THE YEARS BETWEEN. A Novel by William J. Fischer.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE PICTURE ON THE WALL. Mrs. Atherton enjoyed the quiet life

Mrs. Atherton enjoyed the quiet life of Beresvale very much. To be sure, her thoughts often stole back to Billington to linger upon old scenes and old faces, but she was happy in her cottage up there on the hill. And it was a pretty place with its spruce trees, its bit of lawn and roomy garden. Nature had indeed lavished beauty upon that seculded snot.

secluded spot.

Mrs. Atherton knew very few people Mrs. Atherton knew very few people in the village. When first she came among them she changed her name to Mrs. Vale, so that no one could identify her, and Mrs. Vale she remained as far as they were concerned to the last. Everybody, however, looked upon the strange occupant of Ellen Allan's cottage with a certain air of contributes. tage with a certain air of suspicion. There was a mystery about it all they could not explain. The old gossips were busy wagging their tongues for a long time. They came forward with new theories daily. Finally the talk dwindled down to almost nothing, and the mystery, surrounding the little woman on the hill, remained a mystery for a great many years in quiet Beresvale.

The few hundred dollars which Mrs. Atherton had brought with her to Beressele did not leaf year leaf.

vale did not last very long. In time the last cent was gone, and the poor woman was forced to work for her daily bite of was forced to work for her daily bite of bread. But she was good in heart and soul and willing to suffer all for her Master's sake. She never despaired— never murmured. Ten long years she had spent in Beresvale, and these were the iron years of struggle that told heavily upon her. No one would have recognized the Mrs. Atherton of Billington in that thin, stooped, sickly, white-haired, little woman on the hill. She was greatly changed and was not a well woman by any means. At times she would suffer the most violent headaches and cry out loud in pain, so that the little bird in the window would stop its song in sympathy. These headaches song in sympathy. These headaches had come on gradually during the last urs, but they were always getting While they lasted she would go

for days without eating.

One night there was a rap at the kitchen door, and a poor beggar entered, hungry and dirt-bespattered. A cold wind was blowing up from the lakes, and the night was clear.

"I am cold, good woman, and very hungry," the sickly man cried out in

suffering.
"Come—sit down over here!" Mrs. Atherton motioned to him, "the fire is a little low, but 'twill soon burn up, and then you will get warm. I'll have some

thing for you to eat in a few minutes."

Her last 5-cent piece had purchased the loaf of bread she held in her hands, but she thought to herself: "Never mind, here's a poor fellow who seems to be dying of hunger. I'll give him all I have. God will not see me starve. I'll only have to sew a little harder to-morrow—

Mrs. Atherton did some sewing for village, and the money she earned with her needle was practically her only

The good woman busied herself, set the table, and in a few minutes the smell of fresh coffee stole through the room. She turned to wake the poor man who had fallen asleep in his chair. She touched his shoulder gently, and he whispered:
"What is it, good woman?"

"Come! I have a lunch for you."
"Lunch for me? Ah, how good of
you! You do not know how I have suffered." And she wheeled his chair to the table.

When the meal was over he again

seated himself before the fireplace and for some time the two were engaged in

'How did you happen to find the ttage?' Mrs. Atherton inquired, cottage ?" Mrs good-naturedly.

"Well, it was like this. I travelled many miles on foot to-day, started out at sunrise and reached Beresvale this evening. The steamer had just left the wharf, but I was fortunate enough to see a man canoeing across the lake. I called out loudly to him and begged him to take me across, and he did. It was moonlight, and he could see me on the beach. He put me off at the landing and I stumbled along the road anxious to reach the village, but I could go no farther. Looking to the right of me saw a light on the hill nearby—the only light visible anywhere—and thither I made my way. When I gained the top of the hill I saw a little cottage. There was nothing else to do, I was cold and hungry, so I rapped at the door, and

hungry, so I rapped at the door and entered, glad as a child," "And you shall be very happy to remain over night," the woman said.
Mrs. Atherton could tell that his face betrayed no signs of wickedness.

then a fierce downpour of rain sounded outside. In a minute flashes of lightning followed and very soon peals

thunder.

'How glad I am to be in here—out of the cold rain. Last night I slept in the open air, the earth for my pillow and the starry sky for my blanket. It was very

May I ask you your name?" Mrs Atherton inquired kindly. "You have told me so much of your hardships I am anxious to know it." "I am James Sykes from Billington

A frightened look crept into the

startled woman's face.
"James Sykes from Billington?" she repeated softly, pondering over the name. And instantly her thoughts stole back to Jonathan Sykes. Ah, yes. She knew the lad, but she must be very care-ful not to disclose her own identity.

"Yes, madam. My father at one tinkept the largest bookstore there. Bu ness reverses set in and we were turned out in the street. Father did not liv taste such misery, and mother soon followed his footsteps. An only child, I was now practically left alone. But a good friend was thrown across my way, and it was he who put

me on my feet again. This is how it all

me on my feet again. This is how it all happened. He was a doctor—"
"A doctor!" gasped Mrs, Atherton. Instantly her thoughts stole back to Charles Mathers.
"Some two years ago one May afternoon," the beggar continued, "I was walking down the street when I saw a waiking down the street when I saw a runaway horse rushing furiously over the slippery pavement. The occupant in the buggy had no control over the beast whatever. A passing street can had frightened the horse. He jumped and jerked his head, the lines gave—and he was off like a shot. W I turned he was only a block away, and it looked like a drive to death. My heart urged me to rush out and try and stop the horse. The river moaned at my very feet, and it was an easy matter for driver, buggy and horse to be dashed to pieces over the narrow enbankment The sound of hoofs grew louder and louder. Out I dashed into the open road and threw my arms about the horse's head. He dragged me a block but I hung on with the strength of a hundred men. In a few minutes other rushed out and came to my assistance."

"That was a close call, Mr. Sykes."

"Yes, driver and horse would have not caught the horse by the head. And ow grateful Dr. Mathers was !"
"Dr. Mathers ?" repeated Mrs. Ather

ton, in great surprise.

The beggar turned and eyed her intently. He saw that she had been deep-

ly interested in his story.

"Yes, the occupant of the buggy was no other than Dr. Charles Mathers—the renowned Mathers of Billington, the great surgeon who daily saves the live f many people. ong since all this happened?

"Only two years ago."
"And is Dr. Mathers such a wonder

ful man there?"

"Yes, everybody loves him. He

very elever—and kindness itself."

Mrs. Atherton felt elated. She was glad to hear that the world had been good to Charles, in all the long ten years since she had left Billington. In her heart she thanked God for having sent this beggar to her door that night t bring her this good news of Charles. It made her old heart feel young again to hear that he was not wanting in anything. and that he was great amongst the me of the city. Some day she would re-turn to him—some day, when her thin old hands could handle the needle no longer. So long as they were able to stitch and stitch, she would feel content to remain at Beresvale: and should things come to the worst, a letter or telegram would reach Charles in Billing

ton any time.

"Ah, yes," continued Sykes, "Dr
Mathers is a jewel of a man. He was se of a man. The was so grateful to me for having saved his life. Of course I broke the bones of my arm and leg in the attempt, but he soon had me fixed up again at the hospital. From that day on I wanted for nothing. Dr. Mathers cared for me as a father. He interested himself in my behalf, and obtained for me a splendid position in one of the banks, but I could not stand pros perity. I grew wreckless. Drink at the bottom of it all. One morning went to my desk with the smell of liquo on my breath. An hour later the man ager handed me a check and politely told me that my services were no longer required.

Ah, that was too bad." The woma really pitied him. "But then drink has been the curse of many a one, and you should have known it.

Billington that same evening. I was disgusted with myself. I should have gone to see my good friend, Dr. Mathers, but I was ashamed. I did not have the heart to face him and tell him the whole

story,"
" And you left Billington without se

Yes. I went to a neighboring town secured employment, worked steadily few weeks, but was soon told to go. I was drink again. And this is how got down to my present low level. I now earn my living selling my little wares from door to door. I could seek other employment, but I prefer this sort of a life to any other, because I have desperate struggle to earn my daily bread, and, as long as this condition ex

"Have you heard of Dr. Mathers sine

you left Billington? " No, not a word. He does not know what happened me, and I am satisfied But he was very well when last I say Bitt ne was very well when last I saw him. Only there is a sore spot in his heart somewhere. One day I called at his office. He looked very tired and worn out, told me he had not seen his bed for some nights. It was a beautiful The breezes wandered afternoon. noiselessly through the open and left a refreshing coolness behind. For a long time Dr. Mathers gazed thoughtfully upon a picture of a middle aged woman hung above the mantle piece on the opposite wall. He eyed the painting intently. His thoughts were evidently wandering through the flow ery meadows of by-gone days. Present ly a large tear dropped from his eye, and thought I heard it fall. It seemed t wake him from his musings and he turned to me, somewhat apologetically, and said: 'Ah, Jim, forgive me! I forgot you were here. I was only thinking. That womanly face always makes me think. She was a second mother to me, but she left one day it is ten year ago—and I have searched for her in vair all these years. Some day I will tell you the whole story, and then you will no wonder that I grow thoughtful sometime But I never heard the end of the story l lost my position the next day, and

ou see never went back.' Mrs. Atherton turned about nervously n her chair during the last few ser tences. She felt like flying to Billing on and clasping Charles to her heart He evidently had not forgotten her. The more she thought of that picture on the wall and the beggar's story, the more she felt inclined to leave Beresvale the next train. But something held he

"Not yet! not yet!" she whispered to herself. "I can still work."

Now that she had heard definitely of Charles' great success in life she felt were said more satisfied than ever, and the days pleasure.

passed quickly and pleasantly for her-CHAPTER XIII.

DOROTHY FAIRFAX.

Dorothy Fairfax, the accomplished aughter of Jerome Fairfax, banker, wa the handsomest woman in all Billington. Her early days were spent at the convent where the clever Sisters helped to develop her natural talents in music She had a remarkable soprano voice fo one so young. An only child, her par ents naturally took great delight in her At the sty she graduated, and for the two years following took singing lessons from the best teachers Billington could afford. At this time also, she moved in afford. At this time also, she moved in the highest musical circles of her native city. Her father had always promised her a few years abroad to finish her musical education, and consequently, when she was twenty-two, she was sent to Paris, later to Leipzig. She remained only one year at Paris and then took rooms in Leipzig. And here she was at the present time, but her thoughts were turning homewards.

She had come in contact with the nice people during her two years' residence and her heart felt very contented and happy in that luxurious "In Bohostudent-life. Her friends and panions were artists, musicians and writers—all come to Leipzig to get what was best in this center of culture and refinement. They sat at the sa and rennement. They sat at the same dainty tables and sipped out of the quaint, china coffee-cups.

Dorothy occupied two pretty rooms on one of the leading streets of the Ger-

on one of the leading streets of the Ger-man city and had for companion another Billington girl—one Bernice Chadwick The latter was completing her studies on the piano. They had come to En ope together and they were going back home again. At school the two had always been good friends, but this novel experience abroad had drawn ther together on terms of closer intimacy.

Dorothy had a regular " in Bohemia

den. The walls were literally plastered with pictures of the old masters. On a divan in the corner were piled fully a dozen cushions. On the opposite side dozen cushions. On the opposite side stood her piano, upon it a large marble stood her piano, upon it a large marble bust of Liszt, gazing with dreamy, path-etic eyes about the little crowded room. And the sheets of music! There were piles of it scattered about on the floor, tables and chairs. Even the old piano's back was almost breaking with the weight of it. From an old-fashioned Venetian vase on the table a bunch of red and white roses sent their arom through the room. At the two door that led into a larger, room, hung thin Japanese curtains. Bernice Chadwick' Japanese curtains. Bernice Chadwick rooms were on the same flat, but a fee

doors away.
It was a delightful June morning, or of those clear refreshing mornings that make one feel it is good to be alive when all one's cares and worries have wandered thousands of miles away and the heart knows nothing but gladness Dorothy had just finished breakfast and going over to her window, shopened it full length to let in the pleas ant, morning air. Down in the street a jolly mountaineer was singing a daint quaint, German love-song to the accord paniment of a mellow harp. The elea liquid notes of his tenor voice floated into the morning air and filled every nook of Dorothy's den with

It was one Sur The loveliest

The singer had a ringing voice, pleaant to listen to and far too good for th It was a voice that would have sounded well in a concert-hall bu one hears many such voices in the streets and in the haunts of the lowly. One seldom runs across a poor singer

The little melody was soon over Dorothy was delighted with it and threw down a piece of silver to the singer, who caught it in his hat and bowed gallantly.

Just then a crowd of jolly students passed by laughing loudly. In a few minutes the lectures at the university would begin, and the boys were hurry ing to their tasks.

Dorothy stood a long time eveing th changing scene in the street below The sun shone full upon her, as she stood there, in the m simple, white gown hanging loosely from her shoulders. She looked like a quee in contemplation, a look of intense jo upon her classical features. The sun eams wandered through the meshes of her black hair, and when she turned, one could see that she had a complexion of dazzling beauty, fair and creamy. Her cheeks were twin roses that never lost their color. Her eyes were dark her black hair, and brown and dancing with long lashes capable of changing with every thrill of emotion, and her lips were a brillia emotion, and net tips were a red, hiding a fine set of pearly white teeth. Her every movement was grace ful; her head seemed fitted to wear erown, her fingers to wield a sceptr and yet ske had the features that we wield a sceptre

full of sweetness and innocence.

Presently she was disturbed in he Presently she was disturbed in he thoughts by Bernice's entrance into th The latter never entered th same without upsetting or stumbling over something. She was a lively, joy ial sort of girl, and this time th small table in the middle of the root suffered. In an instant the Venetia vase and the red and white roses lay is a little river on the costly, Turkish rus and worst of all, Bernice herself was tied down to the floor, not knowing whether t laugh or to cry. Entering the room her usual careless manner, she had stumbled over a small foot-stool—and that foot-stool was to blame for all the mi

That horrid foot-stool will be the death of me yet," she cried out hotly.
"Oh, my preety vase and the roses on, my precty vase and the roses and the rug!" uttered Dorothy. "They are ruined. Dear me! the dear old vase Gretchen brought me from Venice smashed into a thousand pieces! Bernice, you are awful!" The last words were said with a certain amount of dis-

"Ah, never mind the Venetian vase. I'll get you another," interrupted Bernice with an air of suffering. "It's a pity that your—Oh! the pain! I won-der if I've broken any bones?" The girl could not even then restrain her laughter and Dorothy herself joined in

good naturedly.
"Come, Dorothy! What's the use "Come, Dorothy! What's the use of crying over spilt milk anyway? Come give me your hand like a good girl and help me to my feet—or I'm dead sure."

With Dorothy's assistance Bernice was helped to the divan, in the corner.

In an hour the latter was on her feet as well as ever, trying to stumble something else.

The morning mail brought several letters and papers for both of the girls

voured eagerly.

"Mamma expects me home in a month from to-day, Bernice. What do you think of that? She writes that she

The contents, rest assured, were de

can hardly wait for the day."

"And so does mine. I also have letter from mother. She did not the photographs I sent her at all. know the ones we had taken in the coffee garden, with Herr Kreisler one afternoon. She says I look just like a regular Kaffee-klatsch, and I think robably she's right.

By this time Dorothy was reading the

Billington Post, copies of which arrived in Leipzig every second Thurs-

"Say, Bernice, the Post is certainly giving Dr. Mathers enough of advertis-ing these days. Here is a whole column about him, saying how through an oil painting in an artist's studio he had at ast come upon a path that would lead him to find an old friend of his—a Mrs. Atherton by name. The lady had disappeared from Billington under very suspicious circumstances many years ago. 'Tis interesting reading and you must see it. The paper is several months old. Mother must have sent it by mistake—but 'tis new to me."
"Do you know him, Dorothy?"
"No, I have never met him, but I

have often passed him on the streets. He's a fine man—a very clever surgeon

and awfully good, 'tis said, to the poor.'

"He is quite young as well, isn't he?'

"I should judge him to be between
thirty-five and forty."

"I don't remember ever seeing him,"

replied Bernice. Well, he is quite tall, has jet black hair, fair complexion and is clean shaven. He has what I would call a

good, reliable honest face for a man, and I think he is quite handsome. He dresses well and has always a very pre-possessing appearance; he is broad-shouldered and well-proportioned." "I suppose this fine looking fellow is narried, as usual," exclaimed Bernice.

"Not by any means, Bernice. At least I have not heard so. Mother generally writes me all the news and I'm sure she would not have orgotten to tell me this" Just then the clock struck the hour

"Heavens! Bernice, it's 10 o'clock' exclaimed Dorothy, as she jumped from her chair and grabbed her music, 'Here il'm supposed to be at the pro-lessor's studio at 9.30! Well! Well: I'll get my scolding for keeping him waiting this morning. Besides, he is very busy to-day. He expected me in early for final rehearsal of the songs I am to sing to-night at my graduation recital. I suppose your piano solos will be perfectly done, you little imp!"

"Not by any means, Dorothy. When you are gone I shall get at them again. My fingers feel just like slate-pencils." Dorothy donned her hat and passed through the door. In a minute she was

back again. "Oh. Bernice, I forgot to show you my gown for this evening. The dress-maker sent it down last evening. It is just a perfect gem. Oh, it is just really gorgeous. I'll fell like the Queen of Sheba come to life again. It will sparkle on the stage, I tell you, with its fifteen yards of gold lace and—But, oh, I must away. I am forgetting the lesson. I'll show it to you when I return. Pray for me, Bernice! I am sure Herr Kreisler

will kill me to-day."

Dorothy darted down the steps. In ten minutes she stood at the singing-

CHAPTER XIV. THE SINGING-MASTER.

Herr Kreisler's studio was one of the loveliest and pleasantest spots in all Leipzig. It was an imposing little structure with a marble front, and comprised four rooms—the waiting-room, studio proper, the concert-hall and the pro-fessor's private sanctum. On all sides of it there was a green sketch of lawn, upon which flowers bloomed all the summer long. Herr Kreisler was very proud of his flower-beds. He paid almost as much attention to them as to the voices

When Dorothy reached the studio she was gasping for breath. She rang the door bell hastily, and presently the door opened, and a little stout man with long black hair and round fat face appeared. "Guten Morgen, Fraulein!" he greeted

her tenderly.
"Guten Morgen, Herr Professor!"

"Guten Morgen, Herr Professor!" answered Dorothy, in good German. When she was seated in the waiting-room, Herr Kreisler noticed that she was short of breath and he exclaimed, somewhat angrily, as he threw his hands into the air: "Mein Gott! Mein Gott! Dorothy! How often have I told you not to run your feet off to get here. Now here you are again to-day, come for your last practice und you can't sing wort' anything. I know it. I feel it. Why, you're puffiing worse den a beeg steam engine. Ach! How you expect to sing dose cadenzas is beyond de com-prehension of mein brain. But you must sing dis very night. Not'ing vill help you. De programs are printed, de invitations have been sent out und all de beeg, fine folk of Leipzig vill be dere. Dey always come to Herr Kreisler's concerts. Dey like good music und

singing."
Dorothy took his reproof very much to heart. He had never spoken to her in such certain tones before, but the poor man was so wrapped up in the young woman's success that he allowed himself to become unduly excited. She

was without a doubt the best singer he had yet produced, and he wanted her to do herself and her teacher full justice in

do herself and her teacher full justice in the concert-hall that evening.

"You see, professor," Dorothy re-marked. "I was fully an hour late and I am to blame for it all. Bernice and I were chatting away and never thought of looking at the clock, when lo! it struck ten. So I grabbed my music and just hurried here as fast as I could, be-cause I was afraid you would scold me. But I can sing now. The little difficulty

in breathing is gone."

"Come den, mein kind, und let's get
to work." And together the two wanered to the music room.

The studio was a large, well-lit, sunny

room, plainly furnished but withal comfortable looking. It contained nothing out a piano, a table and two or thre Artistic busts of Beethoven, and Schumann looked down peacefully from the snowy-white wall. The room contained but one picture. It was a fine steel etching of Franz Abt. There were no carpets, rugs, curtains or bric-a-brac. Upon the table stood a bric-a-brac. Upon the table vase containing some flowers.

"Vat t'ink you of des flowers mein Freund?" spoke Herr Kreisler as he drew his pupil's attention to the choice red roses in the vase. "Aren't dey peautiful? I raise dem all by mein

Yes. They are beauties. I think rofessor, you might give me a few to wear this evening."
"Ach, Gott! Fraulein! You shall

have dem. I shall pick dem fresh after-wards—also, a few for Bernice."
"But come und let's make us busy!" Thereupon Herr Kreisler ran his fa fingers through his long black hair and seated himself at the piano. Then his hands struck several heavy, deep-sounding, minor chords and Dorothy walked

"Vat vill you sing first-oratorio o

Let it be 'Faust' first, professor "Very vell den, Fraulein."
Dorothy's arms fell to her side; she ook a deep inspiration and her voice was ready to fall in presently with the singing-master's accompaniment. The latter had almost finished playing the ntroduction, when there was a rap at

the door of the music room.
"Ach! ach! das ist doch argerlich! e exclaimed angrily, as he rose fro

Mina, his wife, was at the doo 'Hans !" she exclaimed softly, "der a man in de vaiting-room to see you is in a beeg hurry.'

"Vell! vell he must vait until hes beeg hurry is passed by. I can't see him for half hour yet. So Mina, just tell him to vait lettle bit." All right, Hans!" Vat does he look like?"

"Fine lookin' man, so high, so beeg nice face. Wear new plug hat und

ong, gray overcoat."
" Has he a clean-shaven face?" "Yes, Hans, he has."
"Ach Himmel! Ich weiss wer Er is: is Signor Lamperti from England." erti!" whispered Dorothy the great Italian director Lamperti!"

The mention of him being so very near made her little heart jump.
"Vell, Mina, in half hour tell him l hall come." And the door closed with

a bang.

Then the practice began in earnest. Dorothy was in fine voice. She sang her high notes with the greatest ease and had perfect control of her voice in the many intricate, difficult cadenzas that occured in the text. At the even ing concert she was to sing a bit of ora torio and opera and several songs in English, German and French. She knew them all perfectly, and, when the rehearsal was over. Herr Kreisler patted her on the shoulder, a look of intense satisfaction in his old, teutonic face.

"Ach Himmel, Fraulein! You san rell-fine-excellent! Your voice jus sounded like a bird—a nightingale—so clear, distinct and melodious. It carried mine soul into heaven—avay von dis noisy eart.' An angel could not have sung besser. Dorothy! mein Herz feels very beeg about you und your charming voice. Pelieve me, you will yet make your fortune wid it. But soon You know, Fraulein, dis poor old heart

vill never cease remembering."

Just then a sad look crept into the singing-master's face, and for some minutes both were silent.

"So you are going to leave in two veeks. Ach! I don't like it at all—not at all. De time vill be here already very soon. It makes me feel sick right here in mine inside chest." "Yes professor, I too will be sorry to leave you and Leipzig. But I will not be as ungrateful as you think me. You

shall hear from me often."

"Vat do you intend to do ven you go ome again? "Peel potatoes and scrub the floor oc

"Feel polatoes and scrub the floor of assionally, professor?"
"Ach! ach, Himmel!" he exclaimed, his voice broke into a loud, penetrating laugh. "Peel potatoes! vell! vell!" "No, professor, I was only fooling. Really, I have not yet settled upon any plans, but I am sure mother will keep me at home with her sometime. Three years' absence is a long time, and I am sure she's anxious to have me with her again. They write that the house has been dead since I left."

"But, liebes kind, you must not neg-lect your singin.' You sing opera vell, and dat is where you belong. Some day, pelieve me, you vill be great prima-

"Prima-donna, professor?" Dorothy exclaimed in surprise. "Do you really nean it?"

The thought of becoming a great prima-donna had never entered Dor-othy's mind. She knew she sang well, but she was very humble in regard to her attainments. She had always planned a career on the stage. She loved to sing to that sea of humanity in front of her. There was something in it

all that drew her like a magnet and held her fast. Often she woke at night and lo! the picture of faces rose before her -real, magnificent, and she saw herself in the role of Marguerite or Juliet, and Lamperti was more than ever than ever heard the wild cries of applause that with his new choice and left Leipzig

shook the very columns of the theater.

And how that applause feed her hungry soul! But then they were only dreams mere, idle dreams—strung together n feverish states of excitement and conin leverish states of excitement and conjured up by some abnormal fancy. In her heart the girl could not help feeling that she was nursing a strange delusion. She would never be so fortunate as to She would never be so fortunate as to have a chance of showing herself in grand opera. But, unsuspecting innocent girl, she did not see the bright earer the future had fashioned for herout there, somewhere in the hours to come.

ome.
"Ach!" exclaimed the professor. "I "Acn: exclaimed the professor. "I forgot already so soon dat a gentleman is vaiting for me in de reception room. So pardon me, Fraulein, for a few minutes! I vill go und see him und den ve vill go out together into de garden for de roses I promised you." And the jolly old man bowed his way out of the usic-room.

uscroom.
"Ach! Signor Lamperti!" he exclaimed

as he shook his old friend's hand. "I am pleased to see you here again in Leipzig. You are lookin' vell, Signor—getting younger lookin' every time I t'ink." Signor Lamperti came originally from Naples. He was a tall, splendid-looking fellow, about forty years old. Most of his time was spent in London, England, where he was year, namelas as where he was very popular as a conductor. He spoke English faultlessly, only that his speech had a slight Italian

accent, pleasant and musical.

"I see, Kreisler, you are still at the old trade," Lamperti began, after some preliminary conversation about the weather and kindred things had been indulged in.
"Ja!" I have all I can do. By de

way, one of mine pupils gives her gradu-ation recital dis evening at de concert-hall. I would be pleased to have you dere, signor."
"Thank you! I shall take advantage

of the invitation. By the way professor pardon the impertinence, but who is the girl who has just finished singing in the music-room? She has a capital voice—sings like a lark. I could have listened Her operatic sele her for hours. tions were especially cleverly done, all else. She has the kind of voice on does not hear every day."

Lamperti's words filled the old teach-

er's heart with pride. To think that they came from the great Lamperti him-

"De girl who has just finished her practice is Dorothy Fairfax—a for-eigner. She leaves in two weeks for America. It is she whose graduation recital takes place disnight. Dis vas our last practice." interrupted Lamperti, " I shall

"Ah, integrapted Lamperti, "I shall go and hear her again then. She's a bird I'd like to capture, Kreisler." "Ach, signor, is that so? Vell! vell!" "Yes, Kreisler, I am looking up material for a new grand opera company. So far I have selected all the principals

except the prima-donna, and I believe I have come upon the proper person right here in your very studio. Yes, Miss Fairfax is the woman. Her voice is magnificent, voluminous—grand. She puts her whole soul into her singing." Herr Kreisler was beyond himself. He

ad not expected such good luck.
"Is Miss Fairfax a young girl?"
"Yes, signor. She's about twenty-

"And handsome?" "Very."

"Ah! I am sure she is just the person I have been looking for for months, Do you think I can see her?"
"Certainly. I shall go for her at

In a minute, blushing, girlish Dorothy

The interview lasted about thirty minutes. Lamperti told the singer how he had come to Leipzig looking for a primadonna, how he had listened to her grand voice during the last half hour, and how voice during the last han nous, and greatly he was pleased with it.

"Would you like to go on the stage, Miss Fairfax?" he asked kindly.

"Wow much, signor, My ambition

"Very much, signor. My ambition has always been in that direction."
"Ah, I am glad to hear it. What

about signing a contract with me for six months' grand opera? I understand -very soon-you vill go far away von Leigzig und den poor Kreisler vill is on our circuit. We end the season remaining several weeks. So it will all be very nice to appear in your native city. What do you say, Miss Fairfax ? "Well, signor, this is all so very

sudden. I scarcely know what to say, and besides I don't know whether father or mother will be satisfied to see me go on the stage. I am an only child, you know. "But I will give you time to consider

the matter, and, after you have talked it over with your parents on your return to Billington, then you can cable me your answer. Further instructions will follow then "Later that morning, as Herr Kreisler pressed a large bouquet of red roses into Dorothy's hands, he remarked heartily: "Take dem, you leetle imp! wear dem dis evening und sing — sing
— sing like you never sang before, for
Lamperti, de great Lamperti, vill be dere to listen. Ach, mein Gott! I'm so proud of you. Mein heart nearly preaks wid joy—und you're to be a

preaks wid joy—und you're to be a great prima-donna. Vell! vell! Fraulein, I always tole you so." The singing-master took her hand graciously as they parted at the garden

gate.
"Gott behute Dich, Fraulein," was all he could say. His eyes were full

When he entered the music-room, Mina, his wife, met him with a smile.
"Haus, vat's de matter? Are you sick? Youw eyes look just leetle bit

red."

"Ach, Mina, I feel bad. I know I shall miss Dorothy und her fine voice in de music-room after dis."

And the poor old singing-master real-his work and more—he loved his pupils,

and Dorothy Fairfax had a special lietle corner in his affections.

The recital that evening was a great