to grow. Put them singly in small pots proportionately to the size of the tubers, in a compost consisting of equal parts of fibrous loam, leaf-soil and sand. Press the soil rather firmly if a short growth and a long season are desired, stand the pots on a bed of cocoanut fibre, or plunge them in it, and keep the temperature of the house at 65° to 70°. At least, this is how they tell one to grow tuberous begonias, and the same plan ought to answer for dandelions and cauliflowers, and things of that sort.

It is nearly twelve o'clock; "noon," in the quaint old Anglo-Saxon phrase. A sparrow has just hopped across the lettuces—a sweet little bird, with two

eyes, two feet, and one beak. But the early worm has left some hours ago on pressing business. Ah, dearest reader, the saddest words in the language. Too late! Too late! Too late! Oh, the bitterness of it all!

But I must be brave. I must water the geraniums. (Plant out early in May, in a south aspect, and mulch freely.) Yes, I must water the geraniums. So do the petty, insistent duties of life break in upon our most spiritual moods! Yet even here fresh disappointment lurks, envious, malignant. The pump is out of order. Besides, there are no geraniums to water. The cat scratched them all up last week.

Now it is nearly lunch-time, so I must finish off this chapter. Down the pleasant path I stray, among the mignonette and musk and marigolds. Look at that swift swallow, his wings sheening in the shine of the sun!—but lunch is ready. Sit still, dear, darling reader, sit very still; after lunch I'll come and talk to you again.

A. C. D.

A MISLAID BILL OF FARE.

FOR some unexplained reason, the following suggestions for the menu of a banquet to be given to a distinguished statesman was left at Mr. *Punch's* official residence. The owner may have it on application.

Hors d'œuvres.

Caviare au général.

Olives en branche.

Bouchées variées.

Potages.

Hotch-potch.

Purée de poireaux.

Poissons.

Soles Parentés.

Entremets.

Les canards au Tory.

Les oies à la Réforme.

Epigramme à la Morley.

Petite Paix. Sauce lionne.

Les colombes en branche de Noël.

Rôts.

Rosbif à l'Oncle Paul. Sauce Hollandaise.

Froids.

Pieds de cochon au Chambellan.

Chaufroid à la bouchère.

Les Vins mousseux, crus spécieux:

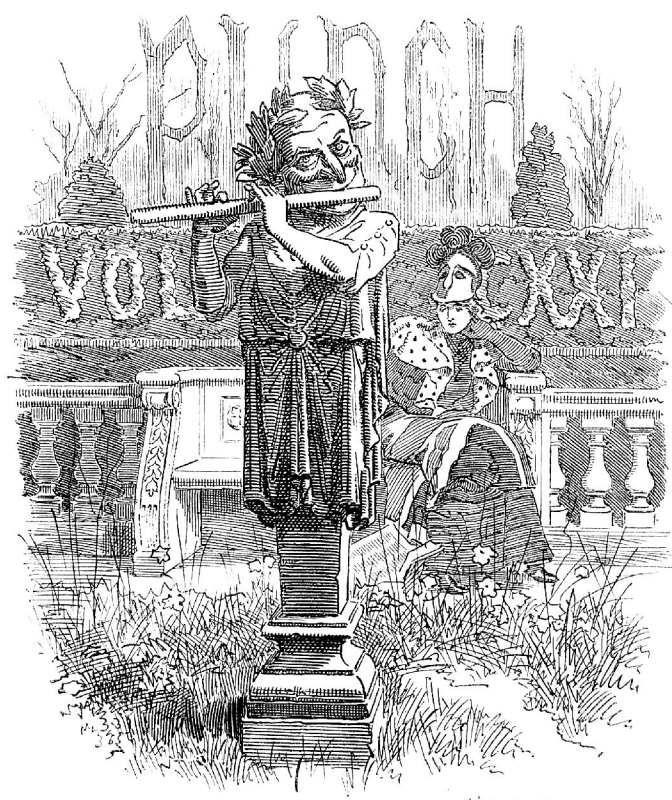
Château Porte-bannière.

Château Demandavec.

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