nent characteristic of the Brown family; and even Mr. Mangan had less of it now than he had before he experienced his change of heart. Only a couple of years earlier in his life, acting in the capacity of Verona's guardian, he would have shown young Orpiment to the door with amazing promptitude and energy, had he ventured to present himself, under such circumstances as at present existed, in the guise of Verona's suitor. And, in truth, he had no great liking for what was going on now; but now, at least, he took a larger, a more liberal view of life than had been his habit in the past—for the lesson that he had learned from his relations with Van had made him more tolerant. Therefore it was that, instead of heaping maledictions upon young Orpiment's head, he ordered a landscape from him. In due time this order was filled, and the picture was sent home. There was ever so much of it, and its light and shade were ever so queer, and there was something dreadfully wrong in its perspective; but, for all its

eccentricities, there were in it hints of genuine good quality. It was a harrowing thing of look at, of course; but its badness was the badness of a crudity in which there was hope.

So they had young Orpiment to dinner, and after dinner the picture was hung solemnly over the mantel-piece in the front parlor. This was an honorable position for it to occupy, and it was a position that possessed certain practical advantages; for when the gas was lighted, unless you climbed over one of the diagonally placed sofas and got quite into one of the corners of the room, the picture had such a glitter upon it that it simply was invisible. Old Madder, who also was dining with them that night, began to comment upon this fact—and only made matters worse by asking Rose, in an aggrieved tone, what he was saying that he shouldn't say to make her pinch him so.

Of course this was not a genuine sale, looking at the matter from an artist's standpoint; and certain other sales—to Mr. Gam-

boge and to some of the friends of these two purchasers—were not genuine either; but they served their well-meant purpose of keeping the fire going under the pot that young Orpiment so gallantly was striving to make boil.

Old Madder, by the way, much enjoyed dining with the young people, and they and Mr. Mangan and Miss Caledonia made him very welcome. At these dinners he conducted himself upon the lines of a serious dignity, and seriously talked art to Mr. Mangan, whose knowledge of art was limited to a commercial appreciation of the value of gilt decorations on red leather boot-tops designed for the Western trade; or, when he happened to be in a cantankerous mood, made vicious thrusts at Van and the young geniuses generally, under the guise of lamentations over the degeneracy of modern painters. His own work, of course, continued to be as exasperating as ever. He nearly drove Van wild by insisting upon painting a portrait of little Madder, that was

hung on the line at the Academy, and that was described in the catalogue as "Grandfather's Darling." From the degenerate modern painters with whom he associated, Van did not hear the last of that horrible caricature of his first-born for years. Among the League men the picture was styled "The Slaughter of the Innocent"—which naturally enough led somebody to speak of the artist as Herod, and so won for old Madder the nickname of Herod Madder that he bore, without knowing it, to the end of his days. After this bitter experience, when old Madder wanted to paint Rose and the new baby, little Caledonia (to all intents and purposes his "Soldier's Widow and Orphaned Child" over again), and call it "The Young Mother's First Love," Brown put his foot down firmly and said that it should not be done. And not until several months had passed—in the course of which old Madder gradually had convinced himself that Brown was jealous of his superior work, and that, under these circumstances, he could afford to

be magnanimous — did old Madder and Brown get along well together again.

By the time that this second baby was born, Brown had conquered so firm a standing-place, and was so crowded with work that his acceptance of an order had come to be considered something of a favor. Young Orpiment, being present one day when an order actually was rejected, and knowing that Brown had fought and won just such a battle as he was fighting, felt himself stirred with hope.

And, in truth, as the season of his apprenticeship wore away, there came to be a good deal for young Orpiment to feel hopeful about. Working steadily and earnestly, the weeks and the months slipped by until he found behind him, since the day when he forswore Leather as a master and took for his mistress Art, three whole years; and three years of honest hard work, if a man has got anything in him to begin with, is bound to tell. His little pictures — after those first orders he had the sense not to

paint big ones—had a fair sale now on their merits. They did not sell for much, it is true, and they still were a long way off from being really good work; but at least the good quality that was in them no longer was obscured by bad perspective and by doubtful light and shade. They had a clear, fresh tone, moreover, that was distinctively their own. Being sent to the exhibitions, they no longer were rejected; and some of the more recent ones had taken a most encouraging step downward from the sky toward the line. The newspapers began to mention his work respectfully, and *The Skeptic*, with an amiable exercise of its powers of prophecy based upon its faculty for recognizing genius in embryo, even went so far as to say that in him another landscape painter had been born.

All this was tremendously encouraging, of course, and young Orpiment was heartened and comforted by it greatly; but even with such good fortune attending him, he could not but find weariness in his long time of

waiting for an income from his work that would enable him to make Verona his wife. Both Mr. Mangan Brown and Mr. Gamboge had offered repeatedly to discount for him the future that now pretty certainly was his; but this good offer, with Verona's entire approval, he decidedly refused. If Verona would wait for him while he worked, he said —and the light of a strong resolution shone in his blue eyes—he would work on until his success was won. And Verona, with the gentle dignity that was natural to her, drew up her tall, graceful figure to its full height, and answered simply that she would wait—would wait, she said, and without the least intention of irony, for forty years.

For these expectant lovers, the example set them by Miss Caledonia and Mr. Gamboge was most encouraging. What was their three years of probation in comparison with the three-and-twenty years of probation that their elders had endured? And the encouragement thus given was all the greater because, as time went on, the matri-

monial prospects of Mr. Gamboge and Miss Caledonia apparently stood still. In the past three years Miss Caledonia had contrived near eight-score fresh opportunities for the long-delayed proposal; and on each of these several occasions Mr. Gamboge had hesitated until his opportunity was lost. On the whole, however, Miss Caledonia's sanguine nature found cause for encouragement in the perceptible change that had come over Mr. Gamboge as these three years sped by. No less than twice, to her certain knowledge, had he expressed positively a positive opinion of his own. On a memorable Saturday he had said, in a firm voice, before the whole family assembled at the dinner-table, that rare roast beef was much improved by horse-radish. On a memorable Thursday evening he had said, addressing Mr. Mangan Brown, and in a tone of bold effrontery that thrilled her soul with joy, that "this idiotic tinkering at the tariff on foreign leather was simply unpardonable." On neither of these occasions did Mr. Gamboge refer even remotely

to Mr. Orpiment: not a word about Mr. Orpiment's preferences in the matter of applying horse-radish to roast beef; not a word about Mr. Orpiment's opinions in regard to the customs duties on foreign hides. Here was living proof that Mr. Gamboge was getting to have a will of his own; and here, consequently, was substantial ground upon which Miss Caledonia could found her conviction that a happy ending to her long courting was near at hand.

Nor was this all. To the best of Miss Caledonia's belief, Mr. Gamboge actually once had got so far as to make a real start toward speaking the momentous words which would resolve into a glad certainty their three-and-twenty years of doubt. It was upon a pleasant Sunday afternoon in the late spring-time that Mr. Gamboge got started—in the mellow weather when the buds of May were bursting into the blossoms of June, and all nature was glad with the bright promise of the coming summer's generous life. They two were seated alone upon the veranda,

screened from the too-curious gaze of passers-by by festoons of the climbing plants which had shot up blithely since the warm days began; and Mr. Gamboge, in a state of post-prandial contentment, was smoking an especially satisfactory cigar. After the fashion of a dove-like serpent, Miss Caledonia by degrees had shifted the ground of their talk until it had come to be of the dreary life that Mr. Gamboge was leading in his great house wherein he dwelt alone. There was a tender solicitude in Miss Caledonia's tone that sunk deep into the heart of Mr. Gamboge and wrought great havoc there. Her low, gentle voice sounded sweetly in his ears; her suggestions for his comfort were practical without being revolutionary; he felt—but more keenly than ever before in all the twenty-three years—that in Miss Caledonia he would find a helpmate indeed. His excellent dinner—prepared, as he well knew, under Miss Caledonia's supervision—his excellent cigar, the soft spring weather, Miss Caledonia's pleasingly plump

person and sympathetic words: all these agreeable forces, acting upon his newly acquired disposition to have a will of his own and to use it, conspired to make him utter the decisive words. A nervous thrill went over him, and he straightened himself in his chair. Miss Caledonia saw what was coming, and was struck with awe. She ceased speaking; her hands fluttered with her handkerchief; there was a trembling of her lips.

"In regard to our personal relations, Miss Caledonia, I am sure that Mr. Orpiment would have said—that is, I know that under these conditions Mr. Orpiment would have done—in fact, I am confident that Mr. Orpiment would have approved——"

"Oh, confound old Orpiment," said that wretched Vandyke Brown, stepping out upon the veranda through the open window in time to hear this last mention of Mr. Orpiment's name. "Of course you know, Mr. Gamboge," he went on, "I don't want to hurt your feelings, or anything"—for he saw that Mr. Gamboge was very much upset—

"But when I think what a lot of good that old screw might have done by leaving his money to his nephew, and so giving him a fair start in the world, I really can't help hating the very sound of his name.

"Aunt Caledonia, Rose wants to know if you can tell what on earth has gone with Madder's light cloak. You had him out yesterday, you know, and Rose can't find it anywhere."

"You will find it where it belongs," answered Miss Caledonia frigidly, "on the third shelf of the closet in the back room."

And so good fortune had come sailing down over the sea of hope to Miss Caledonia—even had stopped to signal her—and then had sailed away! After that rude interruption the perturbed spirit of Mr. Gamboge—although Miss Caledonia did her best to bring it—could not be brought back to the tender mood that so fairly had promised a fair solution of the long-vexed problem of their lives. Still, having come thus close to happiness, Miss Caledonia felt more than

ever certain that happiness yet would be hers.

So the months went rolling on and on, and the time drew near when Mr. Orpiment's five years' lease upon posterity would end. Under the judicious management of Mr. Gamboge, his late partner's estate had increased prodigiously, and the prospects of the Protestant half-orphans were amazingly fine.

"I don't doubt that the miserable little creatures will get fifty thousand dollars apiece—and I hope that it will choke them!" said Rose in a fine burst of indignation and in a fine mixture of metaphors. Nothing that Van could say could convince Rose that Mr. Orpiment's property would not be divided up among the individual half-orphans in the asylum at the time when the bequest became operative.

As to young Orpiment, he really did not care very much now whether the half-orphans got his uncle's money or not. He was fairly

on his legs by this time, with a steady income of two thousand dollars or so a year, and he and Verona were to be married very soon. Of course, they would have to live in a very quiet way, and some of the things which they most wanted to do—the trip to the glorious mountain region of Northern New Mexico, for instance—would have to wait awhile. But the great point was that at last he was earning enough by his own work to permit him, without utterly defying Mr. Mangan Brown and worldly wisdom, to make Verona his wife.

For young Orpiment had fought bravely and had won gallantly his battle for the standard of Art. And wasn't Verona proud of him, though! For Verona knew that his fight for success as an artist was only the visible form of his fight for success as a lover; and all the wealth of her strong love, all her honoring esteem, went out to this her hero, who, for her love's sake, had conquered the world!

With the solemnity befitting so decisive

an occasion, Mr. Gamboge wrote a formal invitation to young Orpiment to be present, on the fifth anniversary of the day after the day of Mr. Orpiment's death, at the going off of the second barrel of Mr. Orpiment's will. But, in order to mitigate the formality a little, and to make somewhat less solemn the solemnity, Mr. Gamboge himself handed the written invitation to young Orpiment, and added to it a verbal invitation to come and dine with him as a preliminary to the reading. Under the circumstances, the fact was obvious that Verona had a constructive right to be present when the will was read; and as Verona could not with propriety be present alone, the necessity presented itself of asking Miss Caledonia to come with her. Naturally, this suggested the advisability of asking Mr. Mangan Brown too. And having got this far, Mr. Gamboge concluded that he might just as well go a little farther and ask Van and Rose and old Madder; and so he did.

It was only a lucky accident, however,

that saved the party from being entirely broken up by a rash act of little Caledonia's. Van wanted Rose's hands for something that he was painting, and she had gone up to the studio the day before the will dinner-party —as she styled the feast that Mr. Gamboge was to give—taking the baby along with her. There was not much of this baby, and she was not quite two years old, but she had a faculty for getting into pickles far beyond her size and years. However, there did not seem to be much chance for her to get into trouble on the studio floor.

The fact must be confessed that, although they had been married for five years, Rose and Van had a shocking habit of philandering; and so it fell out, when he had put in her hands to his satisfaction, that he had laid down his palette and brushes on the foot of his easel, and somehow they had drifted into the big chair, and had got to talking about that autumn morning when "Lydia Darragh" perished, and the great happiness of their lives began.

"It was dreadful, Van, the way that I told you, right out before all those men, that I loved you! I never can think of it without blushing." (Rose was blushing most charmingly, and that was a fact.) "But I really never thought of them at all, and that's the solemn truth. All that I thought of was your ruined work, and of what you were working for—it was me that you were working for, you know, and I knew all about it! —and of trying to comfort you. *Did* it comfort you, dear? Are you *sure*, Van, that you are glad that you married me? Have I *really* made you happy? You are so good to me——

"Caledonia! *Caledonia!* STOP! Merciful heaven, Van, she's got your palette and is eating the paints! Our child is poisoned! She will die!" And Rose shot up, much as she would have done had Van been a catapult and suddenly gone off, and caught the chromnivorous infant in her arms.

Van was pretty badly scared too, but he had his wits about him, and looked at the

palette before giving his assent to Rose's alarmed proposition that death by poison must be the inevitable result of Caledonia's unnatural repast.

"Steady, Rose. I guess it's all right. She's begun at the black end of the palette, luckily, and she's eaten only as far as asphaltum. No doubt she'll have a lively time in her little inside, but she hasn't had a scrap of the light colors, and there's nothing in the dark ones to damage her much. But we'd better rush her off to the doctor, all the same."

And Van was right. Caledonia did not perish, but she had a tremendously large stomach-ache for so small a stomach, and she kept her bed for the remainder of the day. Mr. Mangan Brown, in a well-meant endeavor to mitigate the severity of her sufferings, the very next morning bought her a concertina, and a pair of skates, and a richly illustrated octavo Life of Washington. That these appropriate gifts inured to her betterment is problematical, but she certainly was

so completely recovered by the ensuing evening that her illness was no barrier to the success of the will dinner-party given by Mr. Gamboge.

The dinner in every way was admirable —although Miss Caledonia secretly noticed certain shortcomings in the service, which she promptly resolved should be corrected when she was called upon to take command. But for all the excellence of the dinner, the assembled company was disposed to slight it—to hurry through with it in order to get at the reading of the will. Even the fact that young Orpiment on that very day had sold his big picture, "Spring on the Hudson Highlands," for $450—the highest price that anything of his so far had brought—scarcely made a ripple upon the strong stream of curiosity that was sweeping forward toward the moment when positive knowledge would determine what part the Protestant half-orphans were to play in the final disposition of Mr. Orpiment's estate.

"If it wasn't for Verona, he might pick

out the nicest looking of the girl half-orphans for a wife, and get part of it back that way," said Rose under her breath to Van, as they passed from the dining-room to the library, where Mr. Gamboge was to read the will. "But as things are, though," she added with a touch of melancholy in her tone, "that is quite out of the question."

"What would be even better," Van answered seriously, "would be for him to drop Verona, turn Mormon, and marry 'em all. Then he'd bag half of it, anyway."

"Of course you all know," said Mr. Gamboge in a slightly oratorical tone, holding the sealed will in his hand, "that I have no knowledge whatever of the contents of this document. Should its contents be what I fear they are, you all know that I shall feel, as you all will feel, that a great injustice has been done to our young and gifted friend; to our friend, who by his noble force of character, not less than by his great genius—"

"Don't," said young Orpiment, appealingly.

"Well, I won't," said Mr. Gamboge, dropping suddenly from his oratorical heights. "But I will say this: if the estate don't come to you, my dear boy, I shall think less of Mr. Orpiment's judgment then I ever did—and I never did think much of it, anyway."

At these spirited words Miss Caledonia's heart gave a bound—for she perceived that now, beyond a doubt or a peradventure, Mr. Gamboge had come into the kingdom of his personal independence at last: and she was his waiting queen! As for Mr. Mangan Brown, his lower jaw dropped as though the muscles had parted; and Van gave utterance to a prolonged whistle that Rose had the presence of mind to conceal by coughing violently.

Oblivious to the sensation caused by his revolutionary declaration, Mr. Gamboge adjusted his spectacles, broke the three black seals, and began the reading of the will. It set out with the affirmation that Mr. Orpiment feared God and was in his right mind—statements which caused Miss Caledonia

to purse her lips together doubtingly—and went on with a list of the testator's possessions: the house in which he had lived, and some other houses; his share in the tannery in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania; some warehouses down-town; some building lots on Seventy-ninth Street; various stocks and bonds; and his interest in the leather business carried on by the firm of Orpiment & Gamboge.

"I wonder how the half-orphans will settle about the houses and building lots?" Rose whispered inquiringly as Mr. Gamboge paused at the end of the list.

"Draw lots for 'em, probably," Van whispered in reply.

Mr. Gamboge read on: "Whereas, by my will to which this codicil is supplement, I gave all my residuary estate to my executors upon certain trusts, now I appoint the further trusts referred to in said will as contained in this codicil."

At last Mr. Orpiment's intentions were to be made plain. Everybody bent forward,

listening eagerly, and Mr. Gamboge could not keep his voice from trembling: "At the end of the said period of five years from the time of my decease I direct my executors to assign, convey, and pay over the whole of my residuary estate with its increase and accumulations to the person who, when the same is payable, shall act as treasurer to the Society for the Relief of Half-Orphan and Destitute Children in the City of New York, to be applied to the charitable uses and purposes of said society under its direction." Mr. Gamboge gave an audible groan, laid the will down on his knee, took off his spectacles, which suddenly had grown misty, and with his silk handkerchief wiped them dry.

"The unfeeling, unnatural, heartless old wretch!" cried Rose.

"Never mind, dear; you have conquered fortune for yourself, and I love you a thousand times more for it," said Verona in a low voice, as she took young Orpiment's hand in both of hers.

"It is shameful!" said Miss Caledonia.

"It is just what I expected," said Mr. Mangan Brown; "but I'm uncommonly sorry for you, all the same, Orpiment."

"It's all my fault, for leading you off into painting; I hope devoutly that you may live long enough to forgive me, old fellow," said Van, ruefully.

"Nonsense, Van. You've been the making of me, and I never can be sufficiently thankful to you," young Orpiment answered in a cheery tone that had a thoroughly genuine ring to it.

"Art alone is worth living for, Mr. Orpiment," said old Madder. "Because you have escaped the thralldom of riches, I congratulate you with all my heart!"

"There's another page of the thing," said Mr. Gamboge dismally, and making as he spoke a suspicious dab at his eyes with his big handkerchief. "We may as well get done with it," and he turned the page and read on:

"*Provided*, that at the end of said period

of five years from the time of my decease my nephew shall not have proved, by earning from the sale of his pictures an income of not less than $2,000 yearly; that in abandoning the leather business and in adopting the business of picture-painting, he was right in the choice of his vocation and I was wrong. Should this very improbable contingency arise, then at the time aforesaid I direct my executors to assign, convey, and pay over to him, my said nephew, the whole of my residuary estate with its increase and accumulations, to him, his heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns forever."

"God bless you, my dear boy!" fairly shouted Mr. Gamboge, dashing down the will and his spectacles and his handkerchief upon the floor, and rushing over to young Orpiment and hugging him. "God bless you, my dear boy, the estate really is yours after all!"

And everybody—everybody, that is, but Verona and old Madder—in the delight and excitement of the moment, followed Mr.

Gamboge's exhilarating example. Even the staid Mr. Mangan Brown, even the decorous Miss Caledonia, hugged young Orpiment as hard as ever they knew how. Verona just sat still and looked at him, and through the tears in her lovely brown eyes there shone the light of a great joy and the tenderness of a greater love. The thought that she also was a gainer by this revolution in young Orpiment's fortunes never once crossed her mind; all that she thought of was that his life of toil and struggle now was at an end; that for her hard-working hero the chance to do good work restfully had come at last.

(It was not until an hour or so later, when they were walking home together, that another phase of the matter presented itself to Rose—she was a great hand for seeing things in original lights. "Do you know, Van," she said in a very melancholy voice, "I can't help feeling dreadfully sorry for those poor little Protestant half-orphans? To think of

their coming so near to being heirs and heiresses, and then not getting a single bit of their fortunes after all!")

Old Madder, waiting until the storm had subsided a little, and standing, as it were, afar off, did what he could to throw a wet blanket over the general joy by saying mournfully:

"I hope that this is for the best, Mr. Orpiment; but I fear that it is for the worst. Art is a jealous mistress, and Wealth is her sworn foe. You have my sincere pity, sir; for I sincerely believe that you are a ruined man!"

However, old Madder's wet blanket was not a success, for his genial gloom no more could stay the eruption of happiness that had begun than a real wet blanket could stay an eruption of Vesuvius. Indeed, nobody paid the least attention to what he was saying, for just as he began his cheerful remarks Mr. Gamboge, looking rather nervous, but also looking very much resolved, rose to

his feet with the air of a man who is about to make a speech. Somehow there was that in his manner that made all the blood in Miss Caledonia's body rush tumultuously to her heart. Her prophetic soul told her that it was coming now in very truth!

"My dear Brown," said Mr. Gamboge, addressing Mr. Mangan, "there is a matter very near to my heart, concerning which I long have desired to speak with you. Possibly you may have noticed that my attentions to your sister, Miss Caledonia, for some time past have been rather marked?"

"I have observed the phenomenon to which you refer," answered Mr. Mangan, for Mr. Gamboge had spoken interrogatively, and had paused for a reply—"I have observed the phenomenon to which you refer, my dear Gamboge, pretty constantly for the past twenty-five years."

"Precisely," said Mr. Gamboge, in a tone indicating that he felt encouraged. "You are right, my dear Brown, as you always

are. My reckoning of the number of years during which my attentions to Miss Caledonia have been, as I say, rather marked corresponds with yours exactly. And it seems to me, my dear Brown, that this period has been of a sufficient extent to enable us—that is, to enable Miss Caledonia and me—to acquire such ample knowledge of each other's tastes, habits, and moral characteristics as will justify us in deciding now whether or not we prudently may advance to a yet closer relationship."

"Looking at the matter dispassionately, my dear Gamboge, I should say that it had."

"My own sentiments, my dear Brown, I may say, are, and for some years past have been, unalterably established. I revere your sister, Miss Caledonia, as the best and wisest of women. Under the existing circumstances, Mrs. Brown and Miss Verona will pardon, I am sure, this expression of what, under any other circumstances, might be

considered, if not a too exalted, at least a too exclusive, estimate of her virtues."

"Certainly," said Rose.

"Of course," said Verona.

"Entertaining these unalterable sentiments, therefore, my dear Brown, the strongest, the holiest wish of my life is to make her my wife. To you, as her natural protector, to her, as the arbiter of her own destiny, I now appeal—on this auspicious occasion when my young friend Orpiment wears proudly in our presence his tripartite crown of riches, genius, and requited love. My dear Brown, may I have her? Miss Caledonia, will you be mine?"

"May he have you, Caledonia?"

"Oh, brother! how can you ask? It—it shall—be just as you say."

"Then I say, and I say it heartily, my dear Gamboge, take her—and God bless you both!" and Mr. Mangan Brown led the blushing Miss Caledonia to Mr. Gamboge and placed her hand in his.

And so, young Orpiment having come into his fortune, and Mr. Gamboge having come into his kingdom, Mr. Orpiment's lease upon posterity was cancelled, and he really was dead at last.

ROBERSON'S MEDIUM.

IT was Rowney Mauve who described Roberson as being like one of his own still-lifes: a lot of queer stuff badly composed and out of drawing, and with his perspective all wrong. And I regret to add that it was Miss Carmine, when she heard this description, and recognized its accuracy, who giggled. To say that Violet Carmine was a pickle, is presenting a statement of the case that is well within bounds.

The arrival of this somewhat erratic young person in New York was unexpected, and had a rather dramatic touch about it. On a warm evening in September, while yet the dying splendor of sunset hung redly over the Jersey Highlands, Mr. Mangan Brown was sitting in a wicker-chair on the veranda of his own exceedingly comfort-