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present recently at a wedding-mass the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin in the the character of the service of the iste the church ladies in elegant costume descending from their carriages and ting the steps, where a rich carpet was for them, as one would see in New York similar occasion. At the door steed rergers in white hose and scarlet with blue coat, gold-embroidered die, and the picturesque three-cornered rinmed with light gray ostrich feathers. While awaiting the arrival of the bridal 12ge I took a survey of the church, which pailt by the Dominicans near the close the seventeenth century, and during the trointion was occupied by the Theophilin opists. It was richly decorated, like Roman Catholic churches, where art to lavish all its resources. Some one wealled Art the handmaid of Religion, the seems often to forget this subordinposition, and to arrogate for herself a The in the house of Ged. I noticed paras:ly a marble group of Saint Vincent de with an infant in his arms and an older distilis feet, and a Descent from the

tieris. The bride was leaning on the arm her father, while the bridegroom conduci her mother. They were attended by reral bridesmaids and groomsmen, and lowed by a long train of relatives and werds. Passing up the main aisle, they of their seats in the enclosed space before te high altar, the bi ide and bridegroom in ecentre, apart from the rest, in chairs of inich velvet and gold, rich enough for There was a profusion of white sers around the altar, but they were all d fashion and ma fance on such occasions. Though they are y with scissers a mitations, one would perfer to re real flowers at one's wedding. More than sweetness is a bad omen.

the efficiating priest and his assistants in the civil'z white robes, with lace which would greater anxie made the despair of a duchess. The ride looked very graceful in a white gown age waited for the priectly plain, with the tulle veil floating material was on the feet and orange blossoms gleaming ttrom her dark ringlets. The ceremony pass muster in ruling and impressive. In ore part of it re, but it was he priest presented to the bride and bridenum the " pieces de marriage"—that is, ed the garmer medals about the size of a dollar bearto the names of the young couple, with the ate of their marriage and appropriate milems. A little later they advanced toand the altar, where the priest presented them two golden paterae, which they grerently kissed, and, returning to their mits, two of the groomsmen held ab ve heir heads a long white mantle of cloth of ever with fringes of gold, while the priest rat on with the service.

During the effectory the vergers passed grough the assembly with their monotonous arest puddle, a mant, "Pour les pauvres, s'il vous plait" vie held out the small crimson velvet bag b receive the offerings. I would rather are taken part in the charge at Gettysburg han do this myself, but the perfect ease ud grace of these young French girls made

At the close of the mass the bridal party pused around the altar into the sacristy, then they received the congratulations of their friends, afterward returning through me grand aisle of the church in the same rder as they had entered, except that the tride now leaned on the arm of her husband, shile the organ pealed forth exultingly the d had a record "Wedding March" of Mendelssohn.

As we came out of the church my friend, Idame Lefort, said to me, "You have men what is very rare in France, a marriage flore and inclination, a l'Americain. I

ithe only one I have ever known." "And your own, madame?" said I.

"Mine has been a happy marriage, but was not acquainted with M. Lefort when was married to him. The first time I Fir saw him was on the day of rejoicing at te birth of the prince imperial. He was resented to me in the Champs-Elysees, but was engrossed with the scene around me mi did not much observe him. 'How did it like M. Lefort?' asked my mother on he way home. 'I do not know; I scarcely med at him.' 'Bat, my daughter, your ther has selected him for your husband. is will dine with us to-morrow, and unless te is very disagreeable to you-' M. Lefort rua handsome man; he is so still, you now, and he was much handsomer then. de pleased me, but I never spake ten words thim till after we were married, which ru just a month from the day I first saw in; and all the time we were so busy, my nother and I, with preparations for the redding that I had not a mement to think. the sent me the most beautiful flowers every by, and fer my corbeille de mariage he ave me diamonds and an India shawl which cost five thousand trancs. He was in tate to commit follies then," said madame Tha little eigh. " I was bewildered with I this new splendor, for French girls are ways dressed in the simplest way-not at as in your country, where miss has frerything as handsome as mamma-and hey never go into the street without a chaperone. I was full of life and longed rexcitement; my mother was an invalid and went out very seldom, so that marriage was like an open door to freedom."

"But I do not see hew you dared."

"02, as to that. I was thoughtless thing dif rent. Eugene was very good to me; by and bye we had our little Clarice, we fell in love with each other by degrees, and we have been very happy. I be there. think marriages are as happy in France as winter, and they have all been happy."

Do tell me about them," said I. "With the greatest pleasure, this evening

"The girls will like to hear the story said I. (The girls were four charmpecimens of American young womanhead who were under my care temperarily.) Accordingly, when the lamps were lighted (for there is no gas in French parlors) we trew our chairs around the table to hear the tery of the three marriages.

You remember," began madame, " the ht :clenel who dired with us last Sunday

His wife is my cousin, and a year ago she

was not Madame de Courcelles." "But the little boy ?" said Alice with a naive surprise in her blue eyes. her father, and he would have been so desolate without her that he had not the heart to urge it. My uncle died about two years ago; his property was divided among his children. Pauline had a moderate inceme. which would not permit her to live in the style to which she was accustomed. She wrote me a very sad letter, lamenting her father's death and her own loneliness and desolation. She asked me to find her a room and board in Paris, in a convent or in some quiet family. I wrote that I would do all I could for her. But, my dear cousin,' I added, 'why do you not think of marriage? It will be very disagreeable to you, who have so long been the mistress of a handsome establishment, to live in the way you propose. Seriously, marriage is the only solution of all your perplexities.' I had not long to wait for a reply. Pauline wrote that she would will-It length the bridal party entered, predied by the vergers with their glittering she feared it would be improved and she feared it would be improved and ingly marry, but she was now thirty six she feared it would be impossible to make an advantageous marriage. 'Difficult,' I wrote in reply, 'but not impossible. Come to Paris, make me a little visit, and we will see.' Now I had in mind my friend Colonel de Courcelles, whose wife had been dead

about a year and a half. He often came to see me, and always bewailed his loneliness and the unhappy condition of his children (he had but two, a girl and boy) without a mother. It occurred to me that two sorrows rightly mingled might make one joy; and the next time he called and entered en his usual menologue I interpolated the question, 'Why den't you marry again, colonel? It is the only thing that can make you forget your serrows.' 'I know it,' said he, 'but there is no lady.' 'Pardon me, colonel. have a cousin who is just my age. She has recently lost her father; she has a dowry of fifty thousand francs, and she is coming to spend a few weeks with me.' 'I shall be delighted to meet your charming cousin,

"In due time Pauline arrived. After the first greeting and condelences were over, I said, 'Pauline, I think I have found a husband for you-Colenel de Courcelles. have been acquainted with him many years; he has a fine position, and he was very indulgent to his wife; she was very happy with him. He will dine with us on Sanday, and you will have an epportunity to see him. I have said nothing to him about it; you

may feel completely at your ease." (My Canadian readers, who have been brought up, I hope, with a strict regard for truth, will doubtless be shecked at madame's want of veracity. I was not serry to see my young friends exchange a glance of surprise, which madame did not observe, and would not have understood if she had and turned weed by a groomsman and a bridesmaid, a lie as a thing innecent in itself—one which may be even highly meritorieus, and which becomes criminal only under certain circumstances, deriving its moral character entirely from the motives that prempt it.)

"On Sunday the colonel came. Clarice was at school then, and there were only four of us-M. Lefort and I, my cousin and the colonel, who sat opposite her. They looked at each other furtively from time to time, and when their eyes met dropped them instantly on their plates in the most comical manner. Dinner over, I took my cousin aside: 'What do you think of him?' 'He is too fat,' said Pauline. 'Fat? You think se? The idea!' 'Oh, madame, how could you? He is immense!' said my innecent Pauline, with a look of distress. 'Only consider what a fine position he has,' said I, and such an excellent man! if you could only see how well he looks on horseback at the head of his regiment!

"Later in the evening I had an opportunity to speak to the colonel. 'Well? said I, interrogatively. 'Madame, your cousin is charming, but she is rather too tall.' The huge colonel had a giant's penchant for little women. 'There is ne occasion for you to go any further,' said I. 'I have not mentioned it to my cousin, of course.' 'I should like to call to morrow,' said he.

"In six weeks Pauline was Madame de Courcelles, but up to the wedding-day she continued to say piteously, 'If he were only net so fat ! "

"That is net romantic at all," said Enily. "But they are very happy," said mad-

"Doesn't she think he is too fat now?" asked Belle.

you were to say so," laughed madame.

"Now for marriage Number 2," said

"A short time before my cousin's marriage," continued madame, "my friend, M. Auber, called on me. . That is a strange idea of yours, to marry your cousin to that great fat colonel,' said he; 'I have a friend | fergetting, like Rip Van Winkle, that she who would suit her much better, I am sure.' 'It is rather late for that now; she is to be married in ten days.' 'How vexatious!' said M. Auber. 'Bat, monsieur, I have a sister-in-law, a young widow, several years yourger and far handsomer than my cousin. Your friend might be pleased with her.' 'I wish I could see her.' Nothing easier. Dine with us the day after to-morrow, you and madame Auber, and I will invite Julie to meet you.' My sister is really very beautiful, and M. Auber could not retain his admiration: 'Oh, madame, she is adorable! though, and besides I never expected any- If my friend can please her, he is man to be envied. Let me see; to-day is fuesday. Well, Thursday, if you and your sister and M. Lefort will dine with us, my friend will

"Thursday came, the dinner and the bywhere else. I helped to make three last guests. I had told my sister what was in centemplation, and we were naturally a little ourious to see M. Vernon. He was a good-looking man, about fifty years of age. "Oh, madame, wasn't he bald?" asked

"Well, he was a little, on the top of his

"I hate bald men. Hew old was she ?" "A little under thirty." "I should not think she would have mar-

ried him if she was so beautiful."

"Well, my dear he had a fine social pesition and a large fortune, hotel in Paris, house in the country, elegant carriage, and | each other, and were as silent as deaf-mutes

cervants in livery. It was a great temptatien, and then she was not very young, you know. Well, dinner was over and we had returned to the parlor. M. Auber seemed "Oh, the colonel was a widower," said restless and fidgety, for he is of a very immadame, laughing. "My cousin lived | patient temperament. 'Madame Lafort,' with her father in a country town. She | said he, rising, 'I would like to show you a was the youngest child. Her mother had | painting by Paul Delaroche in the next been dead many years; her brothers and room,' I had seen the painting hunsisters were married; she had been asked | dreds of times, but I followed within marriage, but she did not like to leave out a word. 'Vernen, weuldn't you like to see it too ?' said M. Auber. No secner was the door closed than he asked in his eager way, 'Well, madame, what does your sister think of my friend ?' But, monsieur, how should I know? I have not had an opportunity to speak to her. Besides, it would be more suitable to know M. Vernon's impression first.' 'Oh, I saw that in an instant, said M. Auber. There is no need of asking him. He is enchanted.' 'Truly, she is the most beautiful creature I ever saw,' said M. Vernen. 'Far too young and lovely for me, I am afraid.' 'That remains to be seen, said his friend. Ask her, madame-just as well now as any time.' 'But M. Vernon must go away.' Certainly, madame; and he epened the door into the parler. 'Come, then, Julie, don't you wish to see this beautiful painting? Have you no taste for the arts?' She came. 'M. Auber wishes to knew how you are pleased with his friend.' 'He is very well,' said she cooly - rather old. ' Oh, madame, is that all you can say for one of the best matches in France ?' 'I do not know that I have any objection, she added. 'Then, madame, we will consider the affair settled.'

> "Early the next morning M. Vernon called to ask my husband to accompany him to the house of Julie's mother, and after the usual compliments of presentation he imme diately asked the hand of her daughter. In three weeks I had the pleasure of being present at the wedding."

"Oh, how dreadful !" cried the girls in a chorus. "No levemaking!" "No walks by moonlight! "So prosaic!" "Everything hurried up so, just like a parcel of goods bought and delivered."

"Why, how long are betrothals in your country?' asked madame,

"Two or three years generally. Seldom less than one year when the parties are young

"I should have changed my mind three er four times in a year," said M. Lefort, looking up from the book which he had been reading all the time, apparently.

"And I mine five times," said madame. " How, then? Are not such long engagements eften broken ?" she inquired.

"Oh, never !" said Belle with ferver. "But, my dear child," interrupted I, "I am afraid you are mistaken there: I have known a great many broken in my time." "And de these young lovers see each other often during this long interval?"

"Very often, madam, if they happen to live near each other." "But always in the presence of the young

lady's mother, I suppose?" "No; it is very common for a young lady to receive her betrothed alone."

"Oh, shocking!" and madame looked rigid with astonishment. " But If the enter For the poor, if you please"), each fol- observed it. Frenchmen appear to regard gagement were breken, she would never find a husband after such an intimacy?"

"That would make no difference," I rejoined, "unless a girl were engaged six or seven years, and the man broke his angagement then, as sometimes happens. She would have lost her fresh young beauty, and her heart might be so set on the faithless lover that no other could ever take his place."

"Ah," said madame, "our young girls are at least saved from all pains of the heart."

"And they are kept from indecorous flirting and manœavres to attract attention too," said I, with a glance at my young Canadians—not that they needed the hint particular'y, however.

"They flirt enough afterward," said Balle spiritedly. "Don's you remember that odious Madame T., with her yellow curls, and the young efficer at the Grand Hotel? never saw any such flirting in America," "Don's talk, girls," said Emily.

want to hear about the third marriage." "Well," resumed madame, "I felt a good deal of completency in my success, and it formed a subject of conversation at my next reception. 'I am disgusted,' said Madame Belval. 'I have been trying all winter to bring about a marriage between two of my friends, and it has failed at last. I will never try again if I live a thousand years.' I am ready to try again to-morrow.' 'Pray be se kind as to give me some assistance, then,' said Madame C., wife of the minister of marine. 'I am looking for a suitable wife for Emile, as I am very detirous that he should marry. Young men are exposed to so many temptations in Paris -actresses and grisettes, and all that kind of thing—enough to drive a mether distrac-"I dare say she would be very indignant if ted. Emile will be twenty-five next menth."

"I should think he was old enough to find a wife for himself," whispered Alice. " His salary is twelve thousand francs, which is not bad for a young man, and his father will do semething more for him when he marries.' 'I know a girl that will suit him exactly, cried Madame Belval eagerly, had 'sworn off.'" (This is an interpolation. I am afraid the French ladies had not the pleasure of being acquainted with Monsieur Van Winkle.) "The administrator of the Lyons Railway has a daughter almost nineteen, the most amiable, the most levely, and her father will give her a hundred thousand france.' 'That is very reasonable,' said Madame C. 'I shall be under everlasting obligations to you if you will speak to him of our son.' 'With the greatest pleasure in

the world.' " Madame Belval had an interview with the administrator of railways. He would make inquiries about the young man. The result was satisfactory, and in a week the friends of both families, concluding M. Lyfort and myself, received an invitation to a seiree at Madame Belval's, where the two young people would meet for the first time. It was very embarrassing for them in the presence of so many curious observers. Mademoiselle Therese was levely, with long fair curls and that delicate blonde beauty which is so rare in France. I pitled the poor child, she was so distressed at the thought of being on exhibition, as it were. and looked pale and then flushed alternate-

"I am glad I am no; a French girl," said

Helen. "And the young man was scarcely less agitated. They hardly dared to look at

the whole evening. The next day his father made a formal demand of M. Thouvel for the hand of his daughter."

"His father! and the young man had nothing to do with it ?" exclaimed Balle, amazed.

parents with us," said madame, "M. Theuvel gave an affirmative answer, and the marriage took place shortly after, as is usual in France."

"And shall you be married in that way, Clarice!" asked Alice compassionately of

madame's pretty young daughter.

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