

over the poor man's heart as he saw the little boy's frightened and scowling face—"Oh-oh-h-h," howled Jean, twisting his ragged blouse in his dirty hands.

Paul's father, impetuous like his nation, and terribly frightened by the child's expression, seized Jean and gave him a succession of shakes, saying, "Where's Paul? where's Paul?"

Jean, blubbering and sulky, tried to say nothing; but cowed by the repetition of the shakes, he at last pointed to the Long Pond, and muttered reluctantly, "There."

"There!" said Paul's father, bursting into a torrent of unintelligible words, and flinging his arms into the air. He rushed to the pond, and stood for an instant looking at its unruffled depths; but he knew it was at least six feet deep; and the banks were steep, and he himself a short stout man, far from young, and with neither rope nor pole at hand. So dragging Jean with him, he ran panting and choking to the house, where for a moment he stood with his hand on his heart unable to speak. At last he said the word "pond," and pointing to Etienne, who had remained in the servants' hall, he fell in a heap on the floor. His wife sprang towards him, quite bewildered, poor woman, with her double fright; all the men and maids left their chairs and ran out calling for water, for ropes, for blankets; and M. le Comte de X., astounded at the noise, came out of his study, holding his pink cup of chocolate in one hand, and pushing his wig over his left ear with the other. But while all this was going on, Etienne, who had that excellent quality which we call presence of mind, ran quickly out of the house to the shed where he kept his tools, and got a long strong rake. When the other servants, with M. le Comte de X. at their head, came flocking down to the pond, calling out for a pole, or for some one who could dive, Etienne was already up to his waist in the water, where it was shallowest, and feeling about carefully with his rake. It was not long before he touched the body of poor little Paul, and then Etienne plunged in under the water and brought him up in his arms. The string with which he had played at horses was still twisted round his fingers, and dragged along the grass as he was carried into the house and laid before the kitchen fire. When Jean was asked how long Paul had been in the water, he said sulkily, "about two hours;" which reply made M. le Comte de X. so angry, that I am sorry to say he said a great many things which he should not, though he had reason to be terribly indignant at the

boy's wretched cowardice in not instantly coming to tell what had happened. After this everybody said that there must have been a quarrel between the two lads, and that Jean had probably given Paul an ugly push. It was very sad to think of how easily he might have been restored, even after he had fallen in, for there were three people close by in the grounds, and if Jean had even called out loud, they must have heard him.

So the matter remains somewhat of a mystery to this hour.

I am not going to make you miserable by describing the misery of those poor people. They tried all they could, by rubbing and warming the poor little boy before the fire; but nobody had any hope when they heard how long he had been in the water. And when it was all in vain, they laid him on his little bed, and his mother and sisters strewed flowers over him. Two days after—for burials take place much sooner in France than in England, and the time is fixed by law—Paul was carried in his coffin into the village church; and after the prayers the coffin was borne to the grave-yard on the hill; the old curé walking in front and all the village following after. They laid him in a little grave close under an ivy-covered wall, where a baby sister had been buried long ago. Her mound was planted over with white periwinkles, and looked quite snowy.

When all the servants went sadly back to the château, Paul's father and mother walking at their head, and crying sadly, they found M. le Comte de X. telling the Maire of the village that Jean's father, the drunken cobbler, must be turned out of his cottage and sent away. He was so apt to quarrel and fight that it was not difficult to do this; and the Maire, a fat peasant proprietor in a blouse (the village maires are generally like that in France), was promising it should be done. But who do you think put in a word? It was poor Paul's mother; the kind woman, who said, "M. le Comte, I had rather nothing was done. My son loved little Jean; and if he is sent away with that drunken father, he will only go from bad to worse."

So Jean stayed; and for a long time to come he was always sulky. But sometimes he looked at Paul's mother as if he were going to speak. I can hardly tell you whether the dreadful thing in which he was somehow mixed up will, in the end, make him repentant and be a better boy. But I *think* so; and I am sure Paul's mother deserves that he should.

BESSIE PARKES BELLOC.