

service, and as the matter was of importance, I was justly exasperated. Some very forceful phrases of a letter floated into my head—a letter I should write to the *Herald*, complaining of the abominable telephone service. It took me fifteen minutes to get the right connection, and, when finally I had succeeded, the broker's voice sounded weirdly remote, a vague, irritating whisper.

I was about to demand a better connection from central, when of a sudden I was cut off, and these words came to me, clear and distinct:

"And, Billy dearest, Aunt Bella is to invite you for the week-end."

The voice rang musical, familiar at the first word; before the last I remembered—this was the girl of the theater.

"You will come?"

"You bet I will!"

The answer was in happy, hearty tones, those, I felt sure, of the young man whom I had seen with her.

Over the wire came for an instant that confused din which is the chaos of the city's confidences; then my broker's voice, whispering wanly:

"Are you there?"

My indignation had passed. As I talked business, I thought of youth and love.

### III.

It was a year later that my hansom was caught in a block on Broadway, opposite Grace Church. It was late in the afternoon, I had barely time to get home and dress for a dinner party; the delay was aggravating beyond measure. I was wondering if New York would ever learn to handle its traffic decently, when I was attracted by a commotion amid the crowd in front of the church. That a wedding was in progress I had known from the nature of the assembly in the street, and now I peered out idly to note what was toward.

A movement of the carriages gave my driver his opportunity, and he whipped up briskly. As the hansom rolled forward, I gained one fleeting glimpse of bride and groom. That single glance sufficed. Again the radiant girl; with her the handsome lad! In their faces shone the confident gladness of youth and love.

I worried no more over the traffic of our streets. My heart was full with the overflow of their happiness.

In play and story one may not find these romances. In life—thank that God

whose very heart is love!—they are the rule, not the exception.

The faces of the two were steadfast and honest, and they loved. Steadfast and honest, true lovers, the happiness of the world is theirs by inalienable right, even the happiness of heaven, and no power of evil shall prevail against them.

*Marvin Dana.*

## The Cherry-Vender.

SHE had just trundled her push-cart into the Rue de Seine, and there she stood for a few moments, looking for customers, before going to another block. How old and wrinkled and darkly Italian she was! And how picturesque! Upon her head a purple cotton kerchief of gorgeous design; around her shoulders a little ragged red and yellow print shawl. Her waist was a bright orange, and her skirt a faded blue. From Italy she hailed, without a doubt; yet here she was in Paris, selling luscious black and red cherries.

Across the street there was a flower stand, a mass of exquisite bloom—forget-me-nots as blue as heaven; primroses, fragrant lilacs, pale lilies-of-the-valley, and bunches of tiny-clustered blood-red roses. This street was very narrow. The houses were very gray and old and crooked. Their roofs were high and low and steep and flat. The sky-line was delightful in its utter irregularity. In short, it was a typical thoroughfare in the Latin Quarter.

Half a dozen art students came strolling down the street, their soft hats carelessly askew on their long, curly locks, their broad velveteen trousers flapping as they walked. They paused by Maria's cart. They were talking of the Grand Prix de Rome. They spoke of the privations endured by some of the men who had striven for it, of their hard work, and of the exquisite passion of ambition which seemingly sustained these poor students while they battled their way to fame and success along the road of starvation and deprivation. They spoke with warmth, and their eyes snapped with feeling; for they knew, they had seen, the sufferings of the poor ones of their brotherhood.

One of the students bought half a kilo of cherries from Maria, who seemed strangely excited. Her black eyes were wide open, her head was bent forward, and her old hands trembled so that she could scarcely fill the paper bag with fruit. A little Frenchman, whose face

was almost covered with a black beard, was telling of the distribution of the prizes, which had just been announced.

"The prize for architecture went to that little dark fellow they call 'Bony,'" he said. "He worked hard enough for it, and they say he sometimes had nothing to eat except dry bread. He had to have a room and a proper light, you know, and his working materials took all the rest of his money."

"Not that sickly-looking Buenvento Collini?" exclaimed a student with a huge bow under his chin.

"Yes, that's the fellow," responded the beard.

Maria had stepped closer to them, her old face working convulsively. "*Messieurs*, pardon, but to whom did you say the Grand Prix de Rome for architecture has been awarded?"

France, you know, is democratic, not to say socialistic. All her citizens are equal—at least in theory. No one resents an intrusion. Indeed, no one dare do so if the intrusion be politely made. So with the most serene courtesy the bearded Frenchman answered Maria's question, and repeated that the winner was Buenvento Collini.

For a moment she stood before them transfixed, her eyes raised to heaven, tears flowing down her sunken yellow cheeks, her lips moving tremulously in prayer. Then, fumbling in her bosom, she drew forth a rosary and kissed it. The students watched her with amusement and interest. They admired her pose; they liked her quaint gown with its barbarous colors, the picturesque effect of the great brass rings that dangled from her ears, and the fine old wrinkles in her face. She made a picture full of character. They supposed that she was excited at hearing that a fellow-countryman had won the famous prize, though they did not understand why she wept at the good news.

"Buenvento Collini has won the prize! Ah, ah! Mother Mary be praised!" Maria seemed suddenly beside herself as she spoke, tilting herself to and fro in an ecstasy.

"He is a clever fellow, that Bony," said a student.

"*Monsieur, monsieur!*" The old woman could contain herself no longer. Poverty, hunger—all, all was forgotten in her joy. "*Monsieur, messieurs* all, attend me! Buenvento is my son! My son, he has won the Grand Prix de Rome! Ah, Blessed Virgin, how we did yearn for it, toil for it, starve for it—and it

has come at last! For four years he will study in Rome, and realize his dreams. The day is good, *messieurs!* I go to find my son, but doubtless he also knows all by this time. *Au revoir, messieurs*—good health and long life to you, and success in love as well! My son, my son! He has won the Grand Prix!"

Jabbering in this gleeful fashion, Maria turned to push her cart away. How she had struggled for years in Paris, yearning for the purple hills of her sunny Italy, and its air like the wine of life! How she had patiently trundled her carts of fruit, and learned to say "*monsieur*" instead of "*signor*"! Now and then she had posed for a few friends. When the students painted the wrinkled old face of Buenvento's mother, they did not know that they were providing him with food.

The artists of the Latin Quarter seldom have much ready money, but this particular group was more fortunate than most of the craft. Perhaps there was a capitalist among them; at any rate, they stopped Maria and purchased all her cherries. They filled her paper bags, they stuffed the fruit into their pockets, they carried armfuls of it. Maria laughed and wept as she served them, and a crowd of onlookers gathered around.

"*Vive la France!*" some one said laughingly, and the crowd shouted back in the same good humor, "*Vive la France!*"

Maria stood there, too proud to speak. Then two of the artists returned from the flower-stand across the street, carrying a great bunch of lilies-of-the-valley, and presented it to the old woman with a little speech of cheer and congratulation. Paris loves diversion, and the street almost went wild over this strange incident. Maria, on her part, could only smile and weep and courtesy profusely to all the kind young *messieurs* before she trundled her push-cart away. The students were shouting the latest *chanson* from the Folies Bergères as they disappeared down the old street, singing as carelessly and gaily as only Parisian students can.

A few minutes later Maria entered the church of St. Germain des Près. Kneeling before the image of the Virgin, she devoutly placed half of the great bunch of lilies-of-the-valley at the feet of the statue.

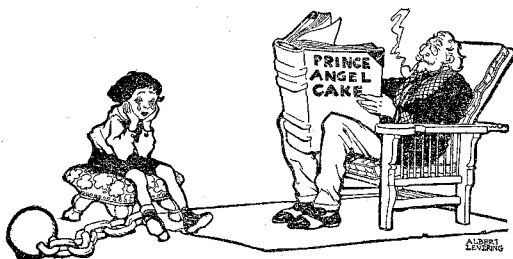
"From my son," she whispered, her eyes still streaming. "From my son, for the Grand Prix de Rome!"

*Marie Beaumarscheff.*

# LITERARY CHAT

## FOR THE MODERN CHILD.

What shall we read to Little Boy Blue,  
Waiting his story at fall of the night?  
Goblins are banished and gnomes are  
taboo,  
Fairies forbidden, and each kindly  
sprite  
Driven afar from the red fire-light.  
"What?" cries Reform. "Invent fables,  
or worse?"



DISINFECTED LITERATURE FOR THE YOUNG.

How shall the children e'er learn wrong  
from right?  
See what I offer you, mother or nurse—  
Pasteurized fiction and carbolized verse!"

What shall we read to Little Boy Blue?  
Tales of adventure, of freedom and  
fight?  
"Stop!" cries Reform. "Oh, what is it  
you do?  
Whims you create and base passions  
excite—  
Truancy, vagrancy, these you invite—  
Arson and robbery—hear me rehearse  
Fatal results of your lack of foresight!  
See what I offer you, mother or nurse—  
Pasteurized fiction and carbolized verse!"

What shall we read to Little Boy Blue?  
Tales of snow-crystals in star-circling  
flight?  
Stories of gems of miraculous hue?  
Sugared geology, moral and trite?  
"Nay!" quoth Reform. "Though I  
pity your plight,  
Think not that science your woes will dis-  
perse.  
Science recants about once a sennight.  
Take what I offer you, mother or nurse—  
Pasteurized fiction and carbolized verse!"

## ENVOY.

Prince, when our blessings we elders  
recite,  
Gratefully let us remember the curse  
Spared to our childhood—Reform and  
its blight,  
Puerile rubbish read out by the nurse,  
Pasteurized fiction and carbolized verse!

**THE WAR CENSORS**—The world  
owes them its thanks for silencing a  
host of blatant poseurs.

Whatever may be the outcome of the  
present war in the remote East, it is cer-  
tain that the world owes a heavy debt of  
gratitude to both contesting parties for  
bottling up, driving away, and otherwise  
discouraging a small army of those  
"war correspondents" to whom such a  
grim tragedy as the siege of Port Arthur  
is merely another chance for self-exploi-  
tation, and who stand ready to turn their  
own cameras on themselves rather than  
deprive newspaper readers of their right-  
ful quota of "war news."

Unquestionably, a great and rare op-  
portunity presents itself in this tremen-  
dous struggle between Muscovite semi-  
savagery on the one side and on the other  
the fanaticism of the farthest East allied  
to the most advanced science of the civil-  
ized West. The subject is one worthy of  
a Prescott or a Bancroft. It does not  
rightly belong to persons capable of il-  
luminating their accounts of a great bat-  
tle with photographs of themselves in  
seven different attitudes. We may have  
to wait for many years before the coming  
Bancroft or Prescott accords to this  
great war the thoughtful attention that  
it deserves. In the mean time, owing to  
the effective work done by the military  
censors, we are likely to be spared the  
deluge of egotistical "war literature"  
that harassed honest men after our brief  
campaign against Spain, and again at the  
close of the recent struggle in South  
Africa.

Books dealing with the conflict between  
Russia and Japan we shall have, without  
doubt, but it may be hoped that they will  
be written by the few genuine news-  
gatherers, those indefatigable, fearless,