

They called him Picotin.

It was not his real name. Nobody knew whether he had a real name or not, but it was of no consequence, for he was only a clown.

Poor Picotin! He had been tumbling about inside the circus-ring eversince he could remember. How he first came into it no one could tell any more than himself, except a very deaf old sweeper, who recollected that a trainer had brought him there as a mere baby, capable of being balanced on the tip of an acrobat's toe, or quietly folded up in a travelling-bag. From this initial stage of a performer, and from lisping droll impertinences, the boy developed gradually into a first-rate clown, but, like many another mitrh-provoking genius, Picotin was sad and solitary in his ways.

With a heart that yearned for sympathy, for affection, he found himself doomed to appear ridiculous even when he most wished to be serious. His dolorous face was provocative of laughter, even without its paint, his smallest utterance was greeted as a joke; for a clown, in the estimation of most people, must always be merry and have quips and cranks for everything under the sun.

Picotin was there was a woman in it. Well, was there ever a life-story yet worth relating that had not a woman in it of some sort or another?

She was very young, with the face of a seraph and a slight, rounded figure reminding one of a flowerbell swayed to and fro by the wind, as she balanced herself on the tight-rope night after night before an admiring audience. A little smile was always on her lips as if she experienced a joyous delight in the supple grace of her own lithe body, and her starry eyes shone with the innocence of a child. Picotin adored her.

One evening, during the performance, some sonseless person, either drunk or too fond of a practical joke, let off reveral lerackers all of a sudden, and threw a squib down into the ring right at Babinette.

She gave a terrified scream and fell from the rope, Picotin rushed forward and received her in his arms. The pretty face was pale beneath its dab of rouge

tore up among the seats of the audience, and seized the offender by the
collar.

Everyone made way for him as he
hauled the coward into the ring. Once
there, the infuriated clown administered a sound thrashing before the eyes
of the public. The management did
not interfere, seeing that the chastisement was richly deserved, and that it
was also applauded.

After that Picotin was more popular
than ever.

He was also happier; for Babinette

was also applauded.

After that Picotin was more popular than even also happier: for Babinette had thanked him prettily, and he had ventured to speak to her parents about his desire to make her his wife, to which they had consented.

Pretty Babinette, meanwhile, as the heroine of that exciting episode of the crackers, had awakened great enthus-lasm among a set of idle fellows who were always thrusting their admiration upon her, and when Picotin threatened to thrash them all she laughed in his face, crunching the bonbons they had sent her, with teeth sharp and white as those of a little field mouse. Was it possible thought the poor clown that this child with the starry eyes was becoming a mere coarse and vulgar woman, such as the others about them? But he shuddered at the thought, thrusting it from him, and waiting patiently to overcome the petulant distaste she seemed to have taken all at once to the idea of being married.

"See, Babinette, how much money they give me. My wife can be quite a fine lady if she chooses," he said to her one day, in his queer voice, that had a crack in it, and never could be brought to murmur soft sentences, such as he would have liked to caress her car with, after the fashion of a lover.

Babinette looked wistfully at the gold pieces. She took them up in her dainty fingers, and let them drop again into his palm.

"Yes," she answered, making a rose-bud of her mouth. "but you—you will."

"You have always passed under the fellow fell deparded in following the man of Piccotts, I believe, and been the man of Piccotts, I believe, and been to have nown as a clown of some require."

If was very similar to his, and that it would be asolely through him should be a liberty to quit it, which ewas quite determined she should on becoming his wife. He was too much in love to reflect at all: he was too much in love to reflect at all: he was simply consclous of some vague sense of injustice.

A few days after that he was strolling in one of the public gardens when a murmur of voices caught his ear. In a shady side path he saw a couple of producing law in hand, and gazing into each other your freaked been that his with the magnitude of his own important and murmur of voices caught his ear. In a shady side path he saw a couple of the hand and marmur of voices caught his ear. In a shady side path he saw a couple of the man and a murmur of voices caught his ear. In a shady side path he saw a couple of the man hand, and gazing into each other your pricession, there is an opportunity of relinquishing it. You are here to your pricession, there is an opportunity of relinquishing it. You are here to a fortune of forty thousand frances a part of relinquishing it. You are here to a proportunity of relinquishing it. You are here to a fortune of forty thousand frances a part of the man who attains the great point hand, and gazing into each other the artitude nor the expression of the hand in hand, and not the girl turned her in the only process of the produce of the propose of the propose of the process. The Worst of It.

The Worst of It.

The Worst of It.

The Worst of It.

Sympathizing Friend—Oh, dear; this is detadfull. Swanger file in the hand here the all the man shady like the understance. The same the hand here the same to hurt her, but I was a factly to the understance of the understance. The was the hand here the same to the their first and the the same thanks a new hat shrink.

The Worst of It.

Sympathizing Tre

much in love working in the state of injustice.

A few days after that he was strolling in one of the public gardens when a murmur of voices caught his ear. In a shady side path he saw a couple of young lovers seated on a bench hand in hand, and gazing into each other's eyes. He would have walked on benefit when the working in the working further attention of the state of the working further attentions.

tween her curled lashes and fell into her lap.

"Poor Plcoth! He is so good," she murmured once or twice, "and he loves me. It will break his heart."

"No clown ever had a heart," cried the young man, with conviction. "Do you think he could pass his life making jokes if he suffered as I do? It makes me tremble and turn side every time I see you on that dreadful rope, my darling. It is abominable, horrible, to see all those eyes, too, fixed upon you. What is your promise to that fool, Plcotin, compared to my love?"

And so this youth wooed her with

over these papers he will be convinced that what I tell him is correct."

Picotin put out his hand and took the papers mechanically, quite as if they were a matter of utter indifference took himself, "Admirable! What talent." thought the lawyer, convinced that the clown was still acting and more than haif inclined to burst out laughing, for heart, gave it an expression of unconcern approaching imbeelilty.

A long fantastic shadow was cast upon the wall from Picotin's figure, as he stood before the flaving gasjet turning the papers over. The lawyer thought it possible he might not be able to read their contents, but he was a mistake. In his way, the jester had a certain amount of education, and he understood enough of the jargon of tormalities through which he now glanced, to know that an unexpected stroke of good luck had befallen him.

"I am a rich man," he murmured, at last, letting the papers rusted down on the floor as his hands fell dejectedly at his side.

"You are, indeed," cried the lawyer, laughing outright at the woe-begone expression with which these words were uttered.

"Its too late, too, late," said Picton, shaking his head mournfully. There were tears in his eyes, but his voice had a break in it that was irresistably comic, and the lawyer roiled in his chair till one leg gave way and made him jump to save himself.

"In Monsleur Arnaud Bertin, rentier, the world will have lost an incomparable artiste," he exclaimed, with a politic floor one of the flourish, carefully re-collecting the documents it was his business to keep safe.

Picotin sat on the wooden box, nursing one leg with an air of gloomy meditation. Why had it for hamewest the safe amake of store, rigid, implacable, its though the proposing, while all the mobility of his features had vanished and left a mask of stone, rigid, implacable, is he answered hoarsely:

"I'm Monsleur Arnaud Bertin, collegent and the proposing, will eall the mobility of his features had vanished and left a mask of stone, rigid, implacable, is he answered hoarsely:

documents it was his business to keer safe.

Pleotin sat on the wooden box, nursing one leg with an air of gloomy mediation. Why had it not happened before—a month ago even? Then he might have gone to Babinette and told her it was in his power to make her a real, fine lady, who could have a carriage and as many gowns as she pleased, for he was no longer a clown, but a gentleman of fortune. She would have been delighted then, and might perhaps have danced round him, clapping her hands in the pretty, airy fashlon he so loved to see. Now, he knew it would be all different. He could not buy her love, since it was given to that fairhaired youth whom, in his heart, he hated.

longer inheritor of the fortune he had brope, my daring. It is adominable to that fool. Picotin, compared to my love?"

And so this youth woose her with soft voice and ardent words, while the bitter to be had not been brought encumbered with debts of the policy of the











I dreamed (we scribbling folk, you know,

I thought two proud and fond mammas Each on a bright spring day Went walking with her little girl, As happy mothers may.

Now one before the other went Some fifty years or more. And you may guess how different were The gowns and hats they were.

"Ho, ho!" he cried. "A little trick
I'll play these pretty dears!"
And in a twinkling he exchanged
The children and their years.

Each little daughter tripped demure Beside the wrong mamma, Who all unconscious sauntered on

Until, just where the crossroads meet, Down glancing as she smiled, With start and frown each wondering dam Beheld her changeling child

Alas! what looks of dire dismay! What woeful, shocked surprise! That fairly laughed until the tear Stood in his elfin eyes.

But when the little damsels wept To see their mothers' pain. Repenting of his naughty prank, He changed them back again.

And, as I woke, two fond mammas, Still pale with such a fright. Each holding fast her daughter's hand, Went whisking out of sight. —Margaret Johnson, in St. Nicholas. BRAGGING IS FOOLISH.

It Is Far Better to Let Other People Sing

It is far Better to Let Other People Sing Your Praises.

In some paper lately "bragging" was spoken of as a "sin," and the especial sin of the American people. But this is a charge which is not entirely true.

Bragging is by no means confined to the American people. And bragging is searcely a "sin," although it is a pronounced form of silliness. For many reasons, all sin is foolish. Of course, just as there is no boy so great a fool as the boy who does what he knows to be wrong and who expects to gain something by doing it. That can't be done, and no one knows it better than the boy who has tried it.

In the first place the braggart is foolish who brags of what he is going to do or going to have or going to be. What's the use? People don't want to hear you tell of what you are "going to do." All they answer is: "Well, do it! Have it! Be it! Then talk!" Therefore, don't talk beforehand. That is foolish. Wait! People don't believe you. They will laugh at you.

And again, the braggart is foolish who talks of what he is, of what he has or what he does, in the present. It is foolish because it is unnecessary. If he is noble or great or brawe he has no need to talk about it at all. People will know it. If he is doing a great deed he adds to the greatness of it by letting his deed speak for itself. Be sure if the deed is a grand one it will speak for itself. People cannot help hearing or seeing. So don't beast of what he bays how to a go so on't beast of what he way to are or have to do. Let your actions speak for itself. Beople cannot help hearing or seeing. So don't beast of what he way to are or have to do. Let your actions speak for itself, beasts of what he way to hear or have to do.

seeing. So don't boast of what you are or have to do. Let your actions speale for you.

And once more the braggart is foolish who boasts of what he used to be or to have or what he used to do. Why? Because if people do not know what you have done or been they will only laugh at your loud boasting. And if they do not there is no need for you to speak of it at all, and you belittle your own act when you boast of it. The wise way is to make what you do so great that it speaks itself, for that is what actions do if they are great enough. And then all you have to do is to sit quiet and let other people sing your praises.

If bragging is a "sin" it must be the silliest sin there is. And that is saying a great deal.—N. Y. World.

An Effectual Warning.

It is well known that certain vagabonds desire nothing better, especially when the cold weather comes on, than to be arrested and locked up, in order that they may be taken care of for awhile. One of this fraternity succeeded in getting himself arrested for vagrancy, and on the way to the lockup he was so much overjoyed by the prospect of not having to sleep in the open air that he behaved somewhat boisterously.

She Spoke Her Little Piece.
Hattle F., six years old, is thought to
give promise of elocutionary talent.
When Auntie May came to visit the
family, therefore, and offered to give
the little girl some lessons, the offer was

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