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Her Bonnet.

When meeting-bells began to toll,
When pious folks began to pass,
She deftly tied her bonnet on,
The little sober meeting-one,
All in her neat, white-curtained room, before her tiny looking-glass.

So nicely, round her lady-cheeks,
She smoothed her bands of glossy hair,
And innocently wondered if
Her bonnet did not make her fair;
Then sternly chid her foolish heart for harboring such fancies there.

So square she tied the satin strings,
And set the bows beneath her chin;
Then sighed to see how sweet she looked;
Then thought her vanity a sin,
And she must put such thoughts away before the sermon should begin.

But, sitting neath the preached word,
Demurely, in her father's pew,
She thought about her bonnet still;
Yes, all the parson's sermon through,
About its pretty bows and buds, which better than the text she knew.

Yet, sitting there with peaceful face,
The reflex of her simple soul,
She looked to be a very saint—
And may be was one, on the whole—
Only that her pretty bonnet kept away the aureole.

—*Mary E. Wilkins.*

A BARITONE'S DEVOTION;

OR A TALE OF SUNNY ITALY.

But if all around her believed him to be not only guilty of such a sin, but to be such a contemptible hypocrite as to have sought his own pleasure under the cover of protecting his sister, might she not possibly have been induced to believe the slander, too? And, once believed, such a story must inevitably kill love. For a while he sat rapt in the miserable contemplation of this thought, then suddenly his mind revolted from the idea of any kind of distrust in Francesca. No, it was not possible! She would believe in him against the whole world, would love him forever, not for any merit in himself, but because of the truth and purity and beauty of her own nature. She had been coerced into the marriage with Count Carossa. Again he fell back into the weary round of surmises, rejecting each in turn, but always confronted by the terrible realization that, however the marriage had been brought about, it was a fact—a fact which gave the death-blow to his hope, and doomed him to go through life alone.

For he must go on living, and must face the thought at once. Indeed, into his simple, healthy mind no thought of death had entered, though most truly life looked to him desolate enough; but it is in times of great trouble that a good man's real character is tested, and every dull, monotonous day of work in Merlino's company had added something to his manly steadfastness, and gave him power now to go straight on and do his duty without flinching. He brought back his thoughts with an effort to the present—"Rigoletto" that evening, the necessity of dining at once, the fear lest his trouble should at all mar the happiness of Sardoni and Domenica, his best friends, and a resolution to keep the news from them if possible till their wedding was over. With this thought in his mind he turned to the glass, saw that trouble was very legibly stamped on his face, and resolved to dine alone at some restaurant, that he might escape observation. On the staircase he met Anita; she looked up at him in a scared way.

"Do not speak of this to anyone else," he said, in a low voice; "above all, not to Sardoni or Domenica. Let it be only between us two, at any rate, till after the wedding."

She promised, although she was far from understanding the motives which prompted the request, and Carlo with a heavy heart passed on and walked slowly down Broad street.

Once more Nita's bitter words rang in his ears, "A legal bar between you and the one you love."

"After all," urged the tempter, "are you not aiming at the impossible? Why should you think of her as his wife when the thought tortures you? What! you mean to allow no thought that you could not lay bare to her sight, or the sight of her husband? Fool! Give up! Is such a love as yours to be cramped and fettered and starved; love that has lasted all these years?"

"You'll forgive me making bold to stop you, sir," said a familiar voice. He looked round and saw Adamson, the scene-shifter.

"I wanted to catch you alone, sir, and at the theatre there be always others within hearing; and I guessed you'd be glad to hear, sir, that it's all come right."

The sudden reaction from the terrible temptation to the story of the honest-looking old man, who had been one of his first friends in the troupe, taxed his powers to sustain it. His brain seemed to reel, but with an effort he dragged himself back to the recollection of Adamson's trouble. His daughter, a pretty American girl, sang soprano in the chorus, and for some time her father had been very uneasy about her, and Carlo had watched with a good deal of interest the progress of a small drama in which his dresser, Sebastiano, played the part of lover.

"It's all come right, sir," repeated Adamson; "and it's all owing to you. I don't know what you've done to Sebastiano, sir, but he's kind of altered. They're a-going to git married right away."

The need of giving the old man his hearty sympathy restored Carlo to himself. He went into a restaurant and ate his dinner soberly, but in his dark sky there were two gleams of light; the first was the recollection that Nita's heart had been at length reached; the second, that his hopes for Sebastiano had been fulfilled. There came to him, too, the perception that there was still one way in which he might safely serve Francesca. He could pray that her marriage might be a happy one. There was at least that still to be hoped for.

He went back to the Lafayette, found a letter which he had written earlier in the day to Enrico, and added the following brief postscript:

"Why did you tell me nothing of Count Carossa's marriage? Send me all particulars, if you can, to New York."

More than that he could not bring himself to put even to his friend, but to Clare he wrote a long letter and poured out all his trouble, for she was a woman, and he knew she would understand. Then, relieved a little by this, he took the letters himself to the post and made his way to the theatre. In Locust street, close to the stage door, he met Sardoni, who was much too full of his own affairs to be very observant.

"The day is fixed at last," he said, cheerfully; "it is to be at New York next Sunday week. Will you be my best man, old fellow?"

"Of course I will, Jack, if you wish it," said Carlo. "Does your father come out for the wedding?"

"No; but he has asked us to stay with him in the autumn, and your letter has evidently done a good deal toward reconciling him to the notion. We owe everything to you, Val."

Carlo turned into his dressing-room, only to be confronted by Sebastiano. He had heard too much of marriages that day, but yet must congratulate his dresser, and, as he put on his jester's costume of red and yellow motley, must listen to the story old Adamson had told him all over again.

"Why, signor!" exclaimed Sebastiano, when he had finished his tale, "see! You have put the red stocking on the left leg instead of the yellow one! One might think that you were in my case!"

Carlo smiled good-naturedly, congratulated the dresser again and dismissed him; but when he was alone he bowed his head on his hands and sat for a long time motionless, overwhelmed by a sense of his utter desolation.

The voice of the call-boy roused him from his sad thoughts. He wrung his hands together.

"My God, help me!" he groaned.

Then taking up his jester's cap with its gold coxcomb, he made his way to the wings and was soon transformed into the malicious, mocking Rigoletto, playing the part with his customary skill, and receiving with his usual quiet modesty the thunder of applause which rewarded him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GENOA.

A month passed by. In this outer life Carlo went through the series of farewell performances at New York, attended Sardoni's wedding, and travelled back to Italy. In his inner life he fought a terrible battle and came out conqueror.

No further details of Francesca's marriage had as yet reached him to relieve his misery of ignorance and suspense. Apparently both Clare and Enrico shrank from touching on so difficult a subject, and all he had received by way of answer to his letter was a copy of the *Roma* from Enrico, containing the same paragraph which Mademoiselle De Caisne had inclosed.

The shrewd-looking official who presided at the bureau in the hall of one of the hotels at Genoa sat speculating to himself as he saw the much-talked-of baritone pass into the breakfast-room on the morning after Merlino's company had landed in Italy.

The official was pleased when, on leaving the breakfast-room, Carlo came to the bureau to buy some stamps, and he adroitly seized the opportunity to prefer a request.

"Will you write your name in the visitors' book, signor?" he said. "Everyone in the place is looking forward to your appearance to-night; you will see, the theatre will be packed from floor to ceiling! Your full name, it you will favor us, signor; the autograph will be valuable."

Carlo smiled a little at the thought that his very commonplace handwriting should be in demand; then, happening to glance up the page at the names of the other visitors, his heart suddenly leaped up into his mouth as he read, "Il Conte Carossa, e Contessa Carossa." The names were both apparently written in the Count's writing. He turned quickly to the *concierge*.

"Count Carossa is still in the hotel?"

"Yes, signor; that is to say he is out just at this moment, but he has taken his rooms for a week. The contessa is in the *salotto*. I saw her go in just now."

For a moment he hesitated. Francesca was here under the same roof with him! Dared he seek her out? Dared he hear from her own lips the whole truth! When he had landed on the previous evening he had sent off another urgent letter imploring Enrico to write, or, if possible, to come and see him at Genoa, where they had accepted a brief engagement; but now to be told that Francesca was close to him threw him completely off his balance, and an impulse scarcely resistible drove him toward the *salotto*. Should he not enter that room? Should he not see her at least for this once? And yet every throbbing pulse within him warned him not to do so, proved to him beyond dispute that for Francesca's sake and for his own, he had far better not seek her out.

With a struggle that seemed to him bitter as death, he forced himself to pass by that closed door, and to go upstairs to his room. He was not left long in peace, for Gigi—who had grown into a very manly little fellow of nearly 7 years old, and who had been greatly improved by two years at a good school in New York—came bounding in with an eager request.

"*Zio caro*, don't you remember you promised to take me to Villa Pallavicini this morning? I guess we'll never be likely to get a finer day, and I do so dreffly want to see the fountains!"

Though sick at heart, Carlo would not refuse the little fellow's petition, and he dragged himself over to Pegli, trying hard to enter into Gigi's happiness, listening to his raptures over the beautiful gardens, and smiling politely when their conductor—a wizened, shrewd-looking little man—made time-honored jokes, and tried to be facetious. Neither the glorious views of sea and mountain, nor the lovely groves of ilex, olive, eucalyptus and pine-trees, nor the glowing color of the aloes and rhododendrons, could rouse in him that day the slightest pleasure. Gigi chattered merrily as they rowed in a little boat, under charge of a broad-shouldered, kindly old boatman, through the stalactite caves, and gave a shout of delight when, as they passed on, and came in sight of the fountains, they saw one of the gardeners carrying out the usual practical joke of turning the watering-hose in the direction of some visitors, who fled with good-natured laughter.

"Look, *zio caro!* oh, do look!" cried the child, clapping his hands.

And Carlo, glancing round, saw, only a stone's throw from him, on the bank, a little group of visitors, and among them Count Carossa and Francesca.

She did not see him, and after one long look, he turned away with a sick, dizzy feeling, and knew that he was answering the boatman's remarks at random, and vaguely wondered whether, after the first shock, that sight would grow more bearable to him.

How he lived through that day he never quite knew, but he had learned the truth of the words which he had spoken to Anita at Philadelphia that "Nothing is impossible"; and when the evening came, though Sardoni had dined with him, he stayed afterward talking of Domenica's perfections, and of his anxiety about his father's first sight of her, Carlo had betrayed nothing, but seemed as ready as ever to sympathize with his friend's affairs.

So engrossed was the tenor with his own happiness that he was amazed when, that evening at the theatre, Anita drew him aside, and, with tears in her eyes, begged for his advice.

"You are Carlo's friend!" she said, in low, hurried tones; "for God's sake tell me what to do! The Contessa Carossa is sitting in the stalls! Shall I tell Carlo before he goes on?"

Sardoni stared.

"Who, in heaven's name, may the Contessa Carossa be?" he asked.

"Insomma! I forgot you had not been told! He kept it from you because he would not have you troubled at the time of your wedding. She is Francesca Britton, the girl he was to have married! He heard when we were at Philadelphia that she had become the wife of Count Carossa."

Sardoni gave an inarticulate exclamation of rage and regret.

"He must be told?" he said. "A sudden shock like that might make him break down. I will tell him myself."

Carol had just dismissed Sebastiano, and was equipped in the picturesque costume of Escamillo, the toreador, with its green velvet jacket and knickerbockers faced with gold, broad red-and-gold sash, tan-colored gaiters, and red flag thrown across the left shoulder. There was no time to be lost, and Sardoni began abruptly.

"I have just been talking to your sister, Val. She thought, and I think, too, that you ought to be prepared beforehand. Count Carossa and his wife are in the theatre."

An exclamation of wonder and dismay escaped Carlo. He began to pace the room in terrible agitation.

"Why did you keep your trouble from me, Val?" said Sardoni, reproachfully. "And what, in Heaven's name can have made any woman forsake a man like you?"

Carlo turned upon him with a fierce gesture.

"Not one word against her!" he cried. "She was free—quite free! And what am I to deserve her, indeed?—a stage-singer with a tarnished reputation!"

"What! You think, then, it was that slander?" ejaculated Sardoni, understanding better why Carlo had kept all from him during this month.

"I don't know!—I can't tell! For God's sake, Jack, don't talk, or I think I shall go mad!"

Francesca had married Count Carossa. That being so, he must and could learn to bear the thought. Nothing was impossible!

The part of Escamillo, though small, suited him admirably, nor could any scene have been better chosen for his reappearance in Italy than the picturesque entry of the bull-fighter. Sardoni wondered greatly how the Contessa Carossa felt down there in the stalls, as she watched with the rest the entrance of the torchlight procession, and saw the crowd group itself and look expectantly toward the back of the stage, till, amid a chorus of "Hurrah for brave Escamillo!" the slight, graceful figure in toreador costume advanced through a little lane of torches.

Carlo's fame had preceded him, and the Genoese audience greeted him warmly; he took off his black velvet hat and bowed with the mingled dignity and simplicity of manner which made him at once revered and loved by so many. Then, quickly turning from the homage of the audience to the business of his part, and resuming the bold, genial bearing of Escamillo, he drained the wine cup handed to him, tossed it across the stage to one of the chorus, and broke forth into the well-known toreador song.

His beautiful voice, the vigor of his acting, the imaginative power conveyed by each look and gesture, held the audience spell-bound, and Sardoni marveled how, under the circumstances, he could sing the refrain of

"Bear thou in mind, when combat thee elates,
Two bright eyes fondly regard,
For thee a fond heart waits, Toreador."

At the close of the first verse the theatre rang with shouts of "Bravo!" And then once again came the graphic description of the bull-fight, till, by mere gesture and expression, he brought the whole scene vividly before the audience. Most of them had heard "Carmen" before, and had seen the baritone more or less energetically flap his red flag. But Carlo actually made them feel the suspense and excitement of the real contest. He surpassed himself, and when once more the refrain had been sung the whole house rose, and with frantic cheering gave the new baritone an ovation. Not one of the applauders guessed that the song had been to the singer a torturing effort, a mockery almost intolerable; or dreamed how his heart was aching as he stood there acknowledging their thanks. Not till the end did he dare look toward the place where they had told him Francesca was sitting; but, as he stood close to the footlights, bowing his acknowledgments, he ventured one keen, searching glance; he would, at least, learn if she looked well and happy, would try to gauge the count's character.

But he had expected too much of himself; all was confusion; he could only see that the count was frantically applauding him, and that Francesca's eyes were shining and her cheeks glowing. After that brief glance, the whole house swam before him, and the only thing for him to do was to get through, as quickly as might be, his brief dialogue with Carmen, and march off amid the greetings of his comrades, while the orchestra once more played the toreador air. The moment he was behind the scenes, his brisk, blithe step changed; there was a sort of relief in being able to relax the strain he had put on himself, yet never, even in the first shock of the news of Francesca's marriage, had he felt such an overwhelming sense of loss and loneliness as now, when he had actually seen her sitting beside her husband in the theatre. His first impulse was to lock himself into his dressing-room, but something made him hesitate; if he were alone, he should think, and if he thought, he should be lost; the only chance of his being able to keep his faculties clear for the rest of the opera, lay in avoiding thought as far as possible. After a minute, he forced himself to go to the greenroom and to join in the conversation, and there he remained through the interval, till the call boy summoned him again, and Sebastiano handed him a striped scarf instead of the red one. Flinging it across his shoulder, he stepped on to the stage, changed himself with an effort into the toreador with his careless geniality, received with cool indifference Don Jose's indignation, and, when challenged to fight, gave a masterly representation of southern passion, springing like a tiger on his foe, and, with drawn knife, fighting desperately. All was speedily over, and again he waited behind the scenes to sing the refrain of the toreador song in the distance.

"You look tired, Donati," remarked Caffieri. "Confoundedly hot, isn't it?"

He assented, though all the time he was shivering from head to foot. It was doubly hard to sing those words in cold blood off the stage. But he got through them somehow, and, leaning wearily against the wall of the passage, waited till the cries of "Donati!" rose to a roar, and then he pulled himself together, crossed the stage and stepped out before the curtain to accept the homage which just then meant to him so little.

"What must be borne can be borne," he said to himself again and again; "and at least Francesca is happy."

And now the end of the opera was drawing near, and his part was almost over. Nita watched him with mingled wonder and sympathy as they waited side by side for their last entrance; he was grave and silent, and the chorus from the stage of "Viva Escamillo!" jarred upon him she fancied, yet, though the wistful look in his eyes told plainly of his trouble, he was still ready as usual to think of other people.

"There is a horrible draught here!" he exclaimed—"you will take cold, Nita."

And so saying, he wrapped his red scarf round her white shoulders, snatching it off again adroitly when they advanced on to the stage. Somehow she had never felt so near to him as at that minute. She knew so well what it was that made him tremble as, with his arm round her, he sang the pathetic little farewell of the toreador—knew so well what it cost him to utter the words, "If thou lovest me, Carmen, thou shalt smile by and by; thou shalt be proud of me."

Together they were just singing their mutual avowal of love, the house was hushed to catch the exquisitely-blended voices in the last soft repetition of "Yes, I love thee!" when from the gallery there rose a hoarse cry—the most terrible cry that can be raised in any great gathering—the cry of "Fire!"

With a shriek Nita tore herself away and rushed from the stage, and in one instant it seemed to Carlo that the whole house was in an uproar. He shouted an assurance that there was no danger; he begged Marioni to go on with the opera; but it was all in vain. Then he stood like a statute in front of the stage, though all around him his companions were flying, though women were shrieking, though Marioni dragged him by the arm, imploring him to save himself while yet there was time. He shook himself free, and remained gazing down at the seething mass of people in the stalls, spite of all the confusion, keeping his eye steadily on Count Carossa and his wife, till at length, with a pang of wrath and astonishment, he saw the count force a way through the crowd for a beautiful, fair haired girl beside him, who seemed to be almost fainting with terror, and leave Francesca to take care of herself.

But indignation soon gave place to a thrill of wild exultation. At least it was his part to shield her now—her husband had left her, and that time which he had thought might possibly come in some dim future had arrived—he might serve her—might, perhaps, save her from death.

He rushed to the side of the stage, leaped down into the deserted orchestra, dashed aside the music-stands which impeded his progress, cleared the barrier at a bound, and, with the agility which was natural to him increased by the fearful excitement, forced his way to Francesca.

"Carlino!" she cried—joy, fear and relief mingling in her tone as she snatched his hands in hers—"I knew you would come. I couldn't go with Count Carossa!"

He dropped her hands, perplexed, troubled, utterly surprised. That Francesca, under the circumstances, should have spoken thus, seemed to him wholly unlike her. The marriage had been a forced one, undoubtedly, but yet how doubly strange of her to come and hear him that night; how immensely she must have altered to greet him now with such words. Terror must surely have made her forget all else.

"Don't be afraid," he said, very gently, yet with a manner so restrained that she instantly noticed it: "even if this is some wholly a false alarm, our best hope of escaping unhurt is just to stay here quietly. See, if you don't mind my holding you like this, I think I can prevent your being pushed by the crowd."

"Carlo," she said, quickly, relapsing into English, "are you angry with me?"

"I? How can you ask such a question? I am not angry at all, but yet the fault—"

"I couldn't help it; I couldn't go with the count, and not know what happened to you. Are you thinking of what people will say?"

"No, that matters very little. But I fear you did wrong to stay."

"Wrong, when I love you?"

"For God's sake be silent!" he cried, in a voice wrung with pain. "I dare not let you speak such words to me. Let us say no more at all. Perhaps the way will soon be clear, and I can take you back to the count. I don't understand how he could possibly leave you behind; he is very much to be blamed."

Her eyes were full of tears.

"You must not be vexed with him," she said, falteringly; "it was my doing. I would not go, and it was right that he should think first of his wife; she was almost fainting."

"His wife!" gasped Carlo. "His wife! Francesca! speak! speak! tell me what you mean!"

His manner terrified her.

"Why, he married Flora Britton, that pretty Scotch cousin of mine; she had been staying with us since her mother's death."

For answer, Carlo, regardless of all else, caught her in his arms, and had the panic in the theatre caused their death he would scarcely have murmured, for in that moment of exquisite relief, in that restoration to him of all he thought he had lost, he lived through whole years of rapture.

"My own! my darling! Can you ever forgive me?" he cried.

"I don't understand," sobbed Francesca; "but nothing matters since you love me still—nothing matters now we are together once more."

He thrust his hand impatiently into the toreador costume, and, drawing forth an envelope, held it towards her.

"I can't tell you," he said; "but look at these, and you will, perhaps, forgive me."

With blank astonishment she looked at the cutting from the *Times* announcing her own marriage to Count Carossa.

"Ah! who could have done so cruel a thing," she exclaimed. "This never could have been in the *Times* at all, or, of course, we should have heard of it. Who could have had it printed like this on purpose?"

"I see it now!" said Carlo. "It must have been Comerio's vengeance!"

His wrath was almost swallowed up in the strange perception that began to steal over him of how completely evil had defeated its own ends. Comerio's vengeance had actually been the means of winning for himself Anita's sympathy and love.

"The hymn we sang at Flora's wedding," observed Francesca, "and her monogram 'F. B.,' just like mine—how horribly it must all have fitted in! This letter, too!—who wrote it?"

"It is from Mademoiselle DeCaisne; she was engaged at the San Carlo, but I'll never believe that she had anything to do with that false notice. Comerio was singing at the San Carlo, too. He must have induced her to write the account and send the paper, and himself have inserted that thing. I don't like Elise De Caisne, but she would never have lent herself to a fraud like that."

"How horribly the people cry out near the doors!" exclaimed Francesca, able now for the first time to realize a little what was going on around her. "Oh, Carlo! how frightened I should be if you were not here with me!"

"Is Captain Britton in Genoa?" asked Carlo.

"Yes, we are all here in the Pilgrim—Uncle George, and Kate and Clare. Oh, how frightened they will be if they hear of this panic before we get out!"

"Where had they arranged to meet you?"

"Uncle George and father were to call for me at the hotel where Renato and Flora are staying. It was such a chance that I came at all, for you know how little father likes theatre going. But they came to the yacht this morning, and begged to have me for the day, and said they had taken places for 'Carmen,' and father never likes to say 'No,' and so I came, not knowing till we landed that Flora had planned it all on purpose that I should hear you sing."

"They will be terribly anxious about you. Do you think you could be brave enough to walk into this smoke, which is driving everyone else away? I believe we should have a very fair chance of escaping through the orchestra."

"Yes, yes—let us come!" she cried. "I am not afraid of anything with you."

He wrapped her shawl around her, cleared the way for her towards the orchestra, lifted her over the barrier, and quickly following himself, advanced cautiously through the smoke-filled passages. Before long he stumbled up against Sardoni.

"You here, Jack!" he exclaimed. "Can we get out? How did it happen?"

"You can get out all right," said Sardoni. "The fire is almost got under; they are working away splendidly with the fire engines. I was just coming to look for you. How it started no one knows, unless it was from one of the matches flung down when they were smoking in the camp scene—and yet I don't see how that can have been. You'll get none of the fun here; come and look at it."

"Not now; Miss Britton's people will be anxious; we must get out as quickly as may be. There is no crowd at the stage door, I suppose?"

"A fire-engine or two blocking the way, perhaps—nothing worse. But what in Heaven's name has happened, Val?"

He glanced for an instant at the sweet, girlish face, which, not long before, he had watched with indignant wonder.

"Comerio's vengeance!" said Carlo, in a low voice; then, turning back, he said, "Francesca, this is my friend Sardoni, of whom you have often heard."

Francesca shook hands with him warmly.

"And how about Madame Merlino?" she asked. "Is she quite safe?"

"I took her back to the hotel with my wife," said Sardoni, "and I believe on the way back I passed Count Carossa."

"He was obliged to try and get his wife out quickly," explained Francesca. "Oh, I hope Flora wasn't hurt in the crowd! Do let us get back to them!"

"Come with us, Jack, if you don't mind," said Carlo; and together they made their way through the crowded streets to the hotel, which was not far off.

In the entrance hall they found a number of people clustered round the poor little contessa, who was lying on the floor quite unconscious, while the count, who had had his arm broken in the crush round the door of the theatre, received no sympathy at all from Captain Britton, who had just come ashore from the yacht, and was beside himself with anger and anxiety.

"She would not come!" he stormed. "Of course not! An English girl has sense enough not to make for the door in a panic! And you ought to have stayed with her! How dare you take my daughter out, and then forsake her like a——"

Mr. Britton hastily interposed.

"John, don't waste time in talking!" he said. "Let us come round quickly, and see if we can't find her."

"*Gran Dio!*" cried the count, starting forward, "where she is!"

Captain Britton turned, and saw that Francesca was just entering the hotel, leaning on the arm of an actor gorgeously attired in Spanish costume. It flashed upon him, even at that moment, that it was a strange reversal of things which should bring him to scold a count for his desertion and to thank an opera-singer for rescuing his daughter.

"My dear, dear child!" he exclaimed, bending down to kiss her; "we have only just heard of the fire—we have been terribly anxious about you! You are not hurt?"

"Not a bit!" said Francesca. Carlo made me stay quite still, and then helped me out through the orchestra and by the stage door—"

"Carlo!" exclaimed Captain Britton, in amazement. And glancing round, he saw that the toreador was shaking hands with Mr. Britton, and answering as best he might the torrent of questions which assailed him on all sides.

"It is Signor Donati, the new baritone of whom all the world speaks!" said one of the little crowd. "*Via!* I tell you I should know him anywhere. The shops are full of his photographs."

"And he has saved the pretty signorina from the fire!" exclaimed another.

Captain Britton, forgetting for once in his genuine glow of emotion that many eyes were watching him, drew near to the hero of the evening.

"Carlo, my dear boy!" he exclaimed, seizing his hand in a hearty grip, "I can never thank you enough—never!"

Something in his throat choked him, and Mr. Britton, having suggested that rumors might possibly have reached the Pilgrim, and that Clare and Kate might be anxious, he quickly availed himself of the chance of escaping from so trying a scene, and, with a parting shake of the hand, and a "To-morrow!" spoken *sotto voce*, which conveyed much to Carlo, he drew his daughter's arm within his, and led her away from the hotel.

(To be continued.)

Plain Facts for Pretty Girls.

It is very bad form to address an envelope crosswise.

A card left or sent to an afternoon tea discharges the obligation.

Women of refined tastes do not use fancy note paper.

Chloroform will remove grease spots from silk and poplin.

The word "suite" is pronounced as though spelled "sweet."

Brides usually take with them to their new homes a full supply of house linen.

The bride should stand at the left of the bridegroom during the marriage ceremony.

Girls should not go out driving, nor to the theatre, with men who do not visit at their homes.

The widows of Presidents Grant and Garfield are allowed to send their mail matter free of postage.—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

How to Feed Dogs.

"In the matter of food many dog-owners make grievous errors and are therefore remiss in their duty," writes Dr. Gordon Stables, "toward our friend the dog. I think the rule of a light breakfast about 8 in the morning, and a good nutritious dinner at 5 p. m. is a good one, but we should never neglect to give some mashed greens twice or thrice a week, nor forget that change does good. An occasional dinner of well-boiled tripe is a great treat to almost any dog; so is a bit of liver lightly boiled. As to bones young dogs may have safe ones, but old dogs are better without; a handful of bone meal must do duty instead.—*Dog Owner's Annual.*

A Professional High Kicker.

Though the recent skirt dancing performance of the Countess Russell in an amateur representation occasioned more comment than commendation, the gay young woman appears very well satisfied, and has determined to go upon the boards as a professional. A cablegram says she will shortly sign a contract with Manager Edwards as a dancer at the Gaiety.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine non-Conformist ministers of Ireland have addressed to Mr. Gladstone an appeal against an Irish Parliament or the subjection of great Protestant communities to Roman Catholic rule. Mr. Gladstone's answer was that he derived no new information from this document.

"I am happy to say," remarked the preacher, "that the sheriff died resigned." "I dispute that statement," said the editor; "he died, but I'll be hanged if he resigned!"

Figgs—Joblots is getting to be a crank. He has started a remonstrance against opening any more new streets in his ward. Diggs—How is he interested? Figgs—He has got it into his head that they intend to keep them open on Sunday.

DOMINION PARLIAMENT.

Mr. Taylor presented bills to revive and amend the charter of the Ottawa, Morrisburg & New York Railway Company, and to change the name to the Canadian-American Railway Company, which was read a first time.

Mr. Innes asked if it was the intention of the Government to lower the duty on crude petroleum used in the manufacture of gas.

Mr. Foster said the Government was not yet in a position to indicate its intention on this subject.

Mr. McCarthy moved two resolutions calling for a return upon the subject of appeals to the Railway Committee of the Privy Council on the subject of cases brought before that body generally, and particularly those relating to the regulation of rates and fares and the prevention of discrimination and extortion.

Mr. Haggart said there was no objection to bringing down the papers. There were only two cases brought before the committee referring to traffic arrangements, and they had been satisfactorily disposed of. Other cases related to crossings of railways and highways.

Mr. McCarthy said he was sorry to have missed the discussion, somewhat on the same lines as that which he was about to propose, which arose over a resolution moved by the member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills). He did not desire to quarrel with the conclusion the House then arrived at. Looking at the history of this country, we ought to be well satisfied, and feel that substantial justice had been done to us, in the way we were dealt with by the Imperial Government respecting the questions affecting Canadian interests. Although it was impossible for Canada to work treaties irrespective of the Imperial Government, they did not see why she could not have a presentative, not in any sense independent of, but in conjunction with the Imperial representative at Washington. This appeared to him a practical step. We had enormous interests at Washington, larger interests in the United States than with any other power excepting only the Imperial authorities at London. Nearly half our trade was done with the United States, and difficulties constantly arose between us and the Government of that country. He begged to move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Weldon: "That in the opinion of the House, in view of the vast commercial interests existing between the United States of America and Canada, and of the political questions from time to time requiring adjustment between the Dominion and the neighboring Republic, it would tend to the advancement of the interests and the promotion of a better understanding between the two countries were a representative appointed by the Government of the Dominion, subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Imperial advisers, and attached to the staff of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, specially charged to watch, guard, and represent the interests of Canada."

Mr. Casey, moving for a return of all correspondence concerning the appointment of W. Ingram as Collector of Customs at St. Thomas, Ont., claimed that he had only secured the place by rendering particular assistance to his brother, the member for West Elgin.

Mr. Ingram warmly defended the appointment of his brother. It illbbecame the hon. gentleman to make the charges he had done, and to pursue the tactics which were discreditable to himself.

Mr. Costigan moved the second reading of an Act to amend the Inland Revenue Act.

Mr. Laurier said the House would expect some explanation of this measure. It was simply stated that the time was to apply to the Northwest territory, and give no reason for the change. It would appear that it removed the restrictions which have been imposed on the Northwest territories with regard to the sale of liquor.

Sir John Thompson pointed out that the Act of last year gave the Northwest Legislature power to repeal restrictory clauses of the Northwest Territories Act, and in accordance therewith that Legislature had passed an Act repealing the said provisions and substituting a license system.

On the item cattle quarantine, $15,000,

Mr. Carling, replying to Mr. Lister, explained that Mr. McEachern, V. S., to whom $1,500 was paid last year, was engaged by the Government, and that this sum was paid for his services as chief veterinary inspector. All his time was not taken by the Government.

Mr. Landerkin asked what was the number of inmates in the lazaretto at Tracadie.

Mr. Carling—There are 22 inmates, about the same as last year.

On the item of 400,000 for the Soulanges Canal.

Mr. Mills (Bothwell) said it did seem extraordinary that this canal should be built on the north side of the river when we already had one on the south. It seemed to him a waste of public money, especially considering our high rate of taxation and the immense expenditure the country was put to in other ways. He thought we were pursuing a very unwise course.

Mr. Haggart said years ago it was decided to deepen the canals. The reason it was decided to build the new canal was because it was found it would be more expensive to deepen the canal on the south side to a depth of 14 feet than to build the new one. The total money expended in canal deepening was $27,475,000, and to complete the system, including the Sault canal, there was yet to be expended $15,000,000.

On the item of $74,000 for the Trent canal,

Sir Richard Cartwright asked what the Government meant to do in future about these canals.

Mr. Haggart said the policy of the Government was the same as it always was. The reason a larger amount was not asked for was because the revenue would not justify it at present.

Mr. Bowell, resuming the debate on Mr. Edgar's motion, said he did not intend to enter very fully into this question, which reflected upon a member of the House. It had been pointed out that the charges were not of that definite character they should be when a man's reputation, and that man a Minister of the Crown, was at stake. It was stated by the Postmaster-General that he was prepared not only to meet the charges, but was anxious to have an investigation into his conduct so far as it related to any transaction as a Minister of the Crown in his connection with the parties who constructed the railways in question. The Government did not desire to shirk any responsibility involving the character of a Minister of the Crown. He would move an amendment which would, he thought, meet with the approval of the House and of the country:

That from the aforesaid statements made by James D. Edgar, and comments and argument thereon by Hon. David Mills, Sir Richard Cartwright and Mr. Edgar from their places in this House, it appears that it was the intention of Mr. Edgar by such statement to charge Sir A. P. Caron, a member of the House and a member of the Privy Council of Canada, with grave offences and dereliction of duty, notwithstanding that said statements as first recited did not make any definite or precise charges against him; that the following charges and allegations are indicated by the statements of James D. Edgar and comments thereon by the members aforesaid as intended to be made in the first statement, namely, (1) that during each of the years 1882 to 1891 inclusive the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway Co. received by way of bonus from the Dominion subsidies amounting in the aggregate to upwards of $1,000,000, which subsidies were voted by Parliament upon recommendation of Ministers of the Crown. (2) That during the whole of the said period Sir A. P. Caron was and still is a member of the Government, and one of Her Ma'esty's Privy Councilors for Canada, and also a member of the House of Commons since 1882. (3) That during the said period and while the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway was being constructed in part by means of the said subsidies Sir A. P. Caron knowingly aided and participated in diverting the said subsidies from the purpose for which they were granted by receiving for election purposes from the railway company, or construction company, or one of them, or from H. J. Beemer, manager or director of the said railway company, large sums of money out of the said subsidies, and out of moneys raised upon the credit of the same, and also during the said period did further knowingly so aid and participate by obtaining from the said companies or one of them payments out of the said subsidies, and out of the moneys raised by the said companies, or one of them, or on the credit of the same, large sums of money for election purposes, and to aid in the election of the said Sir A. P. Caron and other members of the House, and supporters of the Government of which he was a member. (4) That after some of the last mentioned payments were so obtained and made the said Sir A. P. Caron, in consideration thereof, corruptly aided and assisted the said company to obtain further subsidies from the Dominion Parliament. (5) That since the 6th October, '78, the Temiscouata Railway Company received various subsidies from the Dominion, amounting in all to about $640,000, and that Sir A. P. Caron knowingly aided and participated in diverting the said subsidies from the purpose for which they were granted by receiving from the said company large sums of money out of the said subsidies or out of the moneys raised on the credit of the same, and also during the said period by obtaining payments from the said company or out of the moneys raised by payments of the same to aid in his election as a member of the House of Commons, and in the election of other persons as members of the House. (6) That, after some of the last-mentioned payments were so obtained and made, the said Sir A. P. Caron, in consideration thereof, corruptly aided and assisted the said company to obtain further and other subsidies from Parliament. (7) That the said Sir A. P. Caron, as a member of the Government, did recommend public moneys for the purpose of corrupting the electorate of Canada, to wit; a portion of the moneys voted for subsidies as before stated. (8) That the Crown, having been advised to appropriate large sums of public money for the purposes towit; of the said subsidies, such moneys or a portion of them were diverted from the purposes for which they were so appropriated and placed in the hands of the said Sir A. P. Caron for the purpose of corrupting the electors of a certain portion of Canada. (9) That the said Sir A. P. Caron had an understanding that the said subsidies, or some of them, so voted or recommended, with one or more of the railway companies participating in the said appropriation or with some person or persons interested in the said appropriations, that the moneys so appropriated by Parliament or a portion of it should go to him. (10) That the said Sir A. P. Caron entered into a corrupt conspiracy with the said companies or one or more of them. That it is the opinion of this House it is expedient that an inquiry be made, so as the truth or falsity of the allegations be ascertained, and numbered one to ten, being the allegations and charges included in the original statement of Mr. Edgar and those made in the course of debate thereon, and for that purpose this House deems it proper and convenient that the evidence relating to such allegations and charges should be made by one or more commissioners, to be appointed under chap. 114 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, and having all the force mentioned therein, and that such evidence should be laid before the House when completed.

The proposal to refer the charges to a commission named by the Government was greeted with loud Opposition laughter.

Sir Richard Cartwright said one thing was very clear, and that was the pitiable position to which the Ministry were reduced on the present occasion, because it was quite plain that they intended to refuse any investigation until they were compelled to do so by pressure from within the party or from opinion expressed throughout the country. If the Minister of Justice's name would not live for anything else, it would live like that of a former judge, who deemed it proper that an accused person might be allowed to substitute an entirely new set of charges from those originally preferred, and that the accused should select their own judge. It will be tidings of comfort and joy to that much abused set of persons, the criminal classes. In the Pacific Scandal, when the charges were made against Sir John Macdonald, although he refused a committee, he did not attempt to vary or alter the charges made. When did the Government propose that this commission should sit? They would have no right to call the members of this House before a commission appointed by themselves whenever they chose. The members of this House were responsible to this House alone. He could not believe the people of Canada had sunk so low as to tolerate an interference with the prerogatives of the people. For his part he would refuse to appear before such a commission and answer for anything he had said from his seat in Parliament. He moved this amendment to the amendment:

That all the words of the amendment be left out and the following added to the original motion: That this House refuses to allow the investigation into the charges preferred by J. D. Edgar, a member of this House in his place in the House, against Sir Adolphe P. Caron, also a member thereof, to be removed from the control of Parliament and to be committed to one or more commissioners, to be appointed upon the recommendation of said Sir Adolphe P. Caron and his colleagues. That this House views with repugnance the proposition to permit the person accused to vary and alter the charges preferred against him, instead thereof to substitute a new set of charges drawn up by himself and his colleagues, and that such a demand, no less than the proposal that the said charges should likewise be investigated by persons to be appointed by himself and his colleagues, is entirely unprecedented and opposed to parliamentary law and usage, as settled by the Parliament of the Mother Country, is a violation of the privileges of the members of this House, and is designed to elude and defeat the ends of justice.

Mr. Edgar said that he was hardly prepared to hear the res