



“Colloque Sentimental”

Translated, by Aleister Crowley,
from the French of Paul Verlaine

Drawing by Sydney Joseph

IN the ancient, frozen, solitary park
Two figures passed anon—now mark!

Their eyes are dead, their lips are soft and gray;
One scarce can hear the words they say.

In the ancient, frozen, solitary park
Two ghosts evoke the past—oh, hark!

“Dost thou remember our old ecstasy?”
“Why do you wish to remind me?”

“Does thy heart beat still at my name, and glow?
Seest thou my soul in dreams, dear?”—“No.”

“Ah! the fair days of joyance and of glee
When our mouths kisse! ah, kisse!”—“Maybe!”

“How blue the sky was, as our hope was clear.”
“Hope has gone down to Hell’s nadir.”

So, in the foolish alleys they conferred,
And only midnight overheard.

S. O. S.—R. S. V. P.

Vanity Fair’s Prize Department of Deportment

Conducted by Charles Macomb Flandrau

IN the July number of Vanity Fair, Mrs. A. (without troubling to mention the fact to her husband) invites Mrs. B. to a family dinner. Mr. A. telephones the butler from Wall Street that he is bringing a friend home to dinner and not to wait. Mr. A.’s friend proves to be Mr. C. who—because of a quarrel—has not spoken to Mrs. B. for years. Problem:—What should Mr. C.—who from the hall has recognized Mrs. B.’s voice—now do?

It was interesting, as the solutions of this difficulty poured in, to note that they were almost evenly divided on the question of whether Mr. C. should leave the house when he recognized Mrs. B.’s voice (of course explaining in some fashion to his host, his hasty departure), or whether he should boldly enter the dining-room and face whatever kind of music it, for the moment, pleased Mrs. B. to furnish. In fact toward the last, the judges began to feel that even in this remote and peaceful little department the great war was not without its influence, and they came to regard the contestants in the light of militarists on the one hand, and on the other, as pacifists, non-resisters—doves of peace.

Is the whole country as evenly divided as this particular contest would seem to show, the judges wondered? The replies were psychologically most entertaining, for, roughly speaking, about half of the contestants strongly

advised Mr. C. to take the heifer by the horns, so to speak, while the other half counseled him to avoid an encounter—to flee at once on any pretext he could think of. One writer, indeed, was so resolved to prevent a meeting between Mr. C. and Mrs. B. that he declared Mr. C.’s only course was suddenly to develop all the symptoms of virulent smallpox and request Mr. A. at once to summon an ambulance. He who hears and runs away will live to be asked to dinner another day, seemed to be their attitude. And after all, in this particular instance, there is much to be said for it. For the problem, it will be noticed, carefully neglected to disclose the nature of Mr. C.’s and Mrs. B.’s quarrel. It might for example, have been a mere nothing, such as Mr. C.’s having swindled Mrs. B.’s husband out of half a million in a real estate deal, or it might have been one of those deep, elemental, gripping tragedies that one rarely outlives, such as Mr. C.’s wife having copied in every detail one of Mrs. B.’s imported hats.

How do we know?

So, about half the writers, as has been said, preferred to assume that this chasm could not be bridged—that the rift in this lute could never be—well, whatever it is that people do when they take down the lute and discover that it has developed a large and alarming rift—and they got Mr. C. out of the house as quickly as possible. But the others—the

militarists, as the judges called them—were eager to take a chance. They relied greatly on Mrs. B.’s and Mr. C.’s “manners” and “breeding,” and hoped for the best, but they never gave the slightest indication that, if the worst came to the worst, they would be “Too Proud To Fight.”

With one exception (and he was finally persuaded or intimidated, or something) the judges applauded Mr. C.’s courage in meeting the enemy like an officer and a gentleman, and they therefore bestowed the first prize upon Miss Helen S. Reed, of 19 East Thirty-second Street, New York, who said that Mr. C. unhesitatingly entered the dining-room. Countless others felt the same way, but unlike Miss Reed they abandoned poor Mr. C. at the threshold. She, however, followed him in, as it were, and provided for him a clever conversational opening through which all sorts of illuminating results might proceed.

“THE guest must of course go into the dining-room and allow himself to be introduced to Mrs. B.,” writes Miss Reed “and upon meeting her he must say, ‘Mrs. B.—I trust that the friends of your friends are your friends.’” Nature and art would then take their respective courses and while this is happening, we shall bestow the second prize on Miss May O. Barnett of 185 Main Street.

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