

## LITERATURE.

## THE FIVE FRANC PIECE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

It was past midnight, and the bride had been long in her bridal chamber, when the bridegroom escaped from his friends, and found his way to a private staircase where a confidential maid awaited his coming, in a corridor near the door which was to open for him alone. "Go in," said Dorine, in a low whisper, "my lady is waiting for you." The husband of an hour tapped at the door, opened it, and threw himself at the feet of a young and beautiful woman. She was seated before a cheerful fire, in the elegant undress of a rich widow, to whom a second marriage had given rise to new hopes and fears. "I beg you will rise," said she giving him her hand. "No, no, my dear madam," said the young man, grasping firmly her extended hand and carrying it to his lips, "no, let me remain at your feet, and do not withdraw this little hand, for I fear you will vanish and leave me; I fear it is all a dream; it appears to me I am the hero of a fairy tale, such as I remember in my childhood, and that at the moment of possessing all in the world I wish to possess, the deceitful fairy will fly away with my happiness and laugh with her companions at my grief and despair." "Banish your fears my dear Frederick; yesterday I was the widow of Lord Melville; to-day I am Madame de la Tour, your wife; dismiss from your imagination this fairy image of your child, for there is no fairy tale to relate, but a true story."

Frederick de la Tour had every reason to believe that a supernatural being had taken his fortunes into keeping; for during the last month either by accident, chance, or destiny, an inexplicable success had made him rich and happy beyond his most sanguine wishes. He was young, not more than twenty-five, alone in the world, and living with the most self-denying and rigid economy, when one day, as he was walking in the street of Saint Honore, a splendid equipage was suddenly drawn up opposite to him, a lovely woman, leaning out of the coach window and seemingly much agitated, called out to him, "Mr. M." He stopped. The footman descended from his station, opened the door, let down the steps, and with his plumed hat in hand, respectfully invited the astonished Frederick to enter the carriage. He did so, and thus, as if by magic, beheld himself seated beside a woman both young and beautiful, and dressed with great elegance and richness. He had hardly time to look around him before the horses were again at full speed. "My dear sir," said the lady who was thus running away with him, and in the sweetest tone of voice imaginable, "I have received your note, but notwithstanding your refusal, I hope I shall see you again at my little soiree to-morrow evening." "Me! madame," said Frederick. "Yes, you, sir;—oh! I beg a thousand pardons, I hope you will forgive me the mistake I have made," said the lady, with an appearance of much surprise, "but you resemble so perfectly one of my most intimate friends that I mistook you for him. Oh! excuse me, sir; what must you think of me; but the likeness is so striking—it would have deceived any person." By the time this explanation was at an end, the equipage entered the court-yard of a splendid mansion, and Frederick could do no less than hand Lady Melville from her carriage.

Now, my Lady Melville, as we have said before, was beautiful, and did not at all resemble those sallow-visaged heavy stepping English women, who when they smile, open affectedly their pale lips, and show you two rows of frightfully yellow teeth. No she was a French woman; her lustrous black hair contrasted well with her brilliant complexion, and her coral lips, as she smiled sweetly, permitted an occasional glimpse of the whitest teeth in the world.

Frederick de la Tour, dazzled as well he might be, by so many charms, had no difficulty in believing that Lady Melville had mistaken him for some less happy mortal, and he thanked his stars for it, as the favor enabled him to become favorably known to my lady, whose obliging and very flattering invitations he eagerly accepted—and strange to tell, soon became not

only a marked favorite, but among her most constant and welcome guests. The rich widow was surrounded by suitors for the honor of her hand, who were dismissed one by one, and it was somehow so brought about, that before the end of a short month, the young clerk had an interview by her ladyship's own appointment—marriage was proposed by her, and of course accepted by him, in a delirium of love and astonishment.

The bewildered young gentleman stood before the small looking-glass in his modestly furnished attic, and surveyed himself from head to foot. He was by no means an ugly man, but he should not consider himself particularly handsome; his dress was such as became a clerk with a salary of as many hundred francs per annum as there are months in the year, and having a praiseworthy aversion to running in debt, he could not therefore attribute his good fortune to his tailor. He made up his mind that he must be loved for himself alone, and his early novel-reading favored this romantic conclusion, but being naturally of a modest turn of mind, this solution on second thoughts appeared improbable, and he then determined that Lady Melville must be laboring under some strange and unnatural delusion.

When the wedding day arrived and this future husband listened to the silver or rather golden tones of the notary's voice, his astonishment redoubled. He would have, (so said the marriage contract), a country seat in Burgundy, a house in the street Saint Honore in Paris, and numerous other goods and chattels, of which until that day he had never heard a syllable. Lady Melville had riches across the channel, also, coal mines in Wales and grazing lands in Devonshire. It was to the young man a golden dream from which he dreaded to awake. The Mayor had sanctioned and the priest had solemnly blessed their union, yet with the rites of the church and the forms of law to aid his reason, the conviction that it was all but a splendid and unsubstantial vision would not leave him, even at the feet of his lawful wife in the bridal chamber—he pressed her hand to his lips, he grasped convulsively the embroidered night dress, in his fear that she might suddenly vanish into air.

"Rise, my dear Frederick," again said his wife, "draw that easy chair close to mine and let me talk to you." The young man did so, but without releasing the hand of his wife, and Madame de la Tour began thus—

"There was once upon a time,"—"Good Heavens," said Frederick, "I am not wrong then; it is! it is! a fairy tale!" "Listen, my dear sir—there lived once a young girl whose family had been rich, but when their only daughter was but fifteen, they had no other means of subsistence than the daily earnings of her father. They lived at Lyons, and I know not what vain hope of bettering their condition induced their removal to Paris. But some men when they have once fallen never rise again, and indeed few things are found more difficult of attainment than retrieving our fallen fortunes, again filling our place in society, and moving in the cherished circle we have been obliged to relinquish.

"The father of this poor girl experienced this, to him, insurmountable difficulty, for after struggling during four long years with poverty and neglect, he died in a hospital. Her mother's death soon followed, and the young girl was left alone in a cheerless garret, a long arrear of rent unpaid, with the chilling presence of two miserable untenanted beds to increase her feelings of grief and desolation. If there were to be a fairy in my story, she should, without doubt now present herself, but there was not a glimpse nor a shadow of one. The young girl was unknown in Paris, without money, with neither friend nor protector to sustain and cherish her, and she asked in vain that employment which makes the riches of the poor. Guilty pleasure, it is true, extended its arms to allure her, but there are minds so formed as instinctively to love virtue and to abhor vice, and hers was happily of this stamp—but she must eat, and the hunger of the first day was increased by a sleepless night bringing a second day without food.

"You, Frederick, have just risen from a table profusely covered with the most tempting lux-

uries, sparkling wines, the rarest fruits, everything to gratify the fastidious appetite, and although until yesterday poor, you can have no conception of the misery I am describing. In the midst of the magnificence around us, and seated as we are in these ample chairs, embroidered with silk and gold, you may be astonished that I can conjure up such a scene—but listen still.—(Conclusion in our next.)

[From the Boston Carpet Bag.]

## SHOOTING A TROUT.

I,—Charley Clewline, don't pretend to be very sharp—never did; but I did one thing once that even Peter Snooks himself never would have thought of, or dared to do if he had.

We were laying up there at the little old tumble-down log wharf at Hanford's Landing, on the Genesee River, one sunshiny afternoon in May, eighteen hundred and ever so long ago; but I remember the time, place and circumstance particularly well from three other circumstances, the first of which was that Ben Harrington and I were taking in some hat-boxes that morning, and Ben sat down on one of 'em that had just been branded in stinsel, "This end up." Ben had white duck trousers on, and the result is obvious.

The next circumstance was, that Ben stuttered so that it took him from seven bells till dinner time to say "butter." And the last was, Clewline shot a fish—or tried to. I'll tell you how 'twas.

I'd been popping around among the bushes with my stub and twist, double-barreled "Manton," shooting chickadees and such like for more'n an hour, when I got tired, and as I came onto the old wharf, I spied Ben laying flat down, looking off over the edge, and very busy fishing for something.

When I got so I could look down to see what he was at, I discovered a monstrous great salmon trout, about a foot under water, sawing slowly in between the logs till his tail was almost out of sight, and then he'd back out again, stern foremost, just like a lazy hog scratching himself between two rails.

I wanted to have a shot at that trout, and so, after Ben had tried about fifteen minutes to make him bite, and all the time he never once looked at the bait, I couldn't stand it any longer and I sung out,—

"Take care Ben, get up and let me have a crack at him."

"Hold on Charley you blasted fool!—you can't shoot him."

"I know better, I can. I'll kill him or scare him to death."

"Get out! You shan't! I am going to hook him," and Ben was so excited that he didn't stutter a mite.

I would have a shot though, and so I pulled Ben away by the legs, and laid down on the wharf in his place.

"The old trout was just sliding out tail foremost, and I drew a "bee" on him with the muzzles of my "Manton" about six inches from the water, intending to chuck it into him about amidship.

Then a bright idea struck me, and I stuck the muzzles six inches under water and when the trout was just about half way out, I unhitched at him with both barrels.

I stayed there long enough to hear a tremendous "B-I-O-O-K," that sounded like the first upheaving effort of a sea-sick Dutchman, and then I went flying like a Peruvian bat with sixteen legs and eleven pair of arms, turning all sorts of "wintersets" in the air, and coming down spat in the river more'n two rods from the wharf.

Where the gun and salmon-trout went to was always a mystery to me,—I never saw or heard of either afterwards.

SINGULAR, INDEED.—A man somewhat given to superstition, dreamed on Monday night, that he saw an omnibus up Washington street, containing four passengers, and drawn by six horses, each animal having six legs. Upon waking from the sleep, he sprang out of bed, and made a note of the figures, 4, 6, 46. On Monday he spent several hours searching after a lottery ticket, with the numbers 4, 6, 46 upon it. Finding one at last, he paid \$20 for it,—12 per cent off. On Tuesday, strange to relate, the ticket drew—a blank.

A CHARACTER.—Old "Bumblebee" was the cognomen of Mr. T., of Newburyport; he gained the title from the fact of his catching a bumblebee one day as he was shingling his barn and in endeavouring to decapitate the insect with his hatchet, cut off the ends of his fore-finger, and thumb, letting the bee go unhurt. Other mishaps happened to the old codger, upon that same barn. In one of his abstractions, he shingled over his spare hatchet; and cutting a small aperture in the building to let in a little daylight, this man actually inserted a wooden pane, as being economical and not liable to be broken!

Uncle T. in one of his obvious freaks nailed his left arm so firmly between two boards of a fence he was putting up, that he had to call for help to get extricated from his self-imprisonment. He once put a button on the gate instead of the post. But the rarest freak of all, was when he ran through the streets with his hands about three feet asunder, held up before him, begging the passers-by not to disturb him, as he had got the measure of a door-way with him!—Post.

About thirty-five years ago, there resided in the town of Hebron a certain Dr. T., who became very much enamored of a beautiful young lady in the same town. In due course of time they were engaged to be married. The doctor was a strong and decided Presbyterian, and his lady as strong and decided a Baptist. They were sitting together one evening, talking of their approaching nuptials, when the doctor remarked—"I am thinking, my dear, of two events which I shall number among the happiest of my life." "One is the hour when I see you my wife for the first time." And the other, if you please? "It is when we shall present our first-born for baptism." "What sprinkled?" "Yes, my dear, sprinkled?" "Never shall a child of mine be sprinkled?" "Every child of mine shall be sprinkled!" "They shall be ha?" "Yes, my love." "Well, sir, I can tell you, then, that your babies won't be my babies. So, good night, sir." The lady left the room, and the doctor left the house. The sequel to this true story was that the doctor never married, and the lady is an old maid.

NEW KIND OF GRISTMILL.—Old General W——, of Onachita County, had a neighbor, who was about to build himself a water-mill on a little stream that ran feebly about three months in the year. He was anxious to convince the General of the feasibility of the project, and the great profit to be realized; and accordingly expatiated on it one day, at great length. At last the General said—

"Look here, M——, I'll tell you what you had better do. You have got no great use for a head, no how, and if you had, the one you've got is a poor affair, any way. Slice off the top, and make a hopper of the rest of it, and you can grind more corn with your jaws, in a day, than you ever will with the little old water-mill you're talking about."

COMFORT FOR A QUAKER.—Not many months ago, a Philadelphia friend, who rejoiced in the name of Comfort, paid his devoirs to a young and attractive Quaker widow, named Rachel H——, residing on Long Island. Either her griefs were too new or her lover too old; or from some other cause, his offer was declined. Whereupon a Quaker friend remarked, that it was the first modern instance he had known, where "Rachel refused to be COMFORTED!" This anecdote is only remarkable as being the first Quaker pun on record. "Friends" generally lightly regarding such distortions of "plain language."

AN INVETERATE ONE.—Mr. G——, was a most inveterate punster. Lying very ill of the cholera, his nurse proposed to prepare him a young, tender chicken. "Wouldn't you better have an old hen?" said G——, in a low whisper, (he was too ill to speak louder), "for she will be more apt to lay on my stomach." G——, fell back, exhausted, and the nurse fainted.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR POCKETS.—There is a book with the dangerous title of "The Pocket Lawyer." We shouldn't like a book with this title much, for we are sure that if we got a lawyer in our pocket, we never should be able to get him out of it.—Punch.