

**THE "OUT OF DATE" COUPLE.**

We are "so out of date," they say,  
Ned and I;  
We love in an old fashioned way,  
Long since gone by.  
He says I am his helpmate true  
In everything,  
And I—well, I will own to you  
He is my king.  
We met in no romantic way  
"Twist 'glow and bloom."  
He wooed me on a winter day  
And in—a room.  
Yet, through life's hours of stress and  
stern,  
When griefs befall,  
Love he, our small home corner warm,  
And all was well.  
Ned thinks no woman like his wife—  
But let that pass;  
Perhaps we view the dual life  
Through roseate glass;  
Even if the prospect be not bright,  
We hold it true  
The heaviest burdens may grow light  
When shared by two.  
Upon the gilded scroll of fame,  
Emblazoned fair,  
I cannot hope to read the name  
I proudly bear;  
But, happy in their even flow,  
The years glide by.  
We are behind the times, we know,  
Ned and I.  
—Chambers' Journal.

**THE WILL.**

I knew this tall young man who was called Rene de Bourneval. He was very agreeable in company, although a trifle sad, seeming to dislike everything, very skeptical—a formal and biting skeptic—never especially in laying bare in one word worldly hypocrisies. He often repeated, "There are no virtuous men—or at least they are only relatively temperate."

He had two brothers whom he did not visit, the MM. de Courcils. On account of their different names I believed him the offspring of a second marriage. I had been told on several occasions that a strange story had happened in this family, but no details had been given me.

This man being entirely agreeable to me, we were soon good friends. One evening, after I had dined with him, I accidentally asked him, "Were you the offspring of your mother's first or second marriage?" I saw him turn slightly pale, then blush, and he remained some seconds without speaking, visibly embarrassed. Then he smiled in a sweet and melancholy manner which was peculiar to him and said: "My dear friend, if it does not tire you, I will give you some singular details of my parentage. I know you for an intelligent man. I do not therefore fear your friendship for me will suffer, and if it should suffer I should no longer care to have you for a friend."

"My mother, Mme. de Courcils, was a poor, timid little woman, who in her husband had married for her fortune. Her whole life was a martyrdom. Affectionate, fearful, delicate, she was ill treated without intermission by him who should have been my father, one of those churls who are called country gentlemen. After they had been married a month he lived with a servant. He had besides for mistresses the wives and daughters of his tenants. This did not prevent his wife from having two children; including myself, three should be reckoned. My mother said nothing. She lived in that ever noisy house like those little mice that slip in and out under the furniture. Effacing herself, flying away, trembling, she looked at people with her clear, restless eyes, which, always in motion, looked scared with the fear that never left them. She was still pretty, very pretty—very fair with a grayish fairness, a timid fairness, as if her hair had faded a little from her incessant fear.

"Among the friends of M. de Courcils who came frequently to the castle was an old cavalry officer, a widower, a formidable man, tender and violent, capable of the most energetic resolves—M. de Bourneval, whose name I bear. He was a tall, spare fellow, with a heavy black mustache. I resemble him very much. This man had read and thought far more than those of his class. His great-grandmother had been a lover of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and it was said that he had inherited something from this connection of his ancestress. He knew by heart the 'Social Contract,' the 'New Heloise' and all those philosophical books which have prepared beforehand the future overthrow of our ancient customs, of our prejudices, our obsolete laws, our foolish morals.

"He loved my mother, it appeared, and was loved by her. This affair was kept so secret that no one suspected it. The poor woman, sad and abandoned, clung to him desperately and imbibed all his habits of thought, theories of free opinion, boldness of independent love; but, as she was so timid that she never dared speak loudly, all of it was driven back, condensed, pressed into her heart, which was never opened.

"My two brothers were harsh toward her, like my father—did not oppress her—and, accustomed to seeing that she did not count for anything in the house, treated her almost like a servant.

"I was the only one of her sons who really loved her and whom she loved.  
"She died. I was then 18. I ought to add, in order that you may understand what is to follow, that, by legal advice, her husband had been provided for, and she had retained her own separate estate, having, thanks to the artifices of the law and the intelligent devotion of a notary, preserved the right to make her will as she pleased.

"We were, therefore, informed by this notary that a will existed and invited to be present at its reading.

"I recall it as if it were yesterday. It was a grand, dramatic, burlesque, surprising scene, called forth by the posthumous revolt of the dead woman, by this cry of liberty, this claim from the depths of the grave of this martyr crushed by our morals during her life. From her shroud coffin she threw a despairing appeal toward independence.

"He who believed himself my father, a stout, plethoric man, who put me in mind of a butcher, and my broth-

ers, two robust fellows of 20 and 22, waited tranquilly on their seats. M. de Bourneval, who was invited to be present, entered and placed himself behind me. His frock coat was buttoned tightly. He was very pale, and he often nibbled his mustache, now a little grizzled. He doubtless expected what was coming.

"The notary double locked the door and commenced the reading, after having in our presence broken the red wax seal of the envelope, of whose contents he was ignorant."

Suddenly my friend was silent, rose and took from his secretary an old paper, unfolded it, kissed it for a long time and resumed. "Here is the last will of my dearly loved mother:

"I, the undersigned, Anne-Catherine Genevieve Mathilde de Croixluce, lawful wife of Jean Leopold Joseph Gontran de Courcils, being of sound mind and body, do hereby make my last will.

"I ask forgiveness of God above, and then of my dear son Rene, for what I am now going to do. I think my child is stout-hearted enough to understand and to forgive me. I have suffered all my life. I was married from considerations of advantage and was afterward despised, disregarded, oppressed and deceived unceasingly by my husband.

"I forgive him, but I owe him nothing.

"My elder sons have not loved me, have not caressed me, have scarcely treated me like a mother.

"I have been to them during my life all I should have been; after my death I no longer owe them anything. The ties of blood do not continue without the constant, sacred affection of each day. An ungrateful son is less than a stranger. He is a culprit, for he has not the right to be indifferent to his mother.

"I have always trembled before mankind, before their iniquitous laws, their inhuman customs, their infamous prejudices. Before God, I no longer fear. Dead, I throw away from me that shameful hypocrisy: I dare to utter my thoughts and to openly avow the secrets of my heart.

"Therefore I leave in trust the whole of that part of my fortune of which the law permits me to dispose to my dearly loved lover, Pierre Germer Simon de Bourneval, afterward to revert to our dear son Rene.

(This will has been drawn up in addition, in a more formal manner, by a notary.)

"And before the Supreme Judge, who hears me, I declare that I should have cursed heaven and my existence if I had not found the deep, devoted, tender, unshaken affection of my lover, if I had not learned in his arms that the Creator has made human beings to love, to sustain and to console each other and to weep together in hours of bitterness.

"My two eldest sons are the children of M. de Courcils. Rene alone owes his existence to M. de Bourneval. I pray the Ruler of mankind and their destinies to place the father and son above social prejudices, to make them love each other until their death, and love me still in my grave.

"Such are my last thoughts and my last desire."

"M. de Courcils had risen. He cried, 'That is the will of a mad woman.' Then M. de Bourneval stepped forward and declared in a loud and decisive voice: 'I, Simon de Bourneval, declare that this writing contains only the strict truth. I am ready to prove it by letters in my possession.'

"Then M. de Courcils walked toward him. I thought they would seize each other by the collar. There they stood, both tall, the one stout, the other spare, quivering. The husband of my mother stammeringly articulated, 'You are a villain!' The other said, in a dry, vigorous tone: 'We will meet in another place, monsieur. I should have affronted and provoked you a long time ago if I had not valued above all else the tranquillity during her life of the poor woman whom you have made to suffer so much.'

"Then he turned toward me: 'You are my son. Will you come with me? I have not the right to take you away, but I will take you if you wish to accompany me.'

"I pressed his hand without answering. Indeed, I was almost overcome.

"Two days later M. de Bourneval killed M. de Courcils in a duel. My brothers, afraid of a frightful scandal, kept silence. I transferred to them and they accepted their share of the fortune left by my mother.

"I took the name of my true father, renouncing that which the law gave and which was not mine.

"M. de Bourneval died five years ago. I have not yet found consolation for my grief."

He rose, took several steps, and, placing himself in front of me, said: "Well, I say that my mother's will was one of the most beautiful, me-loyal, grandest things a woman could accomplish. Is not that your opinion?"

I stretched out both hands to him, "Yes, surely, my friend."—Guy de Maupassant.

**New Orleans Tennis Courts.**

"I was walking on St. Charles avenue this morning," said a northern visitor, "and I saw several tennis courts, the lines of which were marked out on the sward by grass of a different color from that which carpeted the court. I made inquiries about the matter and found that nearly all the New Orleans tennis grounds were marked off in that way. It is a very pretty idea, and one that I have never seen anywhere else."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

**A Prelate's Eloquence.**

In 1104, when Henry I was in Normandy, a prelate named Serlo preached so eloquently against the fashion of wearing long hair that the monarch and his courtiers were moved to tears.

Taking advantage of the impression he had produced, the enthusiastic prelate whipped a pair of scissors out of his sleeves and cropped the whole congregation.—London Fun.

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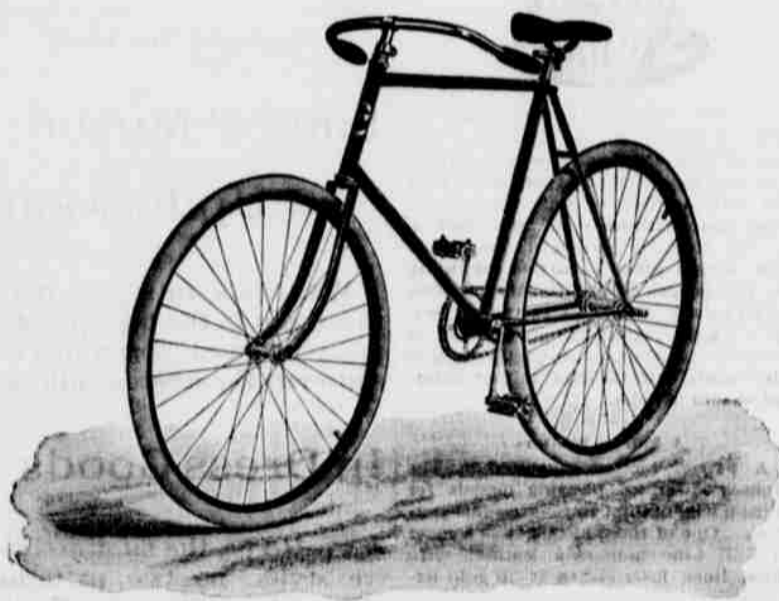
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