

Lippincott's monthly magazine.

Philadelphia, Pa. : J.B. Lippincott Co., 1886-

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951000970826u>



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ONE VERSUS TWO.

ONE dismal evening in gentle spring—improperly so called by mendacious poets—I sat disconsolately in my room reviewing the winter campaign: the wind shrieked around the corner gable and dashed sheets of rain against the windows, while down below in the streets patches of damp snow, mingled with mud, inspired pedestrians with a savage wish that all the impostors who sing about "beautiful snow" might be summoned in a body to clean the streets. It certainly was what might be called a "nasty night"—an expressive phrase which I should not dare to use if I had not recently seen it in several English novels purporting to describe the innermost circles of Britannic aristocracy, sublime in lofty exclusiveness.

A bright fire glowed in the grate, and a box stood near heaped with shining lumps of condensed warmth, for our city stood on the borders of the coal country, where the farmers' wives, when they wanted fuel, turned up the turf anywhere around the house and filled their buckets gratis, with an easy contempt for wood-piles and the laborious saw. After skimming a newspaper, playing an opera air and writing half a page of a letter, I finally lit a cigar and seated myself in an easy-chair to indulge in the dreamy delights of visions in the coals. Gradually out of the glowing depths rose a bold outline, shaping itself slowly into a rocky island surrounded by a summer sea: a little village stood on the beach, with a slender white spire rising above, while the dark pines stretched up and away over the cliffs, and the heights were crowned by a gray stone fort with the Stars and Stripes waving against the blue sky. Then a magical vista opened through the woods and under the shadow of the Sugar Loaf. In the avenue of spruces appeared two forms, a fair young girl and myself, John Free by name. "Bertha," I murmured as the landscape vanished, and left only the

one face outlined in the coals—a child-like face with blue eyes, brown curls and gentle wistful smile. As the features faded other visions arose—visions of lingering walks under the pines, of long conversations on the balcony and romantic sailing-parties over the moonlit water; the quaint parlor in the fort, with the old chaplain, Bertha's father, deep in his chess-problems; the piano where she sang "The Harp that once through Tara's Halls;" and the white handkerchief waving from her window as the steamer carried me away. Just at this stage of the vision the door opened and Warren Brenton came in, divesting himself of his overcoat and dismally chanting an atrocious parody invented on the stairs for my benefit:

In the spring a bitter east wind freezes up the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing dies of cold upon its nest;
In the spring a muddy moisture drips from the bedraggled dove;
In the spring a shaking ague turns a man from thoughts of love.

"You wretch!" I exclaimed, "you have frightened away my visions."

"Where were they?" said Brenton, lighting a cigar and taking a companion arm-chair by the fireside.

"In the coals," I replied, and, full of the genial recollections, I was almost tempted to disclose my thoughts, when he began talking of city politics and the mood passed.

Warren was my best friend: our law-offices were in the same building, we frequented the same houses, and when, by chance, we happened to be on opposite sides of a case, we vastly enjoyed pelting each other with terrific epithets and rolling adjectives, at the same time frowning with all the ferocity we possessed. My income depended upon my industry, but Brenton enjoyed a comfortable fortune: together we attended parties, together we spent our evenings, and together we had passed a month at

Fairy Island the preceding summer, Brenton having outstayed me by several weeks, till called inexorably back, as I was, by the necessities of the daily grinding legal wheel.

After a desultory conversation upon the topics of the day, Warren began rallying me upon my devotion to Miss Kate Vanderheyden, the lovely brunette. "Seriously, though, John," he said finally, with his eyes fixed upon the smoke-rings above him, "in spite of the prosy paternal relative, she is a charming girl."

"So-so," I replied with fastidious indifference.

"Why, old cormorant, what more do you want? Is she not lovely, amiable and rich, and smileth she not most sweetly upon thee?"

"There's Allen in the way," I suggested.

"Oh, he is entirely *ausgespielt*: he wrote her a letter alluding to her 'angle' form and 'starey' eyes. Poor fellow! he knew no spell but hers. No, my friend, the field is clear before you: go in and win!"

"The truth is, Warren, I think she *does* fancy me," said I with an air of candid acknowledgment.

"Of course she does: in maiden meditation fancies Free. And now, may I ask if the day is fixed?"

"Not yet, but perhaps it soon will be."

"I am not mad, but soon shall be," sang Brenton, ending in a prolonged quaver just half a tone flat. At the close of this musical quotation I mildly questioned him in my turn concerning a certain cousin Dora with whom he kept up a domestic flirtation under cover of respect for an aged aunt.

"Dora is a dear girl," he replied sentimentally, "and I should marry her tomorrow were it not for sundry qualms of conscience."

"Regarding cousinship?" I asked.

"Oh no: she is three degrees removed; but there is another little girl to whom I consider myself half promised, and I am afraid she would cry her eyes out if she had to give me up."

"Does she live here, old Mormon?" said I, lighting a fresh cigar.

"No; but the truth is, I flirted with her desperately for eight weeks, and all but committed myself. Whenever I think of her pretty face, I have not the courage to break her heart, poor little thing!"

"Who is it, Bluebeard?"

"Why who should it be but Bertha Macpherson, of course? You remember her?"

"Remember her!" I stammered idiotically, staring at my broken coal-visions with a cold perspiration trickling down my back.

"Yes, the old chaplain's daughter, you know? The reverend, Bertha and that long-legged Duncan lived in the rooms above the chapel overlooking the lake. Well, I have been engaged to Cousin Dora for years, but last spring we had a quarrel, and just to revenge myself I began flirting with the lassie up on the island. Dora heard of it, and it soon brought her round: we are all right now, but as I am not unprincipled like some of you fellows, I positively cannot bear to break the little Macpherson girl's heart."

"Do you mean to say, Warren Brenton, that Bertha Macpherson loves you?"

"Of course she does: that is the very point of the difficulty."

"Did she ever acknowledge it?"

"Perhaps not in words; but what do you care about it?"

"What reasons have you for your assertions, sir?" I asked with concentrated composure.

"I don't know that I am obliged to give them to you; but it was evident enough that the child was wrapt up in me."

"I think, Mr. Brenton, you are mistaken in the lady," I remarked loftily.

"Nothing of the kind, sir."

"Her affections are bestowed in another quarter, and I have her letters to prove it."

"Her letters!" exclaimed Brenton with flashing eyes.

"Yes," I answered triumphantly, at the same time taking two letters from my pocket and brandishing them in his face.

"What is in them?" said my rival furiously."

"Never mind," I answered meaningly, hastily replacing the innocent documents in my note-book, with the inward consciousness that their barren friendliness would but poorly prove my assertions: "enough that she writes to me, not to you. And allow me to request you not to make use of her name so freely."

"I shall make as much use of her name as I please, and she would marry me to-morrow if I asked her," exclaimed Brenton furiously.

"I beg leave to differ: Miss Macpherson is my property."

"It's false!" shouted my fiery companion.

"I shall marry her this summer," I continued with bold audacity.

"I'll be hanged if you do," said Brenton, knocking over his chair and slamming the door after him as he rushed from the room. In an instant his head reappeared. "And Kate Vanderheyden?" he called out jeeringly. I made a spring after him and ran out on the landing: he was half-way down stairs, and, flinging a law-book down to attract his attention, I leaned over and shouted "And Cousin Dora?" at the top of my voice. He shook his fist at me and disappeared into the street, while I, after going down to pick up the legal spoke of the daily grinding-wheel, returned to my room, feeling the depressing reaction of a hot excitement.

The fire had burned low, and a smouldering black heap was all that remained of my glowing visions. I threw on fresh coal, and seated myself to tempt back the rosy reveries, but all in vain. When at last the blaze sprang up, it was altogether too sparkling for meditation: the crackling flame and brisk gas-jets refused to take the outlines of Fairy Island, and Bertha's fair face no longer smiled behind the black bars.

My feelings, too, had changed: indolent self-satisfaction was replaced by angry disappointment; and true to my training I began rigidly scrutinizing the events of the preceding summer, weigh-

ing Bertha's careless words, judging sternly her graceful ways, and using all my legal acumen to prove her guilty of high crime and misdemeanor. But, in spite of special pleading, I accomplished nothing beyond a renewed fondness for the lovely accused, and a firm determination not to believe Brenton's conceited avowals, particularly as he was noted for fancying himself a mighty Nimrod among the fair, slaying whole ranks with one of his idiotic smiles. Dear little Bertha! The more I thought of her, the more I swore she should not be sacrificed. To be sure, she was not exactly eligible as a wife, in comparison, for instance, with Kate Vanderheyden, but I certainly should not allow myself to be supplanted by Warren Brenton; and full of chivalrous resolution, I took out the two letters for additional inspiration. "She is too ladylike to express her feelings before I take the initiative," I murmured as I scanned the friendly lines relating principally to some books I had sent, "but evidently there is a deep hidden meaning in these words. No doubt the simple-hearted child encouraged Brenton for the especial purpose of talking about me, and the great jackanapes took it all to himself. It must be dismal enough at Fairy Island now: I suppose the little girl sits by the window and looks mournfully over the ice all day long, sighing for June, the fifteenth of June, when I promised to be there."

This melancholy picture moved me to a sudden resolution: I would slip away quietly by the first boat up, warn her against Brenton's perfidious failings, stay a few days to cheer her up, and perhaps—But there was no hurry about the rest: she would be satisfied with her little drop of comfort, and Brenton, I thought with a glow of virtuous indignation—Brenton shall be unmasked. This generous determination soothed my wrath, and as the fire had burned down to glowing coals again, I saw new visions in their depths: Bertha roused from her depression, Bertha beaming with joy to see me, and betraying in her artless face the secret feelings of her heart.

The next morning a cold rain drizzled from the gray sky and somewhat dampened my ardor: still, I persevered so far as to visit the office of the transportation company to inquire when the first boat would leave for the North, and was informed by a dismal boy on a three-legged stool, reading a dime novel, that "the ice was ten feet thick yet." Evidently, nothing could be done for the present, and to pass away the time I devoted myself with renewed industry to my profession, withdrawing from all scenes of gayety like a knight-errant vowed to a holy cause. Brenton did not appear again, neither did I meet him on the street: we avoided each other carefully, and nursed our wrath to keep it warm. Finally, after two weeks of this vegetative existence, I felt it my duty to call on Miss Vanderheyden: it was time she should understand my indifference, lest I should make her miserable as well as poor Bertha, and therefore I really ought to go. Very charming she was, very lovely she looked, and I was enjoying myself in a melancholy manner when who should come in but Warren Brenton! Of course we were both too well bred to show our animosity, and Miss Kate had no suspicion of the truth as we all chatted gayly upon the airy nothings of society and laughed with inimitable ease. I confess to a few tremors as I thought of my last interview with Brenton: what if he should allude to Bertha before Miss Vanderheyden? A cold chill crept over me: it would be so cruel to expose the poor little girl's feelings, you know.

Toward the close of the evening, Brenton spoke of the approaching summer and his plans. "If you are to be at Sharon, Miss Vanderheyden," said the coxcomb, "I should certainly go there myself, were it not for a pressing engagement in another quarter. I have just received a letter from a friend, inviting me for June, and once there, Heaven knows how long I shall stay."

"It must be a lady then," said Miss Kate gayly.

Brenton smiled, and drew from his pocket a letter. "Let me see, it is the

fifteenth, I believe," he drawled with pretended forgetfulness, scanning the page. Intentionally or not, the envelope dropped at my feet, and stooping to pick it up, I recognized the delicate, unformed handwriting of Bertha Macpherson.

The two talked on, but I heard not what they said: my brain whirled, phantasms of anger and revenge danced before my eyes, and I sat in my chair like a lunatic in a strait-jacket. At length the perfidious wretch rose to take his leave, all smiles and courtesy, and when he was safely out of the house I murmured an incoherent farewell and rushed into the street. Late as it was, I hurried to the domains of the dismal boy, this time all bustle and confusion: the harbor was reported clear, the first boat of the season was to leave within forty-eight hours, and a schooner was on the point of starting for Chicago, the advance-guard of the lower Lake fleet. Seizing a pen, I indited a few hasty lines to Bertha, incoherent and vague enough, save the one fact that I should follow the letter in person by the first steamer. As I hurriedly sealed the missive, I pleased myself with the thought of the joy it would bring to that lonely island and the happiness it would diffuse over that gentle heart. Bribing the captain of the schooner to deliver the letter, I engaged my passage by the steamer, and returned to my room triumphant.

It was evident that after our quarrel Brenton had written her a beseeching letter, fair to the face but false at heart, and the unsophisticated girl, deceived by his apparent sincerity and pitying his distress, had asked him to come in June. That she had selected the fifteenth might be accounted for by two reasons: my presence at that time would preserve her from an open declaration on his part; and perhaps also, innocent as she was, she was woman enough to try the effect of the stimulant of jealousy upon my somewhat tardy devotion. Having thus explained satisfactorily the phenomenon of the letter, I sank to sleep, lulled by rosy dreams.

During the next day I made my preparations as quietly as possible, and post-

ing a notice on the office door to the effect that I was called away by important business, at the appointed time I took my valise and started for the pier. It was a bright cold day, with a high west wind, and as I passed through the Park, I saw Brenton, with his cousin Dora on his arm, on the opposite side of the monument. With a comfortable enjoyment in the brilliant strategical movement with which I was about to outflank my unsuspecting enemy, I could not resist the temptation to fire a farewell shot. Crossing the street as Dora entered a store, I came up behind her companion, loitering outside, and putting my face close to his ear, "And Cousin Dora?" I murmured suddenly in a jeering voice. He grasped at my arm, but I broke away, and hastening onward toward the river I laughed exultingly at his discomfiture. The Comet lay at the dock with hissing steam and ringing bells, and in fifteen minutes she backed slowly out into the lake, turning her sharp bows toward the North, where Fairy Island lay hidden in the Straits, five hundred miles away.

As long as the spires of the city remained in view I amused myself watching them, and imagining the rage of my quondam friend could my plans be suddenly revealed to him: in the flush of victory I even hoped magnanimously that Cousin Dora might be gracious to him, and generously vouchsafed a nuptial benediction in future.

As we left the harbor the sharp wind gradually nipped romantic thoughts, and wrapped in a heavy overcoat I began pacing the decks in the vain hope of restoring the chilled circulation. Lake Erie stretched away to the northward, sullen and dark, the short surly waves chopping the dull expanse in irate irregularity: between the piers, in slimy smoothness, the muddy current of the Cuyahoga rolled along, bringing down the refuse of six miles of bordering oil-refineries on its odoriferous tide, and preserving its turbid identity far out into the harbor. The west wind had driven the ice-floe down the lake toward Buffalo, and its retreating masses gleamed

in the distance with Arctic clearness: now and then a jagged pile thrown up by the waves, block upon block, catching an occasional sunbeam upon its summit, glittered like an iceberg with Polar splendor. Alongshore, naked forests clothed the low monotonous banks, and the occasional farmhouses stood disconsolately among their barren fields as the steamer ploughed along, looking like the abode of Giant Despair. Then came the vine-islands covered with naked trellises and deserted summer hotels, blank and staring white: one shivering wine-merchant came down to the dock and gazed misanthropically at the casks which the Comet disgorged for his benefit, but his sharp blue nose told not of the merry juice, proverbially rosy, and his glance alone was enough to sour the boldest grape. On a rocky islet fortified Gibraltar reared its walls against the sky, and threatened the passing vessels with the awful power of the great Philadelphia banker, while just beyond opened the celebrated bay where Commodore Perry, generally represented in white satin breeches and pink velvet coat, remarked in a conversational tone to a midshipman in white kids, "Don't give up the ship."

At dawn the steamer entered the Detroit River, brimming full between its low banks, and sweeping swiftly onward with the surplus strength of three mighty lakes. On the American side white villages gleamed in the rising sun, and the cloudy puffs of numerous steam saw-mills rose in the air; but the Canadian shore showed only a few thatched cottages among the neglected fields, with now and then an ancient cross-topped church, built for the vanished Indians and falling into decay. Passing the city, busy activity bustled along the docks; fleets of Lake craft, with their peculiar graceful rigging, were noisy with the sound of hammers; and here and there some adventurous vessel, bringing grain from the prairies, lay resting after its perilous voyage, with the huge trunk of an elevator sucking up the golden cargo. Entering the mysterious mazes of the Flats, margined with porous crumbling

ice-fringes, the steamer glided past solitary beacons standing alone in the midst of the water: sometimes a listless face looked out from the narrow window stamped with the inert ennui of a forced seclusion, but generally the little arks showed no sign of life, desolately riding at anchor in the dreary scene. Just at dusk, dark Lake Huron opened threateningly before the advancing boat, and tossed its long rolling waves high in the air, as if to bar the northern passage. The few passengers huddled together in the cheerless cabin; the crew, wrapped in heavy clothing, went about barricading and tightening every possible opening; the fierce wind came up and the dark night came down as the steamer ploughed heavily onward, out of sight of land, across the stormy lake. All through that miserable night I sat coiled up on a hard sofa, cold and benumbed. The boat rocked and pitched to such an extent that no fire was allowed in the cabin: one dismal light swung from the ceiling, and three shivering children wailed hopelessly around their mother, overpowered by sea-sickness. Driven to desperation, I ventured out on deck, but the driving wind nearly blew me overboard: creeping around on the lee side and clinging to the railing, I gazed down upon the angry waters and out over the dark space beyond. On the forward deck the captain and mate, muffled to the eyes in the bitter cold, kept a sharp watch ahead, and in the wheelhouse three men labored silently as the loaded boat careened fearfully in the storm and plunged heavily through the raging sea. Hour after hour passed, and it seemed as though ten nights had been rolled into one: then the little group in the cabin was startled by a loud cry and sounds of hurrying feet across the hurricane-deck. At that moment we were off Thunder Bay, with a heavy rain-storm upon us, and looking through the mist I could just distinguish the looming outline of a three-masted barque driving before the wind dead across our bow. The bell sounded furiously, the engine stopped, and with all hands at the wheel we rolled helplessly in the

trough of the sea, barely escaping the horrors of a collision.

Gradually the rain changed into sleet, the sleet into snow, and as the cold dawn glimmered in the east, the decks were covered with ice and the mercury was down to winter temperature. Fortunately, the sea calmed down, the fires were lighted again in the cabin, and as we gathered around the stove I began to think of great dogs, train oil, Esquimaux and private theatricals—a strange medley inseparably connected in my mind with Arctic winters at the North Pole. Colder and colder grew the weather, until, as we rounded the point of Bois-Blanc and entered the Straits, we were startled by the unwelcome gleam of an ice-field in the distance, stretching from north to south in an apparently unbroken mass. Pushing on with redoubled speed, we soon found ourselves in the midst of floating blocks of ice, growing more and more numerous until they rubbed against the steamer's sides and closed again behind the stern with a dull thud. At length we struck the main floe, and the porous ice crumbled before the sharp bows as the boat forced her way along, grinding and crushing the snow-covered masses, and occasionally coming full against a solid block with a force which shook every timber in her strong hull. The wind still blew from the west, forcing the moving ice down upon us, and all day the steamer worked steadily to clear the pack before nightfall; but twilight came on and we were still wedged in, although a strip of open water in the distance and Fairy Island rising beyond gave me a hope that my share, at least, in this Arctic journey would soon be ended.

During the night the engines were stopped, and all hands took a good sleep to make up for the fatigues of the preceding night. Early in the morning I went out upon deck and looked toward the northern shore buried in snow: coming around to the other side, what was my astonishment to see a small propeller, working her engine slowly in the ice, about eighty feet south of us! The captain of our patrician side-wheeler pro-

nounced the plebeian craft to be a boat of the Union Line which probably left C—— a few hours after the Comet, and being as snugly built and tight as a cask, rode out the storm securely, and overhauled the larger boat during the night. Our engines were started, and after a hearty breakfast I strolled outside again as we pounded along, my thoughts engrossed with my joyful meeting with Bertha, when suddenly my eyes were blinded by the hateful phantasm of Warren Brenton, wrapped in a huge overcoat of furs and smoking a cigar, on the deck of the propeller alongside. Hastily retreating inside the glass door, I rubbed my eyes and looked again, hoping that I had been deceived by some passing resemblance, but a closer investigation only made assurance doubly sure, for there undoubtedly stood the bane of my life, sheltered by the narrow gangway, gazing intently toward Fairy Island, now plainly visible before us.

In an instant I had opened the door and rushed outside. "You scoundrel!" I shouted at the top of my voice, "how dare you follow me?"

Brenton recognized me instantly, and shook his fist in my direction, but the crunching sound of the boats grinding through the ice prevented me from hearing his answer. Savagely we gazed at each other in silence like two bull-dogs ready for a spring, but the distance prevented a personal encounter, and we were obliged to control our wrath, smoking furiously with snorts of defiance, and glaring at each other ferociously across the floating ice. The captains, seeing black water ahead, let on more steam, and for a moment or two I gloried in the prospect of leaving my rival far behind, but the lively little propeller churned up the ice and flounced herself up alongside again, buzzing and sputtering like a small spitfire, while Brenton waved his hand in triumph.

Toward noon I was moodily standing at the bow, watching the flag floating over Fairy Island, and calculating how long it would take to reach the dock: the houses of the village were plainly visible, and lying at the wharf I could

distinguish the outlines of a steamer from Chicago, and I anathematized my folly for not having gone by rail to that metropolis and taken the first boat from there, as Lake Michigan never freezes. For some time I had not deigned to look at my rival: I was enraged to think that he should have divined my purpose and ruined my plans. The two boats kept steadily on together, now crushing easily through a floating mass of blocks, and now battering against a solid wall of ice, with the signal-bells sounding like mad. The two captains stood on their respective decks, eagerly taking advantage of every available opening: now the Comet's great paddle-wheels revolved majestically and carried her along like a triumphal car, and then the officious little propeller would kick up her heels behind and come bustling up alongside, letting off steam and lashing the water as furiously as a leviathan. At last the little monster, shot ahead, and I was roused from my reverie by the sight of Brenton standing on the stern and pointing triumphantly to Fairy Island. Breathless with excitement I rushed to the captain.

"Five hundred dollars down—" I panted.

"What are ye driving at, young man?"

"Five hundred dollars down if 'you will beat that propeller in," I exclaimed.

"Wall, neow, young man, that's a purty big sum: ye must be mighty anxious abeout it."

"Five hundred down," I repeated.

"Wall, neow, the Comit can do it, for she's a capable critter when her grit's up. I make it a p'int never to worry the boat when there's nothin' to be got by it, but, to tell the truth, I do admire to see her go myself, an', seein' as heow your heart seems to be sot on it, young man, I guess I'll do it."

"Ting, ting," went the bell, and away we shot, the great paddle-wheels revolving rapidly, sending the ice flying to the right and the left, and leaving the puffing propeller far behind. In my turn I stood on the stern and triumphantly saluted my adversary, even going so far as to make a trumpet of my hands and shout remorselessly, "And Cousin Dora?" at him as we surged ahead.

The powerful engine of the Comet did its utmost in my behalf, and in a short time we reached the open water, gliding swiftly toward the harbor, while our crestfallen adversary still floundered in the ice. The bay was full of Lake Michigan vessels, and the steamer I had seen, the Lady Elgin of Chicago, passed us as we approached the wharf, bound down for the lower Lakes by the way we had just cut out for her. About one o'clock I handed the captain his fee and jumped on to the dock at Fairy Island: without waiting a moment I started up the fort hill, slipping and falling on the icy limestone walk, and reaching the great gate in a bruised and strained condition. Hurrying across the smooth parade-ground, I ran up the stairs and knocked at the well-known door. "Come in," said a voice, and entering the little parlor, I found the worthy chaplain in his arm-chair, but no sign of his pretty daughter.

"Why, Mr. Free, do my eyes deceive me, or is it yours? in person?" said the old gentleman, shaking me vigorously by the hand. "Ye're a trifle late, but I opine the ice detained ye."

"How is Miss Macpherson?" I asked.

"*Non est*, sir—decidedly *non est*."

"I hope nothing serious has happened to her," I said in some anxiety.

"Ha! ha! very good!—very good, indeed! But I'm sorry ye missed it, though: it was all over before twelve o'clock."

"Good Heavens, sir! what do you mean?"

"The wedding, to be sure. Didn't ye come for the wedding? It was done in a great hurry at the last, for all along the time was set for the fourteenth of June; but two days ago Bertha decided to be married at once. The first boat had come through, a schooner from C—, and when the child found that navigation was open she just anticipated the day and hurried off. May I offer you a glass of wine and some wedding-cake?"

"Thank you," I muttered, and swallowed a brimming glass to sustain myself, while the chaplain cut off a thick

slice of plum-cake for my benefit. "They have just gone, then, Mr. and Mrs. — I beg pardon, the name has slipped my memory."

"Duncan, lad—Roy McGregor Duncan, a far-away cousin—engaged since childhood, brought up together, ye know. They have just gone on the Lady Elgin: ye must have passed them. Yes, the lassie has been engaged since childhood, but I'll not deny she had a turn for flirting. I have really been fearful at times lest she should do a harm to the young slips who come up here in the summer, but she always assured me that they needed a little sisterly advice, and that she meant it all for their good."

"Very considerate!" I said grimly.

The old man rambled on, and I sat mechanically drinking my wine in a state of angry bewilderment that I, the chivalrous knight-errant, should have rashly taken this dangerous journey, given up an important law-case, paid five hundred dollars down, and, alas! risked the smiles of lovely Kate Vanderheyden, only for the pleasure of making myself sick with Mrs. Roy McGregor Duncan's indigestible wedding-cake. It was too much! The girl had evidently received my letter by the schooner, and deliberately planned this base manoeuvre.

"She little knows what she missed," I soliloquized savagely, entirely ignoring the fact that I had no other motive for coming to Fairy Island than a victory over the conceited Brenton. The thought of his name gave me a gleam of comfort: if I was fooled, so was he, for this arrant little witch had evidently invited him for the fifteenth of June with the cool intention of marrying her long-legged cousin on the preceding day.

During these meditations my garrulous host had been entertaining me with a long account of Roy McGregor Duncan's ancestors in the auld countrie, and having landed them safely in the mythological ages, he came down to the present with the question, "I've been thinking, Mr. Free, that it is a little strange ye should have known of the wedding, when I myself was only informed of the

change two days ago?" This was a rather embarrassing question, but just at the moment a knock was heard at the door, and, as the chaplain called out "Come in," Warren Brenton entered, flushed with haste and anger flashing in his eyes.

"Ah, Mr. Macpherson," I remarked with a suave smile, "you probably remember Mr. Brenton of C—. I am sincerely sorry that he also is too late for the wedding;" and with this parting thrust I left my rival to his fate, almost repaid for my discomfiture by the blank bewilderment of his countenance.

Going slowly down the horrible hill, and viciously digging my boot-heels into the icy gravel, I sought the dock again, and learned that another boat was coming up the Straits from Chicago. Seating myself on a dry-goods box in the cold warehouse, I meditated dismally until the steamer reached the dock, and going on board with my unopened valise, I locked myself into a state-room to sleep off the effects of my disappointment and that villainous wedding-cake.

It was nearly dark when I awoke, and going out on the stern to smoke a cigar, I ran against Warren Brenton, moodily watching the dim outlines of Fairy Island behind us. We both started, and there was an awful pause.

Warren was the first to speak: "Did you ever hear a ballad called 'Jock of Hazeldean,' John?"

"No," I replied gravely; "but I am familiar with one entitled 'Roy's Wife'."

Companions in misery, we looked at each other silently, and a gleam of mirth at last invaded our forlorn countenances.

"Fooled, John?" asked Warren laconically.

"Fooled," I replied firmly.

"By a canny Scot's lassie, John?"

"Aweel, ye may weel say that."

"Did we deserve it, John?"

"We did."

"But after all, there's Kate Vanderheyden, John."

"And Cousin Dora," I replied solemnly; so we lit our cigars, and it all ended in smoke.

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

PRIVATE ART-COLLECTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA.

V.—MR. A. E. BORIE'S GALLERY.

MY subject is getting broader before me, but it becomes more and more stimulating. The longer one lives among the bounties of good art, the greater becomes one's ambition to interpret vigorously, for the literary public, those joys of the connoisseur which the world at large denies itself. As for the cicerone, he does not weary of his function: one can regale on an infinity of sherbet when there are new bands of hours to serve it at each draught.

A select gallery of much distinction illuminates the home of ex-Secretary of the Navy Borie.

Three autographs that you seldom see written upon canvases hung in Ameri-

can saloons are those of Delacroix, of Decamps, of Millet. This collection, framed on French traditions, represents them approximately. In the case of either of these artists, each the inventor of a style, one should have seen great numbers of examples before forming a judgment. My own impressions of Decamps and Delacroix are derived not so much from the five specimens in the Borie gallery, as from the two ceilings by Delacroix in the Louvre and Luxembourg, and from his "Dante" in the museum of the latter; and from an assemblage of some scores of the works of Decamps I once saw collected for auction at Drouot, besides various lithographs indicating his conceptions. As