

His Little Girl

(Continued from page 20.)

"Dear, we won't talk of anything but ourselves to-day. The talk about Sylvia can easily be postponed, and for the present, at least, she is well cared for. When I have found a lady to look after her, I shall send them both to Manderby Court."

"Oh!" Grace exclaimed involuntarily, her face flushing, "are you going to have her there?"

"Why, yes, of course, my darling," Giles' voice expressed the surprise he felt, "I am making myself her legal guardian: I shall be entirely responsible for her, and when you come to take care of me and my house," a great tenderness crept into his tones, "I know the poor little waif will have a loving mother."

"Oh, will she?" Grace reflected viciously. "I know she will have nothing of the sort. The idea, the very idea, of starting our married life handicapped by the care of a child of ten. No thank you, Giles." But the angry thought was not reflected outwardly on her lovely face. Grace had been trained in a school which teaches command of the features, and her histrionic gifts were of no mean order. Her eyes looked into Giles' with a smile of surpassing sweetness, her hand returned the pressure of his.

"We will talk it all out, you dear knight errant," she said playfully. "You oughtn't to have belonged to the nineteenth century, Giles, you ought to have been born in the days when people rode about rescuing fair damsels, and redressing wrongs. Meanwhile, are you coming to the Rathbones to-night? Mrs. Rathbone told me she had sent you an invitation."

"Certainly I am going, if you go," he looked at her fondly, "I don't intend to lose a single opportunity of being with you, after all this long time of separation. Next week I must go to Manderby, old Stubbs, my land-agent, writes almost daily about a thousand things that have to be done. But this week will be yours—uninterruptedly yours."

"Uninterruptedly," she repeated softly, "and we will put off all discussion about—everything like business. We will just enjoy ourselves for this week, Giles—you and I."

"Just enjoy ourselves," he repeated softly, carried away by the magic of her voice and eyes, "that won't be difficult with you, sweetheart, and I."

WHILST he was speaking the words the door opened, and the trim parlour-maid announced in her aggressively English accent—

"Mr. Muller."

Giles and Grace sprang apart, and Grace was on her feet in a moment, her hand outstretched, a welcoming smile on her face.

"How nice of you to come in to-day, Mr. Muller," she said, "may I introduce you to my fiancé, Sir Giles Tredman?"

Her sentence was not finished, for whilst she was still speaking, Giles stepped forward, a dark colour mounting to his very forehead, a blaze of indignation in his eyes.

"I think—this is not the first time we have seen each other," he said, his voice sounding strangely thick and hoarse, "you and I—met—barely a fortnight ago—on the road that goes from Savoy to Italy. Your victim—died!" The broken phrases, the harsh, broken voice, the anger that blazed in his eyes, gave Grace an odd sensation that he was a stranger, not the man she knew at all, and the hand she put out to touch him and check his excitement dropped to her side again. She felt suddenly powerless, helpless in face of forces she could not understand, and as Giles came forward, she shrank back towards the sofa, looking with frightened eyes from one man to the other. All the excitement was on Tredman's side; the foreigner stood there imperturbably, a shadow of surprise on his face, a hint of polite bewilderment—nothing more. And as Giles paused, he bent his head courteously, saying, in his fluent English, which had so slight a trace of foreign accent—

"I think you must have mistaken me for someone else, Sir Giles. I have never been to Aix les Bains in my life. I—" a pair of keen blue eyes scrutinized Giles' agitated countenance, "I have certainly never had the pleasure of seeing you before, and—" his brows drew to-

gether in a puzzled frown, "forgive me, but I do not understand your allusion to—my victim. What you have said is, as you would express it, 'Greek' to me."

GILES stared at the strongly set features, and the blue eyes whose penetrating keenness was so startling, and the dark hair just turning grey; stared at the stranger's tall form, which towered above his own, though he was by no means a short man; and staring, felt that either he, or his companion, must be taking leave of his senses. In a flash of recollection he was back again upon the long white road that leads across the meadow land from Aix towards the mountains. At his feet he saw the wrecked pony carriage, the dying animal, the inanimate form of the woman amidst the wreckage; and the great black motor car that had wrought all the havoc. And, beside it, he could see the towering form of a man, with strong and handsome face, dark hair touched here and there with grey, and blue eyes, keen, bright blue eyes, whose glances seemed to penetrate to his actual soul. The man in the Cardews drawing-room was the living counterpart of that man whose lineaments were so clearly painted for him by memory. And yet—the man standing before him in the flesh repudiated all knowledge of Aix or of the accident, and looking full in his questioner's face, denied the accusation brought against him. Giles was staggered, more staggered, perhaps, than he had ever been in his life before; and sheer amazement held him dumb.

"You have lately seen someone at Aix who resembled me?" Mr. Muller spoke suavely, with certain persuasive gentleness that gave Tredman a curious longing to strike the handsome face.

"I could have sworn I had seen you," he answered shortly, "have you by any chance a twin brother who is as like you as two peas?"—a touch of scorn rang in his voice, but the other man maintained his imperturbability—"and does your brother talk Russian fluently and drive a powerful black motor? If so, he killed a woman outside Aix a fortnight ago. He injured her fatally, and then—drove away," the scorn in Giles' voice was biting, "he is your living image, and if I may venture to offer advice, I should suggest that you would do well not to visit Aix and its neighbourhood. You are so exceedingly like the man wanted by the French police, that you might be arrested by mistake." The other man seemed unconscious of the studied insolence of Giles' tones. He merely put out his hands with a deprecating gesture, and smiled—a smile that all at once lent an extraordinary charm to his somewhat sternly cut features.

"I am not surprised that you are angry at what, judging by your words, must have been a most cowardly and scoundrelly action. But let me most solemnly assure you that I have no brothers, that I do not speak a word of Russian, and that I have never been to Aix in my life."

(To be continued.)

Trade With Australia.

IN view of the coming negotiations for a treaty of reciprocity between Canada and Australia, the figures of trade between the two countries in 1911, just tabulated, are of interest. In the year Canada's exports to Australia aggregated \$4,225,000, an increase of a quarter of a million, while imports therefrom were under \$600,000, an increase of \$82,000.

The balance of trade thus continues strongly in favour of Canada. Agricultural implements and machinery, totalling one and a half million dollars in value were the main articles of Canadian export, lumber and manufactures of it, totalled \$700,000, and paper, stationery, etc., \$600,000; carriages, motor cars and parts totalled \$325,000, an increase of \$90,000. Other marked increases were in metal manufactures, \$100,000; furniture, \$50,000; rubber goods, \$30,000. There was a marked decline in Canada's export of canned salmon, this being attributed to packers being unable to supply the demand.

The principal exports of Australia to Canada were meats, \$200,000; wool, feathers and hides, \$210,000; tin ingot, \$45,000; fruits, \$32,000.



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