

FORGOTTEN, BUT NOT ABSENT.



ABSENT, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN.

### THE CASE OF MR. COGGE.

A CANADIAN COMMOTION IN THREE PARTS AND A HIATUS.

BY W. C. NICHOL.

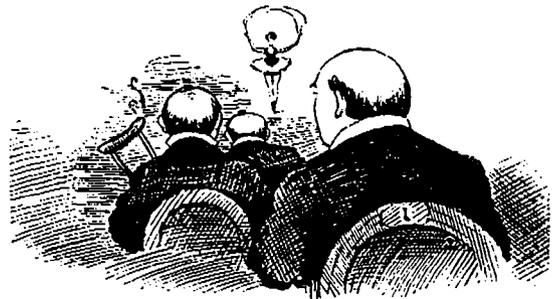
PART I.—(Continued.)

THE agitation reached its height in the Autumn of 1895. Meetings were of daily, almost hourly, occurrence. Press, pulpit and platform deluged the country with opinions, suggestions and ideas. All manner of schemes were proposed and immediately rejected as wholly impracticable. The girls were growing thin and desperate. They wanted to be kissed, and coddled, and loved with a wild, whole-souled ardor which would stop at nothing so that it pleased the sweet object of its affection, but there was no one nigh to kiss, coddle and love consumedly. They became pale and anxious. They were almost afraid to walk down the street, for fear the scoffers would jeer at them and contemptuously refer to them as old maids. Affairs had reached this pitiable stage, when Sir John A. Macdonald, who was, of course, Premier of the Dominion, came to his country's rescue, and, carrying out the policy of Protection which his Government favored, suggested that American girls be added to the list of dutiable articles. "We must," said Sir John, in speaking of the proposition, "encourage home producers as against foreign manufacturers, and the alarming importation of American girls is seriously interfering with the native industry. This, gentlemen, must not be allowed. We must encourage and develop our own institutions, and build up the country from our own resources. Let us give our girls a show. The proportion at present is twelve marriageable girls to every unmarried man, and I fancy all of you who are fathers will agree with me in thinking that this state of affairs is reprehensible and bad for the girls, the country and ourselves." There was some objection to the proposal, because it would debar

all American women from even visiting in Canada, but it was seen to be the only means of effecting the object sought, and in the end a protective duty was put on. It was decided that in future no American woman could come into Canada unless a duty of \$100 for each pound of her weight be paid by her or on her behalf; and 100 pounds was fixed as the minimum weight. If the girl weighed less than that, she was to be registered as weighing a hundred pounds, and the duty collected accordingly. The nation applauded Sir John, the women worshipped him, and the country settled once more into its normal condition of peace.

### PART II.

Early in the Spring, two years preceding the events recorded above, the wife of Mr. Philip Cogge, merchant, Toronto, died from an attack of pneumonia. At the time of Mrs. Cogge's death, her husband had reached his forty-second year. He was a plump and prosperous-looking gentleman, with a florid face, a benign smile, and an air of being quite satisfied with himself and the world at large. He had been a good, affectionate husband, kind, considerate and tender, and at the last moment Mrs. Cogge had clasped his hand lovingly, and looked up at him with fast-dimming eyes which yet seemed to send him a message of thanks for the life he had made happy. But Mrs. Cogge had never known of certain circumstances in the far past, in which her husband, herself and another, of whom she had never heard, had played the leading parts. When Mr. Cogge had passed his twenty-fourth year, he had fallen desperately in love with a brown-haired, blue-eyed maiden, many years his junior. Mr. Cogge was at that time a clerk in a wholesale house, and his salary was the munificent one of \$8 a week. On this, it is perhaps unnecessary to say, Mr. Cogge was quite unable to marry. The brown-haired, blue-eyed maiden, Bella Asherton by name, was also very poor, so that their prospects were not of the most roseate and alluring description. They became engaged, however, and indulged in dreams of a future golden and blissful. But these dreams were only dreams. Mr. Cogge was not faithful to the ardent vows and impassioned sentiments which are familiar to every lover, and entirely unnecessary to chronicle here. About a year after their engagement, he made the acquaintance of a certain Miss Belinda Bushton, who was not only good to look upon, attractive in face, form and manner, but had a snug little



A MEAN TRICK.

OLD Mr. Baldwin is in an ill humor. He went to the theatre to witness the spectacular performance of the "Nymphs of Arcadia," and, being slightly deaf, you know, wished for a seat as near the stage as possible. "What row can you give me a seat on?" he asked of the man in the box-office. "First row," answered the ticket seller. "Good," said Mr. Baldwin. But when he got in he found that his ticket called for a seat on the first row from the entrance. Mr. B. considers that a mighty mean trick to play an old man.