

## THE TIMES.

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### JUDGE NOT BY APPEARANCE

IN THE WOODS forming what remains of the forest of Ardennes, about a mile from a small village called Solenthal, a narrow path leads from a high road to a spot once occupied by charcoal burners, but now abandoned.

In this was a small hut, of wretched aspect, one of millions in France, where glitter and glory hide misery worse than that of Ireland in her worst days, where sound and show conceal from us 16,000,000 of paupers.

It was occupied by two women and a large dog. At the moment when our narrative commences one only was at home. She was about fifty, poorly but not meanly clad. She was clean, neat and tidy, and she plied her needle with unceasing energy. She was sewing for a livelihood.

A short distance off on the edge of the wood, another woman, or rather a young girl, dressed in the same manner, was picking up wood and laying it in an outspread cloth on the ground. She, too, plied her work industriously, for until sufficient fuel had been collected she could not cook their humble dinner.—Presently she seemed satisfied with what she had done, and was about to proceed, when two horsemen issued from the wood and came along, walking their horses slowly. One was a young man, about five and twenty, rosy-cheeked, handsome and full of health; the other was ten years older, and evidently an habitue of boulevards and cafes of Paris. His pale face, made paler by a thin, black moustache and jet black hair, his hollow, sunken eyes, spoke of the man of late hours and pleasures.—His face was cold and repulsive, while that of the other was open and frank.

"What a wretched occupation for so pretty a girl," said the young man, riding quickly on, so as to speak first; "surely, ma chere, you might put your taper fingers to a better use. Here's what will buy you fire woods for months."

And he cast a double Napoleon at her feet.

The girl raised her angelic face to his, sadly and reproachfully. She was about eighteen. Her white skin, her blue eyes, her curly, golden hair, her simple, child-like manner, was something he had never seen before. Her expression was timid and yet proud, and, looking into her eyes, the young man was not surprised at the reply he received:

"Monsieur, I have done nothing to give you a right to insult me. What you have done may have been meant kindly, but I ask alms of no one."

"Pardon, mademoiselle," exclaimed the other, confused and stammering.—"I meant no insult. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I pray you. I thought you poor, and my impulse was to aid you."

"Thank you, monsieur, for the first kind word I have heard these fifteen years, except from my own mother," said the young girl. "But go your way, or else the whole country will shun you, too."

"Begone, wretch!" exclaimed the other riding up and raising his whip menacingly; begone, viper, and dare not speak to an honest man.

The young man listened in amazement.

"I did not speak to monsieur, monsieur spoke to me," said the girl, gently, with, however, a smile of pity and contempt.

"Raise your accursed lips to me again!" cried the other furiously, "and I will scourge you with my whip."

"Monsieur is perhaps a coward," said the gentle girl, stung to anger for once,

turning at the same time to face his insults.

"What! dare you answer me," and he raised his hand again.

"Nay, Edward, you would not hit a woman?"

"A woman? Do you call Madeleine Pierrepont, the child of the assassin of my uncle Dubois, a woman? Say, rather, a fiend," screamed the usually calm dandy.

"Madeleine de Pierrepont!" replied the other, staggering so that his friend had to turn his assistance to him.—"Madeleine de Pierrepont? And this is Madeleine de Pierrepont! Truly," he muttered, as he remounted his horse, "she is not a woman?"

The other imitated him, and they rode off, leaving the young girl to weep alone. In a few minutes, however, she wiped her eyes, and then, fearful lest she would be suspected of appropriating the gold piece, she took it up, wrapped in a piece of paper, with the intention of returning it to its owner. She then lifted up her bundle and walked slowly to her hut.

"Tell me the story of the girl," said the young man, gravely.

The other told it: "Fifteen years before the father of Madeleine de Pierrepont and a Monsieur Dubois, a rich proprietor, had been intimate friends. De Pierrepont was comfortably off, from the fact of his having several occupations. He was collector of the rent of a rich member of his noble family; he was taxgatherer and *adjoint* to the *Maire*.—The *Maire* was M. Dubois a rich man, but somewhat of a miser. It appeared that one afternoon Dubois asked Pierrepont to walk over to a small town at some distance to receive with him a large remittance, which he had to pay a large body of workmen employed in the public works, and other expenses incurred in the building of a church and school room. Dubois felt safer with a companion. It was afterwards proved that they received the money, dined together at the *Soleil d'Or*, drank rather more than they were used to, and then, despite every representation, set out to walk home, though De Pierrepont wished to hire a gig.

"Next morning, the body of Dubois was found about a hundred yards beyond the house of Pierrepont, which was at the foot of a hill that led to the village. All his money was gone as well as his watch and rings.

"A search took place instantly, and De Pierrepont, as his companion, was visited by the police agent. De Pierrepont deposed that Dubois, on his reaching his house, bade him go in, for that he could go the hill safely alone; but still he requested him to keep a bag of 1,000 francs in silver, because it was so heavy, until the morning. This 1,000 francs he gave to the police. Of 16,000 francs in notes he solemnly declared he knew nothing. On this he was arrested as the assassin, tried found guilty and sent the galleys for life.

"His wife solemnly declared that she heard Dubois wish her husband good night, and say, laughingly: 'I'll send a cart for the silver in the morning.'—But, instead of benefitting him in the eyes of the world, she became his accomplice.

"To avoid being hooted at in the streets, she left the village, and every penny being spent ere her husband's trial was over, she obtained reluctant permission to dwell in the charcoal burner's hut. But all shunned her and her child as they would lepers, and, to live, she was obliged to walk nine miles in search of work of the coarsest description.

"Leave the country she would not, because she was born there, and she felt convinced that her husband would be ultimately pardoned.

"And you join, Edward, in the infamous persecution. Supposing the father guilty (which to me is not clearly proven—and you know I am a lawyer), why should this poor girl suffer for the sins of her father? Why, the savages of North America are more civilized than you. I see in this heroic couple subject of wonder and admiration, but not of hate. Poor creatures! Fifteen years of misery have not satisfied you all, but you must still treat them as outcasts."

"My dear Arthur, you have just come from America, where it appears to me you pick up very singular ideas. For my part, the wife and daughter of an assassin, and the assassin of my uncle, are detestable wretches, whom I must hate," said the other, in his usual cool way. His fit of anger was past.

"Injustice, infamous injustice! Poor girl! I think I see her meek face now, looking at me so proudly and yet so sweetly. I never saw anything so lovely in my life."

"Why, the man is in love," exclaimed Edward Dubois, the heir to the murdered man's property.

"Half; and what's more, Edward, do you know I'd marry that girl to-morrow if she'd have me, but I know she would not."

"By my faith," said Edward, "you amaze me, and I am not easily amazed. Of course you are joking."

"Time will show. But now, my dear fellow, adieu; you follow that path in search of pleasure, I this on business."

"Adieu, a *demain*."

"Yes. You breakfast with me at the little Inn, you know."

"Agreed, my philosopher. Adieu."

And Edward Dubois galloped down a narrow path leading to the chateau of a certain Count de Session, who that day gave a grand dinner and evening party. As soon as Arthur saw that he was out of sight he turned his horse's head toward the charcoal burner's hut.

When Madeline returned to the hut and began making a fire she told her mother what had passed and showed her the gold piece. They were used to this kind of treatment, and the mother did not feel it much now. The scorn of fifteen years had made her despise the world. But Madeline seemed hurt.

"I do not care," she exclaimed aloud, at last, "for what the young Monsieur Dubois said; but I am vexed that the good-looking stranger should have said that I was not a woman."

"You are not a woman but an angel," exclaimed Arthur, solemnly. He had approached on foot and had heard a portion of their conversation.

The mother and daughter stood still in dumb amazement.

"You seem surprised, madam;" said the young man, addressing the mother.

"You will be still more so when I add that I have returned with the deliberate intention of imploring you to give me your daughter's hand in marriage; not now, instantly, but when you know me better."

"Monsieur!" exclaimed the mother, indignantly, "this is too much. Go. The felon's daughter is still too good for insult."

"Madam," said Arthur, respectfully, "perhaps your astonishment will cease when I add that your husband is innocent, and that I have come 16,000 miles to prove it."

"You are—speaking—seriously?" gasped the poor woman.

"On my soul and conscience," said Arthur, solemnly.

"Oh, joy! oh, joy!" shrieked the girl, clasping the man round the neck, "the savior has come at last."

"Be calm, my dear young lady, and I will tell you my story in a few words. You will then understand my motives in coming here. I scarcely expected to find you at Solenthal, but at least determined to try. I came yesterday night, and soon heard of your resignation and courage. Be seated, dear girl, and listen to tidings that will be joyful indeed to your filial heart."

Madeline, blushing, her color going and coming, obeyed, and seated herself on a log near the young stranger.

"I am a young Frenchman, and about seven years ago I emigrated to Peru in search of a fortune. I started as a lawyer, and I found business plentiful enough. I knew many Frenchmen in the place, but a merchant by the name of Gaillard was my most intimate friend. He was twice my age, grave, even sullen and saturnine; but he had quaint ways, was very charitable, and I liked him. Besides, the others were married, had families, and he was alone. We used to meet of an evening at a cafe, play piquet, drink sherbet, and then walk home together. He was rich, and lived in great style, but not in any way up to his income. People wondered he never married, but he was not inclined to try the experiment. He looked with alarm at the prospects of my settling in

life, and did all he could to preserve unto himself one bachelor friend.

"About a year ago he fell ill, and the doctor at once intimated to him that he would not recover. Apart from disease it was a general break-up of nature.

"When he found that there was no hope he sent for me.

"'Versan,' said he, 'listen to a dying man, and interrupt me not. You see on this bed an assassin, a thief, a murderer. Fourteen years ago, sitting in a hotel, I saw two men dining, one of whom had received sixteen or seventeen thousand francs. A dreadful thought came into my head. I was not poor, but I was wicked. I followed these two men. They walked on their way to Solenthal together. I dare not attack both, and once or twice I thought of giving up my fearful design. But at the house of one De Pierrepont they parted, and my victim, Dubois, advanced alone.'

"'I was monster enough to think that heaven gave him up to me. I bounded after him; I gave myself no time for thought; I stabbed him in the neck; killed him; took his money and fled. I spare you my thoughts and my fifteen years of suffering. I fled my country; I became a merchant—rich—respected; but I have never had one happy moment. Not only had I murdered him, but Pierrepont was suspected, and sentenced for my crime, only not to death, because the jury hesitated. I thus ruined an honest man, and sent his family to beg their bread.'

"He paused. I spoke not; too absorbed in my horror.

"'De Versan, listen to me, my friend. Do not turn against me; I have left you my sole heir.'

"'Never will I—'

"'Hark! you must and you will.—Take my property, and think, when you enjoy it, with pity on its guilty present owner, and I will make a public confession, pay the heirs of Dubois their 16,000 francs, and, by proving my own guilt, obtain the pardon of the innocent De Pierrepont. Refuse, and I will die unrepentant, for my only friend will have deserted me.'

"And may heaven bless you!" said the weeping and sobbing mother, while Madeleine hid her head in her mother's lap.

"An hour later, in the presence of the French and English Consuls—four Englishmen and four Frenchmen, two priests and the Alcalde—Gaillard, or rather, Mesnard, made his solemn confession, which was signed by all present, sealed, and one of two copies given to me. That copy is now in the hands of the Minister of Justice, and here," drawing forth a letter, "is a copy of your father's pardon."

A wild shriek from both women was the reply.

"And now, Madeleine," said he, taking the girl's hand, before I have the chance of rivals may I renew my request for your hand and heart."

"Monsieur, no man on earth can ever do for me what you have done. In an hour I have lived years of joy; that joy I owe to you. Give me my father, and the love of my whole life, if you value it, shall be your poor reward."

This sudden resolution of the young girl, so natural, under the circumstances, was approved of heartily by the mother. Next morning there sat in a small inn in Solenthal, waiting for breakfast, a man, not old, but bowed by years of woe, gray-haired and pale. On each side of him sat a woman—one his wife, the other his daughter. They had been talking for hours, and were not wearied yet. A young man was sitting opposite, his face beaming with delight. Several times the waiter had announced breakfast, but the young man had always bade him to be quiet and wait still a moment.

At length a hurried step was heard, and the young Edward Dubois entered. He started as if bitten by a snake, and would have left the room.

"Stop!" said Arthur, sternly, as he caught him by the wrist. "Rather kneel and ask for pardon than fly. Read this, man," and he put in his hand the printed bill proclaiming the injustice of Pierrepont's sentence, his free pardon, and containing the certified confession of Mesnard.

Edward Dubois read it in silence.—When he had finished, he turned and grasped the ex-convict's hand.

"No apology can make up for my

conduct," he said, "but what I can do I will. This bill will satisfy the whole country."

"Monsieur," replied De Pierrepont, in husky tones, "you did as but the world did. Appearances were against me and all condemned me."

"Edward, my friend," said Arthur, "you see the danger of judging from appearances. Had De Pierrepont been truly guilty, his wife and child should have been pitted, not scorned. As it is, a vile prejudice has made these two women for fifteen years outcasts and pariahs.

Edward made no reply as the breakfast came in. He, like all the country round, felt horrified now that they found out how unjust they had been; never was a wedding more tumultuously hailed and feted than that of Arthur De Versan and Madeleine De Pierrepont. Still I have not heard that one man, woman or child in the forest of Ardennes has been cured of this evil habit of judging always from appearances, and visiting on the innocent the sins of the guilty.

### An Extraordinary Blunder.

A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, writing from Amelle les Bains, France, says:—A very singular blunder was committed the other day by the officials of a railway station between Perpignan and Toulon. A gentleman who had been spending the winter here with his family, left last week for Marseilles, taking the body of his mother-in-law, who died six weeks ago, and had expressed a wish to be buried in the family vault at Marseilles. When he reached Marseilles and went with the commissioner of police—whose presence is required upon these occasions—to receive the body from the railroad officials, he noticed to his great surprise that the coffin was of a different shape and construction from that which he had brought away from here. It turned out upon further inquiry that a mistake had been committed by the officials, who had sent on to Toulon the coffin containing his mother-in-law's body, believing that it held the remains of a deceased admiral, which were to be embarked for interment in Algeria, while the coffin awaiting delivery was the one which should have been sent on. The gentleman who was placed in this awkward predicament, having requested the railway officials to communicate at once with Toulon by telegraph, proceeded thither himself with the coffin of the admiral, but the intimation had arrived too late. He ascertained that the first coffin had been duly received, taken on board, amid "the thunder of fort and of fleet," the state vessel which was waiting for it, and despatched to Algeria. He at once called upon the maritime prefect of Toulon and explained the circumstances of the case, but though a despatch boat was sent in pursuit, the other vessel was not overtaken. He is now at Toulon awaiting her return, and I believe that he declines to give up the coffin containing the deceased admiral until he regains possession of his mother-in-law's remains.

### A Nice Fortune.

LIMERICK, April 16.—Yesterday, Mr. D. P. McCarthy, a native of Cork, architect, of Barrington street, received a letter signed G. A. Stanly, New Square, Lincoln's Inn, informing him as follows:

"I am directed to inform you that the first instalment of the O'Keeffe legacy has come to hand in your favor for £500,000. The whole or the greater portion of the £500,000 left by the deceased will come to you, except the portion allotted to your brothers, about which the Crown will decide.

Mr. McCarthy received the intimation with great equanimity and quiet thankfulness that his first cousin, Charles Robert O'Keeffe, late of Allahabad, India, who died a bachelor, had left him such a splendid fortune, which made him a millionaire five times repeated. The parents of the deceased Mr. O'Keeffe resided in Cork, and carried on a respectable business there as general merchants. His father and mother had occasion to visit London, and there, contrary to all expectation, his mother was suddenly confined in a hotel, and gave birth to the founder of the colossal fortune. Both Mr. O'Keeffe's parents died before he reached his majority. He had one brother and one sister, but both are dead. The brother died in Australia, to which he emigrated many years ago, and his sister died in Cork.