BEBEE:

TWO LITTLE WOODEN SHOES



"You are cross, Jeannot, that is what it is," she said after awhite. "You should not be cross; you are too big and strong and good. Go in and get my bowl of bread and milk for me, and hand it to me up here. It is so pleasant. It is as nice as being perched on an analytic to."

ant. It is as lice as being perched on an apple tree."

Jeannot went in obediently and handed up her breakfast to her, looking at her with shy, worshiping eyes. But his face was overcast, and he sighed heavily as he took up his hatchet and turned away; for he was the sole support of his mother and sisters, and if he did not do his work in Solgnies they would starve at home.

he did not do his work in Solgnies they would starve at home.

"You will be seeing that stranger againf" he asked her.

"Yes!" she answered, with a glad triumph in her eyes; not thinking at all of him as she spoke. "You ought to go, Jeannot, now, you are so late. I will come and see your mother to-morrow. And do not be cross, you dear big Jeannot. Days are too short to smip them up into little bits by bad temper; it is only a stupid sheep shearer that spoils mip them up into fittle bits by sad temper; it is only a stupid sheep shearer that spoils the fleece by snapping at it sharp and hard— that is what Father Francis says."

Below having delivered her little piece of wisdom, broke her bread into her milk and

ato it, lifting her face to the fresh winds and tossing crumbs to the wheeling swallows, and watching the rose bushes nod and toss below

watching the rose bushes nod and toss below in the breeze, and thinking vaguely how happy a thing it was to live.

Jeannot looked up at her, then went on his slow, sad way through the wet lavender shrubs and the opening buds of the lilies.

"You will only think of that stranger,

"You will only think of that stranger, Bebee, never of any of us—never again," he said, and wearily opened the little gate and went through it, and down the daybreak stillness of the lane. It was a foolish thing to say, but when were lovers ever wise!

Bebee did not heed; she did not understand herself or him; she only knew that she was happy; when one knows that, one does not want to seek much further.

CHAPTER IX

Her stranger from Rubes' land was a great man in a certain world. He had become man in a certain world. He had become great when young, which is perhaps a misfortune. It indisposes men to be great at their maturity. He was famous at 20, by a picture hectic in color, perfect in drawing, that made Paris at his feet. He became more famous by verses, by plays, by political felles and by social successes. He was faithful, however, to his first love in art. He was a great united and very by war recommend. a great painter, and year by year proves afresh the cumning of his hand. Purists said his pictures had no soul in them. It was not wonderful if they had none. He always painted soulless vice; indeed, he saw very little else. One year he had some political trouble. He

wrote a witty pamphlet that hurt where it was perilous to aim. He laughed and crossed the border, riding into the green Ar dennes one sunny evening. He had a name of some power and sufficient wealth, he did not fear long exile. Meanwhile he told nim oif he would go and look at Scheffer's The King of Thule is better, but people

talk most of the Gretchen. He had

He went in leisurely, traveling up the right Meuse river, and across the monotony of the plains, then green with wheat a foot high, and musical with the many bells of the Easter kermesses in the quaint old world vil-There was something so novel, so sleepy, so

harmless, so mediaval, in the Flemish life, that it soothed him. He had been swimming all his life in salt sea fed rapids, this sluggish, dull canal water, mirroring between its rushes a life that had scarcely changed for centuries, had a charm for him.

He stayed awhile in Antwerpen.

is ugly and beautiful; it is like a dull, quaint gres de Flandre jug, that has precious stones set inside its rim. It is a burger lodger of bales and barrels, of sale and barter, of loss and gain; but in the heart of it there are il-luminated leaves of missal vellum, all gold and color, and monkish story and heroic ballad, that could only have been executed in the days when art was a religion.

He gazed himself into an homage of Rubens,

whom before he had slighted, never having known (for, unless you have seen Antwerp, it is as absurd to say that you have seen R as it is to think that you have seen Murillo out of Seville, or Raffaelle out of Rome); and he studied the Gretchen carefully, delicately, sympathetically, for he loved Scheffer; though he tried, he failed to care for her.

"She is only a peasant; she is not a poem," he said to himself; "I will paint a Gretcher for the Salon of next year."

But it was hard for him to portray of

Gretchen. All his pictures were Phryne-Phryne in triumph, ia ruin, in a palace, in a poorhouse, on a bed of roses, on a hospital mattress; Phryne laughing with a belt of jewels about her supple waist; Phryne lying with the stones of the dead house under he naked limbs-but always Phryne. Phryne, who living had death in her smile; Phryne, who lifeless had blank despair on her face; Phryne, a thing that lived furiously every second of her days, but Phryne a thing that once being dead was carrion that could neve

Phryne has many painters in this school, as many as Catherine and Cecilia had in the schools of the Renaissance, and he was chief

How could be paint Greichen if the pure Scheffer missed! Not even if, like the artist monks of old, he steeped his brushes all Lent through in holy water.

And in holy water he did not believe. One evening, having left Antwerpen ring-ing its innumerable bells over the grave of its dead Art, he leaned out of the casement of an absent friend's old palace in the Erabant street that is named after Mary of Burgundy; an old casement crusted with quaint carv-ings and gilded round in Spanish fushion with many gargoyles and griffles and illegible

Leaning there, wendering with himself whether he would wait awhile and paint quietly in this dim street, haunted with the shades of Memling and Maes, and Otto Veneris and Fhilip do Champagne, or whether he would go into the cast and seek new types, and lie under the red Egyptian beavens and create a true Cleopatra, which no man has ever done yet—a young Cleopatra, ankle deep in roses and fresh from Caesar's kisses—leaning there, he saw a little peasant go by below, with two little white feet in two wooden shoes, and a face that had the pure and simple radice of the peasant go by the content of the pure and simple radice.

the pure and simple radiance of a flower. 'There is my Gretchen," he thought to himself, and went down and followed her into the cathedral. If he could get what was in her face be would get what Scheffer could

A little later, walking by her in the green lanes, he meditated: "It is the face of Gretchen, but not the soul—the Red Mouse has never passed this child's lips. Neverthe

"Nevertheless"-he said to himself and

For be, the painter all his life long of Phryne living and of Phryne dead, believed that every daughter of Eve either vomits the

It makes so little difference which-either

of the evening, towards this little run cov-oved but, he forgot the Red Mome and tegral vaguely to see that there are creatures of his mother's san from whom the beast of the

"Nevertheless," for be knew well that when the steel cuts the silk, when the hound hunts the fawn, when the make woose the bird, when the king covets the vineyard, there is only one end possible at any time. It is the strong against the weak, the fleros against the feeble, the subtle against the simple, the master against the slave; there is no equality in the contest, and no justice—it is morely inevitable, and the issue of it is written.

CHAPTER X

CHAPTER X

The next day she had her promised book hidden under the vine leaves of her empty basket as she went homeward, and though she had not seen him very long or spoken to him very much, she was happy.

The golden gates of knowledge had just opened to her; she saw a faint, far off glimpse of the Hesperides gardens within; of the dragon she had never heard, and had no fear.

"Might I know your name!" she had asked him wistfully, as she had given him the resebud, and taken the volume in return that day.

"They call me Flamen."

"It is your name?"

"Yes, for the world. You must call me Victor, as other women do. Why do you want my name?"

"Jeannot asked it of me,"

"Oh, Jeannot asked it, did he?"

"Yes; besides," said Bebes, with her eyes very soft and very serious, and her happy voice husbed, "besides, I want to pray for you of course, every day; and if I do not knew your name, how can I make Our Lady rightly understand? The flowers know you without a name, but she might not, because so very many are always beseeching ber, and you see she has all the world to look after."

He had looked at her with a curious look, and had bade her farewell, and lot her go home alone that night.

Her work was quickly done, and by the light of the moon she spread her book on her lap in the porch of the hut and began her new delight.

The children had come and pulled at her skirts and begged her to play. But Beboe had shaken her head.

"I am going to learn to be very wise, dear," she told them. "I shall not have time to dance or to play."

"But people are not merry when they are wise, Bebee," said Franz, the biggest boy.

dance or to play."

"But people are not merry when they are wise, Bobee," said Franz, the biggest boy.
"Perhaps not," said Bebee; "but one cannot be everything, you know, Franz."
"But surely you would rather be merry than anything else?"
"I think there is something better, Franz. I am not sure; I want to find out; I will tell you when I know."
"Who has put that into your head, Bebeef"
"The angels in the cathedral." about!

"The angels in the cathedral," she told them; and the children were awed and left her, and went away to play blind man's buff by themselves, on the grass by the swan's

water.

"But for all that the angels have said it," said Franz to his sisters, "I cannot see what good it will be to ber to be wise, if she will not care any longer afterwards for almond ginger bread and currant cake."

It was the little tale of "Paul and Virginia" that he had given her to begin her studies with; but it was a grand copy, full of beautiful drawings nearly at every more.

beautiful drawings nearly at every page.
It was hard work for her to read at first, but the drawings enticed and helped ber, and she soon sank breathlessly into the charm of the story. Many words she did not know; many passages were beyond her compre-hension, she was absolutely ignorant, and and nothing but the force of her own fancy

But though stumbling at every step, as a mer, she was happy as the child would be, because of the sweet, strange air that was blowing about her, and the blossoms that she could gather into her hand, so rare, so wonderful, and yet withal so familiar, because they were blossoms.



I am going to learn to be very wise, dear. With her fingers buried in her curls, with her book on her knee, with the moon rays white and strong on the page, Bebee sat entranced as the hours went by; the children's play shouts died away; the babble of the gossip at the house doors ceased; people went by and called good night to her; the little buts

shut up one by one, like the white and purple convolvulus cups in the bedges. Bebee did not stir, nor did she hear them she was deaf even to the singing of the night ngales in the willows, where she sat in be ittle dark perch, with the tvy dropping from the thatch above, and the wet garden ways

beyond her. A heavy step came tramping down the lane A voice called to her:

What are you doing, Bebee, there this time of the night? It is on the strike of

She started as if she were doing some evil thing, and stretched her arms out, and looked around with blinded wondering eyes, as if she had been rudely wakened from her sleep. "What are you doing up so late?" asked Jeannot; he was coming from the forest in the dead of night to bring food for his family, he lost his sleep thus often, but he never thought that he did anything except his duty in those long, dark, tiring tramps to and fro

between Boignies and Lacken. Bebee shut her book, and smiled dreaming eyes, that saw him not at all. "I was reading-and, Jeannot, his nan Flamen for the world-but I may call bim

"What do I care for his name?"

"You asked it this morning." "More fool I. Why do you read! Reading not for poor folk like you and me." Rebee smiled up at the white clear moon that sailed above the woods,

She was not awake out of her dream. She only dimly board the words he spoke. "You are a little pensant," said Jeannot roughly, as he paused at the gate. "It is all you can do to get your bread. You have no one to stand between you and hunger. How will it be with you when the slug gets your roses, and the snail your carnations, and your hens die of damp, and your lace is all wove awry, because your head runs on reading and

folly, and you are spoilt for all simple pleasures and for all honest work?"

She smiled, still looking up at the moon, with the drooping ivy touching her hair. You are cross, dear Jeannot. Good

A moment afterwards the little rickety door was shut, and the rusty bolt drawn within it; Jeannot stood in the cool summer night all alone, and knew how stupid he had been is

He leaned on the gate a minute: there crossed the garden as softly as his wooden shoes would let him. He tapped gently on

"Bebee-Bebee-just listen. I spoke roughly, dear-I know I have no right. I am Will you be friends with me againtto be friends again." She opened the shutter a little way, so that

he could see her pretty mouth speaking.

"Oh, Jeannot, what does it matter? Yes,
we are friends—we will always be friends, of Course—only you do not know. Good night."

He went away with a heavy heart and a long drawn step. He would have preferred that she should have been angry with him. Bebee, left alone, let the clothes drop off her pretty round shoulders and her rosy limbs, and shook out her coils of hair, and

kissed the book, and laid it under her head, and went to sleep with a smile on her face. Only, as she slept, her fingers moved as if she were counting her beads, and her lips

"Un, over Hoty Mother, you have so much to think of—yes, I know—all the poor, and all the little children. But take care of him; he is called Flamen, and he lives in the street of Mary of Burgundy; you cannot miss him; and if you look for him always, and have a breed that the angels never leave him, I will give you my great cactus flower—my only one—on your feast of Roses, this very year. Oh, dear Mother, you will not forget!"

CHAPTER XI

CHAPTER XL

Bebee was a dreamer in her way, and aspired to be a scholar too. But, all the same, she was not a little fool.

She had been reared in hardy, simple, honest ways of living, and would have thought it as shameful as a theft to have owed her bread to other folk.

So, though she had a wakeful, restless night, full of strange phantasies, none the less did she sweep out her floor and make her mash for the fowls, and wash out her bit of linen and hang it to dry on a line among the tall, flaunting hollyhocks that were so proud of themselves because they reached to the roof.

"What do you want with books, Bebeel" and Reise, the sabot maker's wife, across the privet hedge, as she also hung out her linen. "Franz told me you were reading last night. It is the silver buckles have done that. One mischief always begets another."

"Where is the mischief, good Reinel' said Bebee, who was always prettily behaved with her elders, though, when pushed to it, she could hold her own.

"The mischief will be in discontent," said the sabot maker's wife. "People live on their own little patch, and think it is the world; that is as it should be—everybody within his own, like a nut in its shell. But when you get reading, you hear of a swarm of things you never saw, and you fret because you cannot see them, and you dream, and dream, and a hole is burnt in your soup pot, and your dough is as heavy as lead. You are like bees that leave their own clover fields to buzz themselves dend against the glass of a hot house."

tima. I said, "The child is a good child, and spins, and sews, and sweeps, rare and fine for her age—why go and spoil her?" But he was always headstrong. Not a child of mine knows a letter—the saints be praised! nor a word of any tongue but our own good Flemish. You should have been brought up the same. You would have come to no trouble then."

bee, scattering the potato peels to the clack-ing poultry, and she smiled into the faces of the golden oxlips that nodded to her back

shirt.

But Bebee was not hearing: she was calling the chickens, and telling the oxlips how preity they looked in the borders; and in her heart she was counting the minutes till the old Dutch cuckoo clock at Mere Krebs'—the only clock in the lane—should crow out the hour at which she went down to the city. She loved the but, the birds, the flowers;

She loved the hut, the birds, the flowers; but they were little to her now compared with the dark, golden, picturesque square, the changing crowds, the frowning roofs, the gray stones, and the delight of watching through the shifting colors and shadows of the throngs for one face and for one smile.

"He is sure to be there," she thought, and started half an hour earlier than was her wont. She wanted to tell him all her rapture in the book—no one else could understand.

But all the day through he never came. Bebee sat with a sick heart and a parched little throat, selling her flowers and straining her eyes through the tumuit of the square.

The whole day went by and there was no

day; her pouch was full of pence-what was She went and prayed in the cathedral, but it seemed cold, and desolate, and empty; even

the storied windows seemed dark. thought; and a terror fell on her that frightened her, it was so unlike any fear that she

Going home through the streets, she passed the cafe of the Trois Freres that looks out on the trees of the park, and that has flowers in its balconies, and pleasant windows that stand open to let the sounds of the soldiers music enter. She saw him in one of the winlows. There were amber and scarlet and black; silks and satins and velvets. There was a fan painted and jeweled. There was women's faces. There was a heap of purple fruit, and glittering sweetments. He lau there. His beautiful Murillo head was dark against the white and gold within.

reason why he should be as good as he is," she said to herself as she went slowly over the

She had the dog's soul-only she did not But the tears fell down her cheeks as she walked.

to Father Francis:

them; and I could not pray to Mary last night for thinking of them-for I hated them so much. But she did not say: "I hated them because they were with

the bricks of his little bare study, where all the books he ever spelt out were treatises on the art of bes keeping.
"My dear, you never were covetous at all,

nor did you ever seem to care for the things of the world. I wish Jehan had not given you those silver buckles; I think they have ot your little soul on vanities." "It is not the buckles; I am not covetous,

said Betse, and then her face grew warm. She did not know why, and she did not hear the rest of Father Francis' admonitions.

But the next moon time brought him to the market stall, and the next also, and so the summer days slipped away, and Bebee was quite happy if she saw him in the morning time, to give him a fresh rose, or at evening by the gutes, or under the beech trees, when he brought her a new book, and sauntered

An innocent, unconscious love like Bebee's wants so little food to make it all content. Such mere trifles are beautiful and sweet to it. Such slender stray gleams of light suffice to make a broad, bright, golden noon of perfeet joy around it.
All the delirium, and fever, and desire, and

despair, that are in maturer passion, are far away from it; far as is the flash of the meteor across sultry skies from the blue forget me-not down in the brown meadow brook. It was very wonderful to Bebee that he this stranger from Rubes' fairyland, could come at all to keep pace with her little clattering wooden shoes, over the dust and the grass, in the dim twilight time. The days kept count of the hours no more by the cuckoo clock of the mill house, or the deep chimes of the Brussels belfries; but only by such moments as brought her a word from

gave her, studying the long, cruel polysyllables, and spelling slowly through the phrases that seemed to her so cramped and tangled, and which yet were a pleas cl, for sake of the thought they held. For Beloe, ignorant, little simple soul that she was, had a mind in her that was enger, diservant, quick to acquire, skillful to retain, and it would happen in certain times that

that the child had more windom than was often to be found in schools.

Meanwhile he pondered various studies in various stages of a Gretchen, and made love to Bebes—made love at least by his eyes and by his voice, not burrying his pleasant task, but hovering about ter coftly, and mindful not to scare her, as a man will gertly lower his hand over a poised butterfly that he seeks to till, and which one single movement, a thought too quick, may scare away to safety.

Bebee knew where he lived in the street of Mary of Burgundy; in an old palace that be longed to a great Flemish noble, who never dwelt these himself; but to ask anything about him—why he was thered what his rank was? why he stayed in the city at all!—was a nort of treason that never entered her

a nort of treason that never entered her

thoughts.

Psyche, if she had been as simple and loyal as Bebes was, would never have lighted her own candle; but even Psyche would not have borrowed any one class lamp to lighten the level and the

To Bebee be was sacred, unsupproachable, unquestionable; he was a wonderful, perfect happiness that had fallen into her life; he was a gift of God, as the sun was.

She took his going and coming as she took that of the sun, never dreaming of reproaching his absence, never dreaming of reproaching his absence, never dreaming of asking if in the empty night he shone on any other worlds than hers.

It was hardly so much a faith with her as an instinct; faith must reason ere it know itself to be faith. Bebee never reasoned any more than her roses did.

The good folks in the market place watched her a little anxiously; they thought ill of that little moss rose that every day found its way to one wearer only; but after all they did not see much, and the neighbors nothing at all. For he never went home to her, nor with her, and most of the time that he spent with Bebee was in the quiet evening shadows, as she went up with her empty basket through the deserted country roads.

Bebee was all day long in the city, indeed, as other girls were, but with her it had always been different. Antoine had always been with her up to the day of his death; and after his death she had sat in the same place, surrounded by the people she had known from infancy, and an insult to be would have been answered by a stroke from the cobbler's strap or from the tinker's hammer. There was one girl only who ever tried to do her any harm—a good looking, stout

cobbler's strap or from the tinker's hammer. There was one girl only who ever tried to do her any harm—a good looking, stout wench, who stood at the corner of the Mon'agne de la Cour with a stall of fruit in the summer time, and in winter time drove a milk cart over the snow. This girl would get at her sometimes and talk of the students, and tell her how good it was to get out of the town on a holiday and go to any one of the villages where there was Kermesse and dance, and drink the little blue wine, and have trinkets bought for one, and come home in the moonlight in a char-a-bane, with the

in the moonlight in a char-a-bane, with the borns sounding, and the lads singing, and the ribbons flying from the old hense's cara. "She is such a little close sly thing!" thought the fruit girl sulkily. To vice inno-cence must always seem only a superior kind of chimners.

cence must always seem only a superior kind of chicanery.

"We dance almost every evening, the children and I," Bebee had answered when urged fifty times by this girl to go to fairs, and balls at the wine shops. "That does just as well. And I have seen Kermesse once at Malines—it was beautiful. I went with Mere Dax, but it cost a great deal, I know, though she did not let me pay."
"You little fool!" the fruit girl would say.

But the good honest old woman who sat about in the Grande Place, hearing, had al-ways taken the fruit girl to task, when they got her by herself.
"Leave the child alone, you mischievou

one," said they, "Be content with being base yourself. Look you, Lisette—she is not one like you to make eyes at the law students and pester the painter lads for a day's outing. Let her be, or we will tell your mother how you leave the fruit for the gutter chil-

how you leave the fruit for the gutter children to pick and thieve, while you are stealing up the stairs into that young French fellow's chamber. Oh, oh! a fine beating you you will get when she knows."

Lisotte's mother wasa flerce and strong old Brabantoise, who exacted beavy reckening with her daughter for every single plum and peach that she sent out of her dark, sweet smelling fruitshop to be sunned in the streets, and under the students' love glances.

So the girl took heed and let Bebee alone. "What should I want her to come with us for!" she reasoned with herself. "She is twice as pretty as I am; Jules might take to her instead—who knows!"

her instead—who knows?" So that she was at once savage and yet tribee drifting down the high flood of tempta

"Oh, ho, you dainty one?" she cried one day to her. "So you would not take the nuts and mulberries that do for us common folk, because you had a mind for a fine pine out of the hot houses! That was all, was it! Eh, well—I do not begrudge you. Only take care; remember, the nuts and mulberries last through summer and autumn, and there are heaps of them on every fair stall and street corner; but the pino-that is enten in a day, one spring time, and its like does not grow in the hedges. You will have your mouth full of sugar an hour-and then, chi-

you will go famished all the year." 'I do not understand," said Bebee, looking up, with her thoughts far away, and scarcely earing the words spoken to her.

"Oh, pretty little fool! you understan well enough," said Lisette, grinning, as she rubbed up a melon. "Does he give you fin things! You might let me see!"



"Oh, pretty little fool! You well enough."

"No one gives me anything." "Chut! you want me to believe that. Why, Jules is only a lad, and his father is a silk mercer, and only gives him a hundred francs a month, but Jules buys me'all I want -somehow-or do you think I would take the trouble to set my cap straight when he goes by! He gave me these earrings, look.
I,wish you would let me see what you get."
But Bebee had gone away—unheeding—dreaming of Juliet and of Jeanne d'Arc, of

whom he had told her tales. He made sketches of her sometimes, but

seldom pleased himself. It was not so easy as he had imagined that it would prove to portray this little flower like face, with the clear eyes and the child's open brow. He who had painted Phryne so long and faithfully had got a taint on his brush—be could not paint this pure, bright, rosy dawn-ho who had always painted the clare of midnight gas on rouge or rags. Yet e felt that if he could transfer to canvas the light that was on Bebee's face he would get that Schoffer had missed. For a tin eluded him. You shall paint a gold and glistening brocade, or a fan of peacock's feathers, to perfection, and yet, perhaps, the dewy whiteness of the numble

He felt, too, that he must catch her expresion flying as he would do the flash of a swal low's wing across a blue sky; he knew that Bebee, forced to studied attitudes in an atolier, would be no longer the ideal that he

den, among the sweet gray Invender and the golden disks of the sunflowers, and more than once Bebee was missed from her place in the front of the Broodhuis. The Varnhart children would gather now ad then open mouthed at the wicket, and Mere Krobs would shake her head as she went by on her sheepskin saddle, and mutter that the child's head would be turned by vanity and old Jehau would lean on his stick and peer through the sweet brier, and wondered stupidly if this strange man who could make

the black earth so long, long before, when the red mill had been brave and new, the red mill that the boys and girls called old.

But except these, no one noticed much. Fainters were no rare sights in Brabant. The people were used to see them coming and going, making pictures of mud and stoues and ducks and sheep and of all common and silly things.

"What does be pay you, Bebeef" they used to ask, with the shrewd Flemish thought after the main chance.

to ask, with the shrewd Flemish thought after the main chance.

"Nothing," Bebee would answer, with a quick color in her face; and they would reply in contemptuous reproof: "Careless little fool—you should make enough to buy you wood all winter. When the man from Trent painted Trine and her cow they gave her a whole gold bit for standing still so long in the clover. The Krebe would be sure to lend you her cow, if it be the cow that makes the difference."

Belsee was silent, wesding her carnation

ference."

Belse was silent, weeding her carnation ted. What could she tell them that they would understand!

She seemed so far away from them all—these good friends of her childhood—new that this wenderful new world of his giving had account to her stable.

that this wenderful new world of his giving had opened to her sight.

She lived in a dream.

Whether she sat in the market place taking copper coins, or in the moonlight with a book on her knees, it was all the same. Her feet ran, her tengue spoke, her hands worked; she did not neglect her goat or her garden, she did not forsake her house labor or her good deeds to old Annemie; but all the while she only heard one voice, she only felt one touch, she only new one feet.

good deems to old Amenine; but all the while she only beard one voice, she only felt one touch, she only saw one face.

Here and there—one in a million—there is a female thing that can love like this, once and forever.

Such a one is dedicated, birth upwards, to the Mater Dolorosa.

He had something nearer akin to affection for her than he had ever had in his life for anything, but he was never in love with her—no more in love with her than with the moss rosebuds that she fastened in his breast. Yet he played with her, because she was such a little, soft, tempting female thing; and because, to see her face flush, and her heart heave, to feel her fresh feelings stir into life, and to watch her changes from shyness to confidence, and from frankness again into fear, was a natural pastime in the lazy, golden weather.

That he spared her as far as he did—when after all she would have married Jeannot any-

after all she would have married Jeannot any how—and that he sketched her face in the how—and that he sketched her face in the open air, and never entered her hat and never beguiled her to his own old palace in the city, was a new virtue in himself for which he hardly knew whether to feel respect or ridicule; anywny it seemed virtue to him. So long as he did not seduce the body it seemed to him that it could never matter how he slew the soul—the little, honest, happy, pure, frank soul, that amidst its poverty and hardships was like a rebiny.

happy, pure, frank soul, that amidst its poverty and hardships was like a robin's song to the winter sun.

"Hoot, toot, pretty innocent, so you are no better than the rest of us," hissed her enemy, Lisette, the fruit girl, against her as she went by the stall one evening as the sun set. "Fruit so it was no such purity after all that made you never look at the student lads and the soldiers eld. You were so dainty of taste, you must needs pick and choose, and, Lord's sake, after all your coyness, to drop at a beckoning finger as one may say—pong!—in a minute, like an apple over ripel Oh he, you sly one!"

Bebes flushed red, in a sort of instinct of offense; not sure what her fault was, but

Bebee flushed red, in a sort of instinct of offense; not sure what her fault was, but vaguely stung by the brutal words. Bebee walked homeward by him, with her empty baskets; looked at him with grave

empty baskets; looked at him with grave wondering eyes.

"What did she mean? I do not understand. I must have done some wrong—or she thinks so. Do you know?"—

He had known women by the thousand, good women and bad; women whom he had dealt ill with and women, who had dealt ill with him; but this he had not known—this frank, fearless, tender, gay, grave, innocent, industrious little life, helping itself, feeding itself, defending itself, working for itself and for others, and vaguely seeking all the while some unseen light, some unknown god, with some unseen light, some unknown god, with a blind faith so infinitely ignorant and yet so infinitely pathetic.

"All the people are going on a pilgrimage," she explained to him when he asked her why her village was so silent this bright morning. "They are gone to pray for a fine harvest, and then each one prays for some other little thing that she wants herself as well-it costs seven francs apiece. They take their food with them; they go and laugh and eat in the fields. I think it is nonsense. One can say one's prayers just as well here. Mere Krobs thinks so too, but then she says, 'If I do not go, it will look ill; people will say I am irre-ligious; and as we make so much by flour, God would think it odd for me to be absent; one's prayers just as well here. Me and, besides, it is only seven france there and Back; and if it does please beaven, that is cheap, you know. One will get it over and over again in paradise.' That is what More Krebs says. But, for me, I think it is non-sense. It cannot please God to go by train and eat galotte and waste a whole day in

getting dusty.

"When I give the Virgin my cactus flower, I do give up a thir, I love, and I let it wither on her altar instead of pleasing me in bloom here all the week, and them, of course, she sees that I have done it out of gratitude. But that is different; that I am sorry to do, and yet I am glad to do it out of love. Do you

'Yes, I know very well. But is the Virgin

all that you love like this!" "No; there is the garden, and there is An-toine-he is dead, I know. But I think that we should love the dead all the better, not the less, because they cannot speak or say that less, because they cannot speak or say that they are angry; and perhaps one pains them very much when one neglects them, and if they are ever so sad, they cannot rise and re-buke one—that is why I would rather forget the flowers for the church than I would the flowers for his grave, because God can pun-ish me, of course, if he like, but Antoine

nover can-any more-now." "You are logical in your sentiment, my dear," said Flamen, who was more moved than he cared to feel. "The union is a rare one in your sex. Who taught you to

"No one. And I do not know what to be

"No one. And I do not know what to be logical means. Is it that you laugh at me?"
"No; I do not laugh. And your pilgrims—they are gone for all day?"
"Yes; they are gone to the Sacred Heart at St. Marie en Boia. It is on the way to Liege.
They will come back at nightfall. And some They will come back at nightfall. And some of them will be sure to have drunk too much, and the children will got so cross. Prosper Bar, who is a Calvinist, always says, 'Do not mix up prayer and play; you would not cut a gherkin in your honey; but I do not know why he called prayer a gherkin, because it is sweet enough-sweeter than anything, I think. When I pray to the Virgin to let me see you next day, I go to bed quite happy, be-cause she will do it, I know, if it will be good

"But if it were not good for you, Bebeel Would you cease to wish it then? He rose as he spoke, and went across the floor and drew away her hand that was parting the flax, and took it in his own and troked it, indulgently and carelessly, as a man may stroke the soft fur of a young cat. Leaning against the little lattice and looking down on her with musing eyes, half smil-

bee looked up with a sudden and delicious terror that ran through her as the charm of the snake's gaze runs through the bewildered "Would you cease to wish if it were not good?" he asked again. Bebee's face grew pale and troubled. She left her hand in his because she did not think any shame of his taking it. But the question suddenly flung the perplexity and darkness of doubt into the clearness of her pure child's

half serious, half amorous, half sad, Be-

and sunlit before her.
She had never had a divided duty. The religion and the pleasure of her simple little life had always gone hand in hand, greeting one another, and never for an in-stant in conflict. In any hesitation of her own she had always gone to Father Francis, and he had disentangled the web for her and

conscience. All her ways had been straight

But here was a difficulty in which she could never go to Father Francia Right and wrong, duty and desire, were for the first time arrayed before her in their

sense of peril-the peril of a time when in lieu of that gentic Mother of Ross whom she kneeled to among the flowers, she would only see a dusky shadow looming between ker and the beauty of life and the light of the sun. assacreed no counste danger to his words. She only thought—to see him was so great a joy—if Mary forbade it, would she not take it if she could notwithstanding, always, al-

and timedy, and lifted her eyes to his with an unconscious appeal in them.

"But—I do not see why it should be wrong to speak with you. You are good, and you lend me beautiful things out of other men's minds that will make me less ignorant; our Lady could not be angry with that—she must like it."

like it."

"Our Lady—oh, poor little simpleton!—
where will ber reign be when Ignorance has
once been cut down, root and branch?" he
thought to himself; but he only answered:

"But whether she like it or not, Beboet—
you beg the question, my dear; you are—you
are not so frank as usual—think, and tell me
homestic?"

eively.
"You have done her the wrong of a fair skin when hers is brown, and a little foot, while hers is as big as a trooper's; there is no greater sin, Bebee, possible in woman to

CHAPTER XIII.

Flamen loosed the wicket latch, and thought there might be better ways of spend-ing the day than in the gray shadows of old

"Will you give me a draught of water?" he

asked her as he crossed the garden.
"I will give you breakfast," said Bebee,
happy as a bird. She felt no shame for the

smallness of her kome; no confusion at the poverty of her little place; such embarras-ments are born of seif consciousness, and Bebee had no nore self consciousness than her own sweet, gray lavender bush blowing scrainst the door.

against the door.

The lavender bush has no splendor like the roses, has no colors like the hellybooks: #

is a simple, plain, gray thing that the ocession and that the cottagers cherish, and that keeps the moth from the homespun linen, and that goes with the dead to their graves.

It has many virtues and infinite sweetness, but it does not know it or think of it, and if

the village girls over tell it so, it fancies they only praise it out of kindness as they put its

only praise it out of kindness as they put its slender, fragrant spears away in their warm bosoms. Bebee was like her lavender, and now that this beautiful Purple Emperor butterfly came from the golden sunbeams to find pleasure for a second in her freshness, the was only very grateful, as the lavender bush was to the village girls.

"I will give you your breakfast," said Bebee, flushing resily with pleasure, and putting away the ivy coils that he might enter.

"I have very jittle, you know," the added.

"I have very little, you know," she added, wistfully. "Only goat's milk and brend; but if that will do—and there is some honey—and if you would eat a salad, I would cut one

He did enter and glanced round him with

a curious pity and wonder both in one.
It was such a little, small, square place,

and its floor was of beaten clay; and its un-ceiled roof he could have touched; and its

She stood and looked at him with frank

But she was not embarrassed by it; she

There is a dignity of peasants as well as of kings—the dignity that comes from all ab-

Bebee had this, and she had more still that

Some women have it still when they are

She could have looked at him forever, she

was so happy; she cared nothing new for those duzzling dahlias—he had left them; he

was actually here—here in her own, little, dear home, with the cocks looking in at the

threshold, and the sweet peas nodding at the lattice, and the starling crying, "Bonjour!

tired," she said, pulling her little bed forward for him to sit on, for there were only two

wooden stools in the but, and no chair at all.

brushes from his hand, and would have kneeled and taken the dust off his boots, if he

would have let her, and went hither and

thither, gladly and lightly, bringing him a

wooden bowl of milk and the rest of the sien-

der fare, and cutting as quick as thought fresh creases and lettuce from her garden, and

ringing him, as the crown of all Father

Francis' honeycomb on vine leaves, with some pretty sprays of box and mignomette scattered about it—doing all this with swift, sweet grace that robbed the labor of all look

of servitude, and looking at him ever and

again with a smile, that said as clearly as any

words. "I cannot do much, but what I do I do with all my heart."

There was something in the sight of her going and coming in those simple household errands, across the sunlit floor, that moved

Then she took his sketching easel and

"You are tired; I am sure you must be

of effort, all freedom from pretense,

she had the absolute simplicity of

and grateful eyes; she could hardly believe that he was here; he, the stranger of Rubes'

land, in her own little rush covered by

was glad and proud.

childhood with her still.

four score.

ways, always!

He kept her hand in his, and watched with

the camellias that float in the porcelais bowls
of midnight suppers.

This man was not good. He was idle and
vain, and amorous and cold, and had been
spoiled by the world in which he had passed
his days, but he had the temper of an artist
he had something, too, of a poet's fancy; in
was vaguely touched and won by this simple
soul that looked at him out of Bebse's eyes
with some look that in all its simplicity had
a divine gleam in it that made him half
ashamed. contentment the changing play of the shade and sorrow, the fear and fascination, on her and sorrow, the fear and fascination, on her face.

"You do not know, Bebeer" he said at length, knowing well himself; so much better than ever she knew. "Well, dear, that is not flattering to me. But it is natural. The good Virgin, of course, gives you all you have, food and clothes, and your garden, and your pretty, plump chickens—and I am only a stranger. You could not offend her for me—that is not likely."

The child was cut to the heart by the sadness and humility of words of whose studied artifice she had no suspicion.

She thought that she seemed to him ungrateful and selfish, and yet all the mooring tops that held her little boat of life to the harbor of its simple religion seemed cut away, and she seemed drifting helpless and rudderless upon an unknown sea.

"I never did do wrong—that I know," she said timidly, and lifted her eyes to his with an unconscious appeal in them.

"But—I do not see whit it should be.

with some look that in all its simplicity ind a divine gleam in it that made him half ashamed.

"I think," she said at last, "I think—if is be wrong, still I will wish it—yea. Only I will not tell myself it is right. I will just any to Our Lady, "I am wicked, perhaps, but I cannot help it." So—I will not deceive her at all, and perhaps in time she may forgive. But I think you only say it to try me. It cannot, I am sure, be wrong—any more than it is to talk to Jeannot or to Bae."

He had driven her into the subtlettes of doubt, but the honest little soul in her found a way out, as a flower in a cellar flade its way through the stones to light.

He plucked the ivy leaves and threw them at the chickens on the bricks without, with a certain impatience in the action. The simplicity and the directness of the answer disarmed him, he was almost ashamped to use against her the weapons of his habitual warfare. It was like a matter d'armes fencing with bare steel against a little naked child armed with a blest palm sheaf.

When she had thus brought him all she had, and he to pleass her had sat down to the simple food, she gathered a spray of researed set it in a pot beside him, then left him and went and stood at a little distance, waiting, with her hands lightly crossed on her cheet, to see if there were anything that he might want.

He ate and drank well to please her, look-

want. He ate and drank well to please her, look honestly?"

He knew quite well, but it amused him to see the perplexed trouble that this, the first divided duty of her short years, brought "I break your bread, Bobee," he said, with a tone that seemed strange to her. "I break your bread. I must keep Arab faith with with it.

Bebse looked at him, and loosened her hand from his, and sat quite still. Her lips had a little quiver in them.

Flamen laughed and answered her eva-

"What is that?" "I mean—I must never betray you."
"Betray me! How could you?"
"Well—hurt you in any way."
"Ah, I am sure you would never do that."
He was sileut, and looked at the spray of

"Sit down and spin," he said, impatiently.
"Sit down and spin," he said, impatiently.
"I am ashamed to see you stand there, and a
woman never looks so well as when she spins.
Sit down—and I will eat the good things you
have brought me. But I cannot if you stand
and look."

and look,"
"I beg your pardon, I did not know," she
said, ashamed lest she should have seemed
rude to him; and she drew out her wheel under the light of the lattice and sat down to it,

mo greater sin. Bebee, possible in woman to woman."

"Hold your peace, you shrill jade," he added in anger to the fruiterer, flinging at her a crown piece, that the girl caught, and bit with her teeth with a chuckle. "Do not heed her, Bebee. She is a coarse tongued brute, and is jealous, no doubt."

"Jealous—of what!"

The word had no meaning to Bebee.
"That! I am not a student or a soldier, as her lovers are,"

As her lovers were! Bebee felt her face burn again. Was he her lover then! The child's innocent body and soul thrilled with a hot, sweet delight and fear commingled.

Bebee was not quite satisfied until she had kne-t down that night and asked the Master of all poor maidens to see if there were any wickedness in her heart, hidden there like a bee in a rose, and if there was to take R cut and make her worthier of this wonderful new happiness in her life. der the light of the lattice and sat down to it, and began to disentangle the threads.

It was a pretty picture—the low, square casement; the frame of lvy, the pink and white of the climbing sweet peus; the girl's head; the cool, wet leaves; the old woodes spinning wheel, that purred like a sleepy cat.

"I want to paint you as Gretchen, only is will be a shame," he said.

"Who is Gretchen?"

"You shall read of her by and by. And you live here all by yoursel?"

"Since Antoine died—yes."

"And are never dull?"

"I have no time, and I do not think I would

"And are never dull?"

"I have no time, and I do not think I would be if I had time—there is so much to think of, and one never can understand."

"But you must be very brave and laterious to do all your work yours.if. Is to possible a child like you can spin, and wash, and bake, and garden, and do everything?"

"Oh, many do more than I. Babette's oldest daughter is only 13, and she does much more, because she has all the children to look after; and they are very, very poor; they often have nothing but a stow of nettles and perhaps a few smalls, days together."

"That is lean, bare, ugly, growsome poverty; there is plenty of that every where. But you, lebee—you are an idyl."

Bebee looked across the but and smiled, and broke her thread. She did not know

CHAPTER XIII.

The next day, waking with a radiant little soul as a bird in the forest wakes in summer, Bebee was all alone in the lane by the swans water. In the gray of the dawn all the good folk except herself and lame old Jehan had tramped off to a pilgrimage, Liege way, which the bishop of the city had enjoined on all the faithful as a sacred duty.

Bebee doing her work, singing, thinking how good God was, and dreaming over a thousand fancies of the wenderful stories he had told her, and of the exquisite delight that would lie for her in watching for him all through the shining hours, Bebee felt her little heart leap like a squirrel as the voice that was the music of heaven to her called through the stillness:

"Good day, pretty one! you are as carly as the lark, Bebee. I go to Mayence, so I thought I would look at you one moment as I pass."

Bebee ran down through the wet grass in a tumuit of joy. She had never seen him so carly in the day—never so early as this, when nobody was up and stirring except birds and beasts and peasant folk.

She did not know how pretty she looked herself; like a rain washed wild rose; her feet gleaning with dow, her cheeks warm with health and joy; her sunny clustering hair and broke her thread. She did not know what he mount, but if she were anything that pleased him, it was well. "Who were those beautiful women?" che said suddenly, the color mounting into he

"What women, my dear?"
"Those I saw at the window with you, the other night—they had jewels."



It was a pretty picture. "Oh!-women, thresome enough, if I be en you, I would have dropped you son uit. Poor little Beboo! Did you go b

ind I never knew?"
"You were laughing"—
"Was I?" "Yes, and they were beautiful!"
"In their own eyes; not in mine."

"Nor"
She stopped her spinning and gazed at him with wistful, wondering eyes Could it be that they were not beautiful to him? those deep red, glowing sun basked dahlia flowers "Do you know," she said very softly, with a flush of penitence that came and went, "when I saw them I hated them, I confessed it to bettler freeds north day. You seemed it to Father Francis next day. You seemed so content with them, and they looked so gay and glad there—and then the jewels! Home-how, I seemed to myself such a little thing, and so ugly and mean. And yet do you

"And yet-well?" "They did not look to me good—those wo-men," said Bebee thoughtfully, looking across at him in deprecation of his possible anger, absolute poverty was so plain—and yet the child looked so happy in it, and was so like a flower, and was so dainty and fresh, and oven so full of grace.

"They were great people, I suppose, and they appeared very happy; but though I seemed nothing to myself after them, still I think I would not change."

"You are wise without books, Bebee."

"Oh, no—I am not wise at all. I only feel. And give me books; oh, pray, give me books You do not know; I will learn so fast—and You do not know; I will learn so fast—and I will not neglect anything, that I promise. The neighbors and Jeannot say that I shall let the flowers die, and the hut get dirty, and never spin or prick Annende's patterns; but that is untrue. I will do all, just as I have done, and more too, if only you will give me things to read, for I do think when one is heavy one onebt to work more—not less."

things to read, for I do think when one happy one ought to work more—not less."
"But will these booles make you happy! If you ask me the truth, I must tell you—no. You are happy as you are, because you know nothing else than your own little life; for ignorance, it have losses. Rebe. let sages, noticest norance is happiness, Bebee, let sages, ancient and modern, say what they will. But when you know a little, you will want to know more; and when you know much you will want to see much also, and then—and then the thing will grow—you will be un longer content. That is, you will be unhappy." Bebee watched him with wistful eyes.

"Perhaps that is true. No doubt it is true, if you say it. But you know all the world seems full of voices that I hear, but that I cannot understand; it is with me as I should think it is with people who go to foreign countries and do not know the tongue that is spoken when they land; and it makes mounappy, because I cannot comprehend, and so no books will not make me more so, but less. And as for being content—when I thought you were gone away out of the city, last night, I thought I would never be able to pray any more, because I hated myself, and I almost hated the angels, and I told Mary that she was cruel, and she turned her face from measure it seemed forever."

from me—as it seemed, forever."

She spoke quite quietly and simply, spinning as she spoke, and looking across at him with carnest eyes, that begged him to believe her. She was saying the pere truth, but she did not know the force or the meaning of that

him as some mountain air sung on an Alp by a girl driving her cows to pasture may a listener who indifferent has heard the swell He listened with a smile, it was not new to of the organ of La Hague, or the recitative of him; he knew her heart much better than she knew it herself, but there was an unceascious ness, and yet a strength, in the words that touched him themsel. [Continued next Saturder.

Red Mouse or swallows it.

way the Red Mouse has been there.

And yet strolling there in the dealer

Bebee smiled, reaching to spread out her linen. But she said nothing.

"What good is it talking to them?" she thought; "they do not know."

Already the neighbors and friends of her infancy seemed so far, far away; creatures of a distant world that she had long left; it was no use talking, they never would understand.

"Antoine should never have taught you your letters," said Reine, groaning under the great blue shirts she was banging on high among the leaves. "I told him so at the time. I said, "The child is a good child, and

ain in sunshiny sympathy.
"Not yet," said Reine, banging her last

sign of him.

The flowers had sold well; it was a feast

had ever known—even the fear when she had seen death on old Antoine's face had been nothing like this.

Bebee looked up—paused a second—ther went onward with a thorn in her beart. He had not seen her.
"It is natural, of course—he has his world -he does not think often of me-there is no

Fasting, next day at sunrise she confessed "I saw beautiful rich women and I envied

Out of the purest little soul, Love entering drives forth Candor.
"That is not like you at all, Bebee," said the good old man, as she knelt at his feet on

CHAPTER XII

while up the green lane beside her.

ent by in a trance of sweet amaze, and she his lips, or even a glimpse of him from afar, across the crowded square. She sat up half the nights reading the books

he gave her to read, would think to himself

shall buffle and escape you. More than once he came and filled in more fully his various designs in the little hut gar-

ghastly and unending warfare.
It frightened her with a certain breathless Bebee's face beam over again upon that panel of wood could not give him back his dead What he said was quite vague to her. She

a great singer in San Carlo. The gray invender blowing at the house