### The Countess

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The countess's hand closed sharply on the bracelet which she had taken. and a look came into her face which almost startled Madge. It seemed to her as if the expression of pride and hauteur had given place for an instant to one akin to fear.

"You found it at-Mrs. Hooper's!" she said, slowly, and with her gray keen scrutiny. "When?"

"This morning," replied Madge. "Irene and I went there, and Irene saw the bracelet lying on the floor." chair. Madge obeyed, and the count-The countess turned the bracelet over ess, unlocking a cabinet, took a leathin her hand as if she were examining er-covered box from it, and raising it, and Madge went on: "Mrs. Hoop- the lid, took out several articles of er thought that you must have drop- jewelry and laid them on the table. ped it when you were there the other Madge looked on as chains, and day," she said. As she spoke the pendants, and diamond liaras, and words, she flushed, for she wondered sparkling rings, and heavy bracelets the vision of loveliness; but Madge whether the countess would correct formed a glittering heap. her and say, "Not the other day, but

last night." The countess looked up at her

It is of no consequence . Did you and the countess, with halflowered said Madge, laconically. did you stay long at Mrs. Hooper's 77 lids, watched her Madge took some As she asked the question, she put the of the things up and looked at them. a pendant of brilliants matching the bracelet round her wrist, but in at- Then she put them down and drew wreath, and put it round Madge's tempting to fasten it she let it fall, back.

Let me put it on for you, madame," anything there you like?" she said, naturally enough. The countess held out her arm, and Madge from her face, shook her head. the hand tremble, and she feared that she said-"too beautiful and unsuit-"Have I done it properly, madame?" she said, gently.

The Countess nodded.

There was a moment's silence, and Madge was moving away, when the Countess stopped her with a gesture. "Have you all that you want-in

your room, I mean?" she said, a trifle less coldly than before.

"Oh, yes, indeed!" replied Madge, quickly. "More than I want. I have not thanked your ladyship before, because " She paused.

"Because what?" said the countess without raising her eyes.

"Because I was afraid of troubling" you," said Madge, her sweet voice very

"You were afraid of me, is not that so," said the countess.

Madge remained silent.

"Poor girl! I pity you!" said the countess, but with very little pity in ly, and with no longer any admira-

"Yes, I pity you," repeated the please choose the plainest and least be afraid of me. What is done can

"Ah, no!" murmured Madge, with a

The Countess looked up at her cur- the ball, wear this." iously. There was another pause and Madge was again about to move away hand when the countess said:

when he was in London?"

prised, "Why should he? I did not want any: besides-" She stopped. "You were going to say he had no money," said the countess. "I notic- you have it now." ed last night that you wore no ornaments. Come with me."

Almost to surprised to be frighteneyes fixed upon Madge with a kind of ed, Madge followed her out of the reluctant admiration. room and up the staircase, and into the countess's own room.

"Sit down," she said, pointing to a

"Now," said the countess, "choose what you please." Madge got up and stood before the

things, a warm flush on her face, her her immovability. "I'must have done so," she said, eyes glowing with girlish admiration,

> "Well?" said the countess. "Is there Madge, with all the color faded mine."

snapped the bracelet on. She felt "They are too beautiful, madame,"

The countess looked at her cur-

"Well?" said the countess.

the courage as she proceeded.

asked. "I thought that gyps-" She stopped, but Madge raised her eyes

temptuous curiosity. "That we gypsies were fond of

Madge took the rings indifferently, and selected one set with pearls and bright and glittering ornments? So we are, madame, and I like them well

enough. But these are too grand and "You are right," said the countess, too costly. Besides—" She paused with surprise. "I thought you would enough. But these are too grand and "Why do you offer to give me some more color in them."

of these things?" said Madge, gather-Madge made no response, and the "Because you have none of your own, and you are-my son's wife. The

absence of jewelry would cause remark. Do you not understand?" Madge sighed. "Yes," she said; "I understand." She glanced at the jewels indifferentyou like, madame," she said, "But Have you anything to put them in?" The countess looked at her down-

cast face with increased curiosity. omething more suitable."

articles in the drawer, and one of them fell to the ground.

Madge went and picked it up, and enconsciously glanced at it. It was a liature about the size of the pain of the hand, and set round with turquois. As she glanced at it, Madge was conscious of a strange sensal of recognition. It seemed to her that the portrait was like some one she had seen in life-like, yet unlikethe shadow of a remembrance. She stood looking at the face, trying to recall the person whom it resembled make the effort, for the counters, look-ing up, saw the thing in her hand, and going quickly to her, took it from her

(to be continued.) \*

Madge shook her head. Why should I? If you had given them

to me because you liked me, I should ears-"I should have been very glad. the moment I thought, I hoped-"

The countess caught her under-lip rith her teeth, and remained silent

"You are a strange girl," she said, coldly, and yet with an undercurrent of admiration and respect in her tones. "Most women in your place would have accepted the things and

cared little why they were given." "Would they?" said Madge, simply and sadly, "I am not like that, madame;" and she turned away. "Stop, please!" said the countess.

She took up a diamond tiara, "Take this. You must wear diamonds at Madge took the costly gems.

"Did my son buy you any jewelry how to put it on, madame," she said, with a kind of proud humility that "No madame," replied Madge, sur- became her as well as any diamonds

> "Wind you hair in a coil higher than Madge hesitated a moment then

she obeyed, The countess watched her with a

"Irene is right," she said. "You have beautiful hair."

Madge looked straight before her, and made no response; and when the thick waves were twined in the tiars in its place. It flashed and sparkled against the soft raven hair like so many fire-flies, and the countess's eyes seemed to melt beneath remained cold and impassive,

"Do you not admire them?" asked the countess, evidently astonished at

"They are very beautiful, madame,"

neck.

"It is only your face that is brown," she said. "Your skin is as white as

Madge smiled sadly, Evidently the countess expected her to have the hide of a negress. "Now take these rings," she said.

"Choose which you think will go best with the other ornaments." She watched Madge closely, with

a proud, half-but only half-con-

"You are right." said the countess.

have chosen the rubies. They have

countess placed the ring with the ruby and one or two others aside. will give you these, and some plainer ornaments to wear on ordinary occasions," she said. As she spoke, she went to a drawer in the bureau and took out some jewelry of a more simple description, and placed them with those which Madge had taken off. "There," she said, "take them to your room. They are valuable, so do not leave them about,

"My large box," said Madge. "That is too big, I will give you

She went to the bureau again, and took out a morocco-covered jewelcase. As she did she lifted one or two

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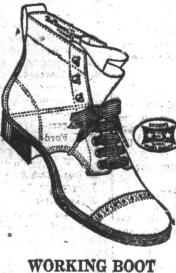
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ligious memory which he was very should be forgotten. book when he was writing the "Edin-

form that he troubled to verify his

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fond of exercising in conversation. Lord Birkenhead gave a useful lead Macaulay, too, had so exact a recol- in this direction not long ago, when

lection of everything he ever read that he confessed that he would be quite I once knew an eminent stockbroker he scarcely had use for a reference unable, if called upon, to pass the who could seldom remember his teleexamination for a "call" to the Bar; phone number and who sometimes burg Review" essays. It was only he also expressed his belief that, when they were issued in volume should the Archbishop of Canterbury be required to qualify again for or-"ploughed."

This only means, of course, that hese two eminent men have forgotten most of the useless knowledge with which they were crammed when they some lunch faced the examiners, and have exchanged it for something more ser-

Most of the learning that we a quire laboriously at school and col lege may be scrapped with advantage That is not to say that our educa-

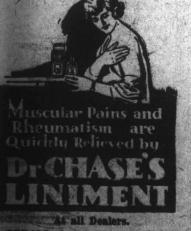
tion served no useful purpose. But in the world of affairs each man and woman must choose what is the seful knowledge to cultivate. It said of the late King Edward that he never forgot a face or a name, and was able on the instant to recall any was able on the instant to recall body who had previously been pented to him. That is a princely a bute, cultivated by all "born to purple," and enjoyed in full mean by our present king and by Prince of Wales.

for faces and names is also of enor-

ge which every man in a profession a trade must have at his fingers ds. It is the most important of all forgot his home address. But he was

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