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His Little Girl

(Continued from page 18.)

(Continued f woman herself had not appeared above the rim of his horizon, and in all his eight and twenty years he had hitherto seen no one who had more than temporarily quickened his pulses or his heart beats. But to-day, he smiled a little, as he thought of it, to-day, a woman's face had produced upon him quite an unusual impression, and whilst he threaded his way along the Knightsbridge pavement, he mentally reproduced for himself feature after feature which had so impressed him.

"I want to introduce you to Miss Rosa Muller," Mrs. Cardew had said, leading him up to a tall girl who stood a little apart, near the folding doors of the inner drawing-room, "she has come to England to be near her uncle who is a friend of ours. And I only wish," here the hostess had flashed a charming smile first at the girl, and then at the man, "I only wish I could speak Miss Muller's language a quarter as well as she can speak ours."

"Miss Muller's language presumably being German?" Berners answered, as he bowed to the tall girl, and noted with observing glance how deeply blue were her eyes, and what a delicious smile parted her well-cut lips.

"German," she answered, in a low voice, whose tones pleased his fastidious ear, "though I, myself, am quite cosmopolitan. I call myself of no nation. I belong everywhere." She spoke almost faultless English, the faintest

cosmopolitan. I call myself of no nation. I belong everywhere." She spoke almost faultless English, the faintest possible accent only adding piquancy to her speech, and Berners noticed that her laugh held in it the same low, musical quality as her voice. Although possessed of no actual beauty, and assuredly vying in no single particular with the beautiful daughter of the house, there was about the young forwith the beautiful daughter of the house, there was about the young foreigner a haunting charm which made an extraordinary appeal to Berners. She talked easily and well; she was neither gauche nor forward; and those deep blue eyes of hers met his with a frankness that was essentially woman-ly and with no trace of the country. ly, and with no trace of the coquette. Her conversation was as frank as her manner. Berners quickly learnt that manner. Berners quickly learnt that she had lived at various times in most of the European capitals; that she was an orphan, whose nearest relative, an uncle, was now in London in the Diplomatic service, hence her presence in the metropolis.

"N OT that I live with my uncle," she added. "He has always been accustomed to bachelor existence; a niece would be an encumbrance, and so I am in a hotel with my companion—who is not here to-day. My uncle is not here either, I have come alone to Mrs. Cardew who is a friend of his. You know," her blue eyes smiled enchantingly into his, "I have always wished Providence had made me an Englishwoman. Englishwomen are the freest, the most charming, and I think, the happiest in the world."

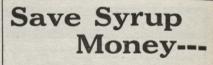
charming, and I think, the happiest in the world."

Berners recalled these words now, and, looking through the railings of the Green Park at the freshness of trees and grass, still unspoiled by summer dust, he smiled as he reflected fancifully that the girl he had just left, possessed much of the freshness and sweetness we associate with early summer. He found himself resolving to cultivate the Cardews; he wished that Miss Muller's uncle had been of the party today, that he might have made his acquaintance, and thereby laid up for himself possibilities of meeting his niece again, and he compared Rosa with the young ladies of Stockley, to the obvious and total disadvantage of all those estimable young people. During dinner, at which a friend joined him, those estimable young people. During dinner, at which a friend joined him, his thoughts were perforce wrenched away from the events of the afternoon, to a discussion of a recent surgical to a discussion of a recent surgical discovery, and to genial gossip anent his own and his friend's old hospital. But he did not linger long in the club after dinner, and nine o'clock was striking in Big Ben's sonorous notes as he walked across St. Jame's Park and turned in the direction. walked across St. Jame's Park and turned in the direction of the river. He was in a mood for walking, and for walking fast and far. He had more than half a mind, indeed, to tramp the whole distance to Stockley, but decidwhole distance to Stockley, but deciding against this, he determined to make

for one of the South London stations, on the line, and take the train from there instead of at a terminus. The night was very sultry, and heavy clouds night was very sultry, and heavy clouds rolling up from the north seemed to presage a thunderstorm, but as yet there was no sign of rain. Berners' quick walk slackened to a considerably slower pace as the sultriness increased, and when he found himself in some of the less frequented thoroughfares on the Surrey side of the river he took off his the less frequented thoroughfares on the Surrey side of the river, he took off his hat and allowed what little air there was to play upon his bare head. He had been walking for some time, without paying any close attention to his whereabouts, taking the right turnings almost mechanically, and allowing his thoughts to bring back to him all the conversation of the afternoon, but all at once he roused himself from his abstraction to realize that he was in a at once he roused himself from his abstraction to realize that he was in a narrow, dingy street, entirely unknown to him, and that in his absorption he had missed his way. He glanced at the sordid houses, whose dark and forbidding appearance seemed to indicate that the neighbourhood was a poor one, and the faces of the few passers-by who slouched past him, did not give him a reassuring idea of the character of the inhabitants. He stopped an evillooking man, who eyed him askance, and asked civilly to be directed back into the main thoroughfare from which he had unconsciously drifted. The man gri ad unconsciously drifted. The scowled at him, but answered gruffly:

'TAKE the first turn on the left, Graham Street, follow it right along, that's your way." The night was growing rapidly darker; those rolling clouds from the north had spread over the sky, and as Berners, following his guide's direction, turned to the left, a few large drops of rain fell on his head. Putting on his hat, he began to wishfirst, that he had not indulged in his ridiculous wish to walk an unnecessary number of miles; secondly, that he had not allowed his absence of mind to lead him into this tangle of unknown and unsavoury streets, and his footsteps quickened as he realized along what a very narrow and very "mean" street he now walked. The houses on each side struck him as unpleasantly lifeless and silent, the pavement and roadway were "TAKE the first turn on the left, Granow walked. The houses on each side struck him as unpleasantly lifeless and silent, the pavement and roadway were deserted, and even the distant rumble of the great city seemed deadened by the high buildings that nearly shut out the sky. Something in the darkness and the silence sent a little thrill along his nerves, strong man though he was, and quite ungiven to nervousness. He hurried on at a good round pace, oppressed with a vague fancy that out of those silent houses eyes were furtively watching his progress, and he was beginning to speculate how near the end of the street might be, when a sound of wheels broke the all-prevailing stillness, and to his intense surprise a small, well-appointed brougham drove smartly past him, and pulled up at the door of one of the grim buildings on his left. That such a carriage should be driving along such a thoroughfare at all, was in itself astonishing; that it should actually stop before one of the unprepossessing houses added point to the astonishing fact, and Berners found himself involuntarily pausing on the pavement to see who would emerge the astonishing fact, and Berners found himself involuntarily pausing on the pavement to see who would emerge from the brougham. Immediately in front of the house at which it had stopped, a lamp flickered in the now rising wind, and the young doctor saw a tall man emerge from the vehicle, and hold out his hand to help someone else alight. He could not see the man's face, a white muffler was tied round his neck, hiding his mouth and chin, and the soft a white muffler was tied round his neck, a white muffler was tied round his neck, hiding his mouth and chin, and the soft hat he wore was drawn closely over his eyes, so that no part of his features was visible. As the second form sprang lightly from the brougham, Berners saw that it was a woman, slight and graceful, wearing a long cloak, over what was evidently an evening dress, and with black lace covering her hair and drawn close about her face. But as she stood upon the pavement beside her companion, a fresh gust of wind swept up the street blowing aside the lace that covered her head, and for a moment leaving her face fully exposed to the flickering gleams of the lamp





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