to predict the dissolution of their friendship. There is nothing of the kind. The fact is, that the pair have the most absolute confidence in each other. The honest Badiche speaks as much for Alice as for Cintrat: he believes his friend is not a marrying man, and he knows too that he would be loath to make any woman miserable. The comradeship between them has been so thoroughly proved, that Cintrat is grateful instead of angry; and indeed, although he is flattered by Mademoiselle Roberjot's evident admiration, we suspect that she has left his heart untouched. But even the unsusceptible Badiche is obliged to admit that Cintrat can hardly leave Pornic without bidding farewell to the young lady; and in that final interview he rushes upon his doom. Thoroughly good-natured as he is, he cannot bear to make the girl unhappy; he knows nothing of the wiles of which an apparently candid little *bourgeoise* may be capable; and indeed it would have taken a shrewder spirit than his to penetrate the resources of the astute enchantress. So he marries and enters on his *ménage* with a worthless and heartless woman who has speculated on his softness and inexperience.

In that second stage of his existence nothing surprises him so much as his own complete reformation. Madame Cintrat flatters him; rubs him down like a cat; and lays herself out to *exploiter* his talents remorselessly to her own advantage. She sends him to his easel, and keeps him there, in season and out of season; it is she who makes all the bargains for his pictures, as Badiche used to do before. The ambitious daughter of the Pornic druggist shows considerable knowledge of life, and raises money freely on her husband's prospects. She advertises him by painting the fantastic façade of their new house, so as to attract the curiosity of the Parisian public; and it is a touch almost worthy of Balzac when M. Malot makes her select the situation immediately opposite to the gates of the cemetery of Montmartre. She knows that the trains of mourners who are following the biers will be specially interested by any distraction in the circumstances. And Madame Cintrat comes to have her *salon*, where she actually receives. Her half-broken husband is a little restive at first, but she finds that she can lead him where she likes, so long as he fancies that she loves him. Even his Bohemian recklessness had been startled at the idea of running deeply in debt; for having hitherto had no credit, he had never been tempted to abuse any. But there is no answering his wife's practical arguments, based on her flattering convictions of his brilliant future. As he had always set comfort before show, he objects strenuously to having all the house sacrificed to the show-rooms; but he is easily soothed into consenting to occupy a bedroom no bigger than one of the Pornic bathing-machines. And though he has lost none of his affection and regard for Badiche, he even consents to see his friend more seldom or by stealth, since Badiche and Madame unfortunately do not "hit it off." In fact, Badiche, whose intelligence has been sharpened by dislike and jealousy, has long perceived with anxiety and pain that his friend's domestic happiness is hollow. It is everything to Madame to have a liberal paymaster in her husband, so it is as much as ever her interest to cajole him. Besides, she has a real pride in his talent, as it reflects lustre on herself. As the wife of the painter Cintrat, she has something of a personality. But as

she struggles upwards in society, she is more and more ashamed of him socially. Yet the poor Bohemian has had hard times of it: he has tried in vain to conform himself to his wife's ideas of suitable dress; but in a couple of days the most fashionably cut clothes look as if they had been picked up in the second-hand stalls of the Temple. As it strikes him that his wife cares less for him,—as he realises that though lavish on herself she is parsimonious for him and for their child,—consequently the submissive slave becomes recalcitrant. He protests that he will not paint by contract, against time, and at so much the yard, that he may pay the milliner's bills she runs up indefatigably. He will not prostitute his art and compromise his fame by laying himself out for flattering portraits of vulgar men and women. Naturally, when Cintrat ceases to be pliable, his wife begins to feel an active dislike for him, which she takes little pains to conceal. Irritation and her stupid vanity make her indiscreet: there is a scandal and a separation. In an exceedingly cleverly managed scene, the worthy Badiche labours unsuccessfully, for the sake of his friend, to save Madame Cintrat from shame and exposure. He knows too well what will be the consequences to that affectionate and impressionable nature of having its idol shattered and their home made desolate.

Indeed there is so much that is dramatic in the novel, that we believe it might be successfully adapted to the stage. A dozen of years or so are supposed to have elapsed, and in scene the third and last we find the once famous painter has fallen far below the stand-point he had occupied at Pornic; though even then he had indulged much too freely in idleness and dissipation. Cintrat is prematurely aged, and has become a habitual drunkard; for his wife when she took to flight had dealt him a second and more deadly blow, in carrying away his child and concealing it. But the faithful Badiche still clings to him, directing the affairs of the miserable household as in the old days, and doing his best to make the two ends meet. Badiche, although no austere moralist, deplores the fall he understands and excuses. The light he had so fervently admired, and from whose lustre he had expected so much, is going out in dimness and evil odour, like an unsnuffed tallow candle. It is all over, and there can be nothing for it, sooner or later, but to sing the requiem of a self-ruined genius. He little suspects the revolution that Fortune is preparing for them. One evening the pair receive an angelic visitor, in the person of Cintrat's daughter, the long-lost Paulette. The young girl, after being abandoned by her unnatural mother, and having had more than her share of trouble and hardships, has walked all the way from Italy to Paris with a trifling sum of money she had saved or borrowed. At the moment of her arrival, the only member of the joint establishment that is at home to receive her is the dog Barbouillon, a very remarkable character, and even more of a vagrant than his masters. Badiche dwells proudly on the dog's eccentric idiosyncrasy, when Paulette subsequently demands—

"'He is your pupil, then?'

"'He's nobody's pupil, Barbouillon; he does exactly what he likes himself. Born of unknown parents, nobody knows where, he has adopted us because he has found with us the liberty that is indispensable to him before all things. Paris belongs to him and he belongs to nobody. One day you meet him in the Champs Elysées, and the day after at Charenton. There are certain restaurants that have his

confidence, and which he is always ready to patronise with any one he takes a fancy to; and there are others where he would never risk himself on any consideration.'"

In consequence of the intimate friendship that springs up between him and Paulette, Barbouillon renounces his vagrant habits and becomes a thoroughly domesticated character. But the influence of the girl on her father is even more remarkable. She comes to him like a breath of the good old times, when his nature had expanded for a season in the happiness of a home. His child is absolutely dependent on him, and he has once more a motive for exertion. The very morning after her arrival, if he does not formally take the pledge, he announces to Badiche that he has done with strong drink. Nor is it the least touching proof of the old Bohemian's devotion, that Badiche, who loves to drink in moderation, becomes an abstainer that he may not tempt his friend. Who could have imagined, only a few weeks before, that the day would come when Cintrat would have alcohol surreptitiously administered in sauces to recruit the strength that has been shattered by excessive self-denial. But this is only the first miracle that Paulette has wrought. Scarcely less heroic are the efforts by which, in spite of discouragement and repeated failures, the painter slowly recovers his assurance of touch. And then he becomes even a greater celebrity than before, since the earnestness of his later style reflects his sad experiences. As for Paulette, she has her father's warm heart, while her unprotected walk to Paris showed that she had much of her mother's resolution. But although she is undoubtedly a pleasing and determined little person, she is rather commonplace; and, as we remarked already, the interest throughout is made to centre in Cintrat. Nor are his trials altogether at an end with the return of prosperity. We say nothing of the unwelcome reappearance of his wife, with claims upon his income which he is compelled to compromise. Cintrat is freehanded enough, and careless in pecuniary questions. But it is another affair when he finds that the daughter who has become all in all to him, has gone and given the innermost place in her heart to another. For once, excess of love renders him selfish, and selfishness finds sophistical arguments to make him reject eligible proposals in what he persuades himself to be his daughter's interest. Of course, on reconsideration he gives reluctant consent; but all the same, his pangs continue to be acute, now that he knows that another is dearer to his daughter than himself. From first to last there is much that is pathetic in the novel; but the chief charm, after all, is in the beauty of the friendship that so closely unites Cintrat and Badiche. With taste and talents, though they may be theoretical rather than practical, Badiche devotes himself to the man to whom he has consecrated his life, with a love that surpasses the love of women: while Cintrat, with all his foibles, is by no means unworthy of that sublime attachment; and in the flush of prosperity, as in the extremes of ill-fortune, never does he either neglect his follower or misunderstand him.

By way of postscript to our article, we make very brief allusion to a collection of exceedingly short stories by M. François Coppée. Stories indeed they can hardly be called: they are rather the slightest possible sketches of incidents so entirely in outline, that it is for the imagination of the reader to fill in most of the details. Some

of them are humorous, most are more or less pathetic, but the greater part are exceedingly clever; and we admire the self-restraint of the author, who seems to have wasted much good material by compressing what might have been almost indefinitely expanded. As is often the case with similar collections, the first of these sketches is perhaps the best, though there is another—"La Fenêtre Eclairée"—very noteworthy. "Le Morceau de Pain" is a melancholy souvenir of the Franco-German war. The Duc de Hardimont, a *petit crevé* of the Empire, hears with horror, while in *villegiatura* at Aix-les-Bains, of the terrible disaster of Reichshoffen. The dissipated descendant of the crusaders has hitherto lived altogether for pleasure; at that particular moment he is caught in the toils of a venal siren of the "Nudités-Parisiennes." The news appeals to his patriotism and his pride of race: in an hour or two his portmanteaus are packed, and he is hurrying by first-class express to Paris. He enlists as a private in a regiment of the line, and we find him participating in the defence of the capital. Nibbling daintily at his rough rations behind a battery under the guns of Bicêtre, he dreams fondly of the good old times and the *cuisine* of the Café Anglais, and throws away his crust of the *pain de munition* in disgust. A comrade is ready enough to pick it up out of the mud, and the gentlemanly spirit of the Duke induces him to apologise for his wastefulness. The two fall into conversation, and De Hardimont learns from the revelations of the other that there are men to whom starvation is familiar, and to whom military rations may be a luxury. Touched to the heart, humiliated and self-condemned, he presses the hand of Jean-Victor as comrade to comrade, and promises that the other shall hear of him when the war comes to an end. For one of the two, it is sooner over than they had supposed. At midnight there is a summons for the relief for the advanced posts. The Duke should be on duty, but he is sound asleep. The grateful Jean-Victor, who has a rude appetite, has been awakened by hunger, and he eagerly volunteers to take the place of his new acquaintance. In a Prussian onslaught on the outlying pickets the half-famished peasant is put out of all his miseries; and the Duke learns, on awakening, that his life has probably been saved by this unexpected substitution. None of these tales carry any very impressive moral lessons, and the teaching of adversity seems to have had slight effect on De Hardimont. When peace has been made, and when the Germans have been bought off, we find he has once more gone in search of the pleasures of Paris; and he is strolling homewards from the club with a companion, after an evening of heavy play. But he had a good heart, as M. Coppée has pointed out before; and a trivial occurrence awakens a melancholy recollection. The aristocratic Comte de Saulnes sees, to his stupefaction, the Duc de Hardimont pick up a muddy crust, which he had kicked aside by accident, wipe it carefully with the handkerchief emblazoned with the ducal arms, and lay it on a bench of the Boulevards in the full blaze of a gas-lamp.

"'What in the world are you about?' said the Count, bursting out laughing. 'Have you gone mad?'

"'It is in memory of a poor man who died for me,' replied the Duke, in a voice that was slightly tremulous. 'Do not laugh, my dear fellow; you would disoblige me.'"