

## THE ROSE'S AVATAR

THERE grew a rose more wonderful  
 Than ever Saadi sang,  
 Its loveliness occult and strange,  
 A rapture and a pang.

Its petals had the pulsing touch  
 That shakes the blood with fire;  
 Its warm deeps were the avatar  
 Of unassuaged desire.

Hid scents and hushed seraglio dreams  
 Were in its subtle breath,  
 The madness of the Mænad's joy,  
 The tenderness of death.

Its soul was all the mystic East,  
 Its heart was all the South—  
 Till tears and love transmuted it  
 To the dark rose of your mouth.

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.



## IT SOUNDED FAVORABLE

SHE—Has the widow given you any encouragement?  
 HE—She asked me if I snored in my sleep.



## RETROSPECTION

THERE is more joy in loving when  
 The loving has gone by;  
 We miss the moment's laughter in  
 A reminiscent sigh.

A fairer maid may dwell at hand—  
 Across the way or nearer—  
 But the little girl we *used to know*  
 Seems just a trifle dearer.

CARLTON TAYLOR ELLBURY.

# THE FIRST VICTIM OF REFORM

By Lloyd Osbourne

SHE looked at him with curiosity not unmixed with a certain fine contempt; sooner or later she knew she was bound to meet him, and now that at last the occasion had arrived, she felt the shiver of an uncomfortable excitement.

Not that Jack Kingsmill was a very formidable foe to look at. Indeed, he was almost a disappointment to Mrs. Mark Farrant as she took his measure with her blue eyes and remembered her self-appointed mission of reform. He was not at all the handsome, dashing, irresistible creature who had so often been described to her by her friends; that wrecker of human hearts whose days were passed in the undoing of pretty women, and whose character for evil was a by-word. So this was the man! Forty years old, if a day, iron-gray hair, iron-gray mustache; teeth so faultless and white that she was at first inclined to think them false; figure tall, almost thin, broad at the shoulders, straight as an arrow; a face that would have been downright ugly were it not redeemed by intelligence, humor and vivacity.

"So you are the one they call 'Darling Jack Kingsmill?'" she said, smiling up at him. "'Fascinating Jack Kingsmill,' 'Conscienceless Jack Kingsmill'—the man I've been looking for a hundred times this week."

"I cannot well help what they call me, you know," he said. "I see that I have been socially assassinated, so far as you are concerned. Call me a lady-killer at once, and hang me."

"I am not judging you by the nickname alone," she said. "Whenever

conversation lags in Newport, people with one accord talk about *you*."

"Worse and worse," he said. "I can see in your eyes the harm it has done me. I suppose you think I am a regular desperado; that I would kidnap your French maid, or put knockout drops in your afternoon tea. You will be more charitable when you have lived among us longer; a little backbiting makes us wondrous kind. You ought to hear what they already call *you*!"

"What can they say about me?" she exclaimed.

Kingsmill hesitated, and studied his immaculate toes.

"They say you are the prettiest little busybody and mischief-maker in Newport," he answered. "They say that when Mark Farrant gave you his hand and millions, and his place in society, that he unwittingly took a viper to his bosom—a viper that means to reform us root and branch, and make us—if the shock doesn't kill us—all over again as good as new. Mark, they say, is already a reformed character; that the forty feet round Mark is a better and cleaner forty feet than the rest of the world put together. They say age will give no exemption; we shall be told to be good, or die. It is even hinted that some of us shall not be granted the option, but shall be lined up against a wall, like communists, and summarily shot. In all of the throng here to-day, I doubt if there is a man but is trembling in his varnished boots and wondering if he is good enough to pass the fatal muster. I myself, outwardly so calm, am palpitating with memories of my misspent