THE WALL PAPER.

When I was only five years old. My mother, who was soon to die, laised me with fingers soft and cold On high

Uatil against the parlor wall I reached a golden paper flower. How proud was I, and, ah, how tall That hour!

"This shining tulip shall be yours, Your own, your very own," she said. The mark that made it mine endures

I scarce could touch it from the floor I craned to touch the scarlet sign. No gift so precious had before Been mine.

A paper tulip on a wall! A boon that ownership defied! Yet this was dearer far than all Heal toys, real flowers that lavish love Had strewn before me all, and each Grew pale beside this gift above My reach.

Ah, now that time has worked its will And fooled my heart and dazed my eyes Delusive tulips prove me still

Still, still the cluding flower that glows Above the hands that yearn and clasp Seems brighter than the genuine rose

So has it been since I was born. So will it be until I die. Stars, the best flowers of all, adorn The sky.

-Edmund Gosse in Russet and Silver.

## THE DEVIL STONE.

It was in the dusky, tepid twilight of a particularly hot, vaporous, drowsy day at Aix-les-Bains, in Savoy, that I passed through the hotel garden and prepared to take a languid stroll through the streets of the little town. I was tired of having nothing to do and no one to talk to. The other people staying at the Hotel de l'Europe were mostly foreigners, and apart from that entirely uninteresting, and, as to my father, he was almost a nonentity to me at present till his "course" was completed. From early morn to dewy eve he was immersed in the waters, either outwardly or inwardly or both, and beyond occasional glimpses of him arrayed in a costume resembling that of an Arab sheik being conveyed in pomp and a sedan chair to or from the baths I was, figuratively speaking, an orphan until table d'hote.

As I crossed the veranda some one rose from a long chair, and throwing his book down said: "Where are you going, Miss Durant? May I go too?

'If you like," I answered politely but indifferently. "I am only going to look for spoons. For"-

Spoons. I am collecting, you know. It is something to do, and one can always give them away when one is tired of them.

So we sauntered along side by side, and as we did so I began to feel less bored and more reconciled to the trouble of existence, and finally amused and interested and flattered.

For this quiet looking, middle aged man, to whom my father had introduced me two days before as an old friend of his, and whom I had mentally summed up as "rather handsome, clever perhaps, conceited possibly and married probably," was making himself agreeable as only a cultivated, polished man of the world who wishes to make a favorable impression can, and gradually I found myself acknowledging that his dark, intellectual face, with its crown of waving, iron gray hair, was some. "That is thing more than handsome, and that his cleverness was sufficient to carry him beyond conceit, while it did not set him above a very evident enjoyment of a girl's society and conversation.

He had already learned most of my tastes and occupations and drawn from me, by a magnetic sympathy, some confessions as to my inmost thoughts and aspirations, telling me in return that he was traveling wearily in search of rest authoritatively ordered by his doctor, and he was deploring his lonely bachelorhood, when my attention was attracted by some quaint spoons half hidden among other old dull silver things in a forsaken looking little shop to which our wanderings had led us through narrow, dingy byways. "I wonder how much they are," I said, and asking me to wait outside Colonel Haughton disappeared into the obscure interior. I remained gazing through the window for a moment; then, impelled by what idle impulse I know not, I

walked slowly on.

The sound of a casement opening just over my head and a feminine laugh arrested me, and I looked up. It was a curious laugh, low and controlled, but with a malicious mockery in it that seemed a fit ending to some scathing speech, and just inside the open lattice, her arms resting on the sill and chin dropped lightly on her clasped hands, leaned the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. It was but a glimpse of auburn hair in a white forehead, of eyes like brown pansies, and parted lips that looked like scarlet petals against the perfect pallor of her rounded cheeks, but it is photographed forever on my brain, for as I looked a man's hand and arm, brown, lean and supple, with the nervous fingers, on one of which a green stone flashed, clutching a poniard, came round her neck and plunged the dagger, slantingwise, deep down into her heart. The smile on the beautiful lips quivered and fixed, but no sound came from them, and the eyes turned up and fixed, and as she swayed toward the open window the spell that was upon me broke, and with a shuddering cry I fied. On, on-blindly, madly, desperately-with no sense or thought or feeling save an overwhelming horror. A red mist seemed to close around me and wall me in, and as I fought against it I felt my strength fail, and all was dark and still.

Somewhere in the darkness a voice speaking, the touch of a hand on my face, a glimpse of light, a sense of pain that some one else was suffering, then usness and memory. My father's anxious face bent over me, and his voice, as though from a distance, said: "Theo, are you better, dear? No, don't day I will send it to my friends, the get up—rest and take this." And sink- Brahmans. Meanwhile it inspires me ing back I vaguely understood that I with no evil propensity, and since it was in my own room at the hotel, and that a stranger, a doctor no doubt, was so far." present. He enjoined absolute quiet till be saw me again and asked that be should be informed at once if there was any recurrence of fainting. Later when I was in a condition to explain the origin of this attack he would be able to prescribe for me. The light of dawn was struggling through the curtains, and I knew that I must have been unconscious for many hours. With the effort to banish all recollections of the terrible scene I had witnessed came lethargy and later deep, and dreamless

Some days of seclusion and rest par

tially restored my health and spirits, and I began to feel that what had passed had been a sort of evil dream, a terror that were best forgotten. My father when he heard my story was at first incredulous. Then, impressed in spite of himself by my earnestness, he gave an unwilling belief to it, but he entreated me to mention it to no one save himself. He could find no account of a murder in the local papers, nor could be ascertain whether the tragedy I saw was known to have taken place, and as he did not wish my name to be introduced in any inquiry he allowed have neglected my opportunity here the matter to drop. To him I spoke sadly. Let us go and gamble tonight, of it no more, but the remembran and I will win fortunes for all of us." of it would not be wholly banished I was haunted by the sight of that lovely face and the sound of that laugh with its dreadful sequel. And a strange fancy had come to me also that the face was in some way familiar to me. I would lie with closed eyes for hours seeking in vain to recall the resemblance that just eluded me. One day meditating thus I roused myself from my reverie and met my own reflection in a mirror that hung opposite. Breathless I gazed, while a new terror took possession of me. There was the resemblance I had sought. There were the anburn hair; the deep, dark eyes; the colorless face with scarlet lips just parted. Not so beautiful perhaps as the one I had seen in the window. Indeed as I gradually comprehended it was myself I gazed upon I could see no beauty in the familiar features, but so like, so wonderfully, terrible like! And then for the first time I began to doubt the reality of my vision and to long eagerly for the power to put it from me. I determined to rest and to dream no longer, and that afternoon I descended to the

"At last!" said Colonel Haughton, taking both my hands. "I thought we were never going to see you again. I have been reproaching myself with having overtired you that day-with having left you. I had no intention of remaining away from you for more than a moment, and I want to explain what detained me. When I came out and found you gone, I concluded you had returned here, and hurrying on I was fortunate enough to reach you just before you fainted. Your father tells me you have had a touch of malaria, and I hopebut I distress you, Miss Durant. I am tiring you. Let me find you a comfortable chair and leave you to rest. "

"No, no," I cried eagerly. "Stay-I will sit here. Tell me, where did you get that ring?"

On his finger shone a curious green stone that seemed the counterpart of the one I had noticed on the hand that held "That is exactly what I want to tell with wondering joy to

spoons for you I noticed, resting on a carved bracket, this ring. It is a very curious stone. You see it looks quite dull now, yet it sparkles with all the brilliancy of a diamond. And on the back of it is cut part of the head of a snake. I have only seen a ring like this once before, and that was long ago in a hill temple in India. They called it the Devil Stone and worshiped it, and they told me the tradition of it. Centuries before this stone had been discovered by a holy man imbedded in a sacred relic, and he made a shrine for it, whence it was stolen by robbers. The next stage in its history was its division into two equal parts by a maharajah, who had them set into rings, one of which he wore always himself, and the other he bestowed on his maharanee, whom he loved greatly. One day he found it missing from ber finger, and in a fit of jealousy he killed her, afterward destroying himself. His ring passed into the possession of the Brahmans, but hers could never be traced. They say that eventually the two will be united, and that until this happens the lost ring will fulfill its mission. It is supposed to impel its wearer to deeds of violence and to his own destruction, and when the evil spirit within it is gratified it flashes and sparkles. They say, too, that if you cast it from you you throw away with it the greatest happiness of your life and lose the chance of it forever. Yet if you wear it it dominates your fate. The instant I saw it I recognized the lost ring and asked the man his price for it. He refused to tell me, said it was not for sale, and I left the shop, because I did not wish to keep you waiting longer, but I returned next day and succeeded in obtaining it. The old man, a curious old Italian, was very reticent about it, but he seemed to have gathered some knowledge of the tradition, and said it had the 'evil eye,' and was neither good to sell nor to wear. It had been sold to him by a compatriot, he said, who had a dark history—a man who was ever too ready with his knife, and who had come to a bad end. I told him I would steal it, and he might charge me what he liked for some other purchases, so we settled it that way."

"Are you not afraid to wear it?" I asked. "It makes me shudder to look at it. There is some deadly fascination

about it, I am sure." "I am afraid of nothing," he said lightly, "except your displeasure, Miss Theo. If it annoys you, I will not wear it, but I confess it has a very great fascination for me. I do not believe in superstition, but I like the stone for itsantiquity and strange history. Some

has interested you I am grateful to it

So I resolved to put the ring and its history out of my mind and to occupy myself only with the new interest that had dawned upon my life. The next few days went by so happily, and it seemed so natural to me that Lionel Haughton should be always by my side that I did not stay to ask myself the reason for our close companionship, yet I think within my heart of hearts I knew. And each day and hour I spent with him was bringing us nearer together and binding us with ties that would not easily be broken.

"Haughton is very much improved," said my father one day, "since I knew him many years ago. His brother was my great friend, and I did not see much of this one. He seems to have spent a good deal of his life in India, and I fancy it has affected his health. I suppose he won't return there. I must persuade him to come and pay us a visit when we go home, eh, Theo?

One evening when our stay was drawing to a close we proposed to go to the casino, where I wished to try my luck at gambling. "I am always lucky if things go by chance," I said, "and I

Colonel Haughton did not, however, join us as usual at table d'hote that evening, and a note handed to me afterward from him told me that he had been feeling ill, but was now better and would meet us later at the casino. It was the first time I had ever played, and before long it became apparent that my prophecy about my luck was being fulfilled. I won and won and won again till a heap of gold and notes was in front of me, and I was the center of all eyes at the table. I played reckless-ly, and yet I could not lose till suddenly my attention was distracted by the arrival of Colonel Haughton, who leaned over my shoulder and placed his stake next to mine. As he did so the ring seemed to emit a faint sparkle, and I felt as if my careless good fortune had deserted me. I wanted to win now, whereas before I had played for the excitement only with the true gambler spirit. And yet from that moment I He also lost heavily-so heavily that I wondered if he were rich enough to take it as philosophically as he appeared to. Nevertheless so large a sum had I won at first that, though much diminished, it was still a small fortune that I gathered up when we left the ta-

"You brought me bad luck," I said to Colonel Haughton as we walked back to the hotel. "Do you know, I think it

was your ring." "I would never wear it again if I thought that," he answered. Then, as we reached the garden and my father passed on to the salon, "Theo," he continued, "stay a moment. I have something to tell you. My darling, I love you. I love you more than life. Will. you try to care for me a little in return? I want you for my wife. I worship you!

Ah, Lionel, beloved, it scarcely needed the assurance of your love for me to bring me the certainty of mine for you! If ever the gates of heaven open to mortal eyes, they stood ajar for us that night. The starlit garden was changed into a veritable Eden, and we walked you," he said. "After getting your not of an angel with flaming sword, who waited silently to drive us from our paradise into outer darkness

It was scarcely noon the following day when we began the ascent of the Dent du Chat, one of the mountain peaks that tower above Aix.

"I feel as if I had wings and must soar into a higher atmosphere," I had said gayly, "and since we cannot fly let us climb. I want to reach the top of that mountain with you and leave

the world behind us. Let us go.' We were to ride up a certain distance and then dismount and gain the highest point on foot. Three guides accompanied us, following leisurely, talking and gesticulating to each other and paying little heed to us, save an occasional frantic rush at the mules when we approached an awkward corner of the zigzag pathway, which had the effect of adding a momentary uncertainty and danger to our otherwise tranquil ascent. We were not sorry when, after two or three hours of this progress, the guides told us we must halt, and that they would remain in charge of the mules till we returned to them. It was rather a toilsome climb, and the sun was beating fiercely down upon us, but we felt rewarded, when, not far from the top, we reached a plateau where we could rest, while a cool breeze from the distant snowy peaks re-

vived us. 'Here is an armchair all ready for ron," Lionel said, leading me to where soft couch of mossy turf lay beneath the shadow of an upright, projecting piece of rock. A yard or two farther on the precipitous side of the mountain desceuded, sheer and impassable down almost to its foot, terminating in a dark and narrow gorge between two ridges. Away on the left far below us nestled Aix, and by its side the Lac du Bourget, with its island mounstery surrounded by water as blue as Geneva's own.

'How lovely it is!" I exclaimed. never knew before how beautiful life

"Nor I," he answered. "I have been waiting for my wife to teach me." And then he told me of life in India, and of many adventures be had had, and finally we spoke again of the ring and of my strange and sudden illness on that day.

"Some day I will tell you all about it," I said, "and why I have such a curious feeling against the ring. I wish you would not wear it. Yet now that you possess it I have a sort of superstitions dread that if you part with it it will revenge itself upon you in some way. I am sure I saw it sparkle last night when the cards went against us.

You were so terribly unlucky. "Unlucky at cards, lucky in love," be

face. "What have you done with all your wealth, little gambler? You have

not had time to spend it yet." "Here it is," I apswered, drawing out my pocketbook, in which I had stuffed the notes, "but I have taken a dis-like to it. I shall give it away, I think. I would rather be lucky in another

wedding day," Lionel exclaimed. "Till then will you wear it for me?" and drawing it from his finger he was about to place it upon mine.

But I would not allow him to do so, and laying it on the bank notes I said: "There's a contradiction! Good luck and bad luck side by side! Let us leave them there," I added half laughing, half in earnest, "and start again afresh."

He turned suddenly away, and fear ing he was vexed I laid my hand upon his arm, but he shook it gently off, and then I saw he was singularly pale, and that his breathing was quick and short, and his eyes had a strangely troubled and intent look. "Lionel, you are ill," I cried. "Oh, what is it, love? What can I do for you?"

"It is nothing," he said faintly, but his voice was changed. "It will pass off. I will return to the guides and get some

water. Wait here till I come back."
"Let me come with you," I entreated, but he shook his head and said he was better and would be quite well if 1 would do as he wished. Then he began the descent. I watched him for a few moments, till he was lost to view at a bend of the mountain, before returning to my seat. But the sun had gone in, and it seemed cold and dark, and a dull, heavy weight rested on my heart. I was lonely there without him, and the moments dragged on slowly and wearily, till I felt the suspense and stillness unendurable.

I decided I would wait only five minntes more and then would follow him, and leaning back wearily I closed my eyes. A sort of faintness came over me, for I was tired, and the sudden change from perfect happiness to this anxiety, this vague alarm, had chilled and stupe-

It may have been a few moments after, or longer, I cannot tell, but I became aware suddenly that, although no sound of footsteps had reached me, there was some one near. I remained absolutely still and listened intently, and though there was no tangible movement or sound there was an impalpable stir in the stillness round me, some vague breath that seemed to speak of danger. I felt paralyzed with the same power lessness that had seized me when the tragedy at the window was enacted before my eyes. It flashed into my mind that perhaps it was a thief, attracted by the notes and ring lying beside me, who had crept behind, believing that I slept. My hand was almost touching them, and as I glanced down to see if I could reach them without moving I noticed with a thrill of indescribable horror that the green stone was sparkling brilliantly with a thousand rays of scintillating

And then-something stirred behind me, and round my neck crept a hand, holding a short, sharp knife, such as Indians carry, and poised it over my heart as if to strike. With an instantaneous desperate throb of agonized revolt against my impending fate I grasped the ring and flung it toward the precipice. As it flashed through the air the knife dropped, and the murderer sprang to the edge in a vain effort to catch the stone ere it fell. He stumbled, missed his footing, and with one terrible cry and his hands grasping the air wildly he fell backward into the abyss.

And it was Lionel, my beloved! When the guides came to look for us, I told them smilingly that the English gentleman had dropped his ring, and in trying to find it had slipped and fallen over the precipice.

They led me down the mountain with reverent care and husbed steps and voices, for they said to each other: "Figure to yourself this English colonel was in love with the beautiful young lady, and he has perished before her eyes. It is a terrible thing, and it has turned her brain."

And when my father told me gently, ome days after, that they had found him and he was to be buried that day in the little cemetery, I laughed outright.

But I have never smiled since-and am quite sane now-only I think I have done with laughter for the rest of my life. And I sometimes wonder why these things should have been, and if there is an explanation of them, save one.—Beatrice Heron-Maxwell in Pall Mall Magazine.

## It Recalled the Honeymoon

Here is a quaint little story told of a young couple upon their wedding trip, crossing from Dover to Calais. Jenny had grown tired and sickly on deck, and James had led her to the saloon below, lovingly wrapping her up in a Scotch plaid in a snug looking corner. He then went and fetched her some eau de cologne and was not less lavish of endearing words until-until he found he bad made a mistake.

His wife had moved to another cor ner of the saloon more free from drafts, and an elderly woman with just the same sort of plaid had taken her place. Realizing the condition of affairs, James dropped the cologne bottle and fled. Later he induced his wife to go and apologize to the woman he had unwittingly lavished tenderness upon, and

lenny went. My dear," said the elderly woman tearfully, "don't apologize. It was nice to be called such sweet names. It reminded me of my honeymoon time. It's many a long year since my John had a

ender word for me." John never meant to be unkind and probably did love his wife. Only, like too many other married men, he fancied that the love which made for itself speech without measure before marriage had no need to break silence afterward -London Tit-Bits

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The laboratory that supplies Bishop Fallows' home brewed nonalcoholio beer is working overtime in order to keep up with the demand. The drink, as described by a connoisseur, tastes like old fashioned "yarb tea," and appears to be a preparation of roots, herbs, barks and gums, such as the grandmothers of the present generation used to give to "clean out the system" after an attack of boils, carbuncles or spring fever. There is a general feeling that Bishop Fallows would not spring any unwholesome or unrighteous beverage on a trusting community, and the Home saloon is doing une.

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Gratitude is a short cut to sincere and lasting friendship. Some people complain that they have no friends. Have they never had a favor done to them? Why, every man has had a score of favors done him every day of his life! Those who bear it in mind, who say a word of hearty thanks, who watch a chance to do a favor in return, never lack friends.

An Easy Mark.

"May I awsk what you have?" requested the tenderfoot politely.

"Ace high," said Alkali Ike grimly. "Oh, dear me. And I've only got three kings. Seems to me I neven have any luck at pokah."

'Taint all luck, mister. It's sperience. You'll l'arn arter awhile."-New York Recorder.

Tailor-I have called after my ac-

count, Dr. A. Debtor—Here is the money, but I have deducted 5 shillings because you have come in my consultation hour.— London Tit Bits.

A monopoly is a good deal like a baby. A man is opposed to it on general principles until he has one of his own.—Exchange.

The strength of the average horse is estimated to be equal to that of 71/4 verage men.

The experience of failure is one that comes in a greater or less degree to every one at times, trying the metal and probing the character as no prosperity can do.-Victor Hugo.

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