



COUNTESS CASSINI.

The Accomplished Niece of the Russian Ambassador.

One of the unmarried women in diplomatic circles at Washington is the Countess Marguerite Cassini, the accomplished niece of the Russian ambassador, who is a countess in her own right, not by heredity, but by special grace of the czar, and a curious story is told of the manner in which she won her title.

It was when Count Cassini had his fateful conference with Li Hung Chang at Peking, long before the Boxer trouble. The count's interpreter was away, for Li's call was unexpected, and as the Chinese statesman could not speak Russian and the Russian diplomat did not understand Chinese the conference came to a deadlock. The count's niece, who had picked up some



COUNTESS MARGUERITE CASSINI.

thing of the language, stepped into the breach, and the affair was arranged to the satisfaction of both parties.

The Chinese empress loved her with presents, the czar's government made a note of the service performed, and when there was a question a couple of years ago of the young lady's presence at Washington, where the count was then ambassador, the czar himself confounded her rivals by making her a countess. This was something like rapid promotion for the lady, but she bore her honors modestly and with a grace that won all who met her. In addition to her knowledge of Chinese Countess Cassini is a mistress of many languages and is as well a clever artist, some of her miniature work commanding the highest praise from critics.

The China Closet.

Well arranged and full of handsome wares, a china closet is among the best ornaments of a dining room. Tint the walls to match the general tone of the room or else cover them with a very thin hardwood or veneer accurately fitted and tacked in place with the smallest size brads. Varnish the veneer and keep clean by weekly wiping with a soft cloth wrung very dry out of tepid water.

Leave the shelf surfaces plain and cover them with linen cut to fit and ornament with a line of drawn work. Heavy cutlery's linen is best, though the soft toned art linens may be effectively used. Set one shelf apart for glasses, preferably the upper one. Cut the linen for it twice the shelf width, hem it all around, then double it. Thus there is a light pad all over the shelf. It can be kept as fresh as the single covers and will safeguard expensive glass. Big pieces of cut glass, especially punch or salad bowls, may break under the jar of setting down upon a hard surface. More than that, they have been known to break from vibration due to heavy street traffic close about the house. Jarring of any kind indeed may induce a fracture. The linen pads stop all this. It is, moreover, a fit and dainty base for the crystal. Never set anything inside a piece of cut glass. To do so is to invite calamity.

Fuchsia Entries.

A useful and pretty gift and one easily made is a fuchsia entry. Take a muslin bag about two inches long and about half as thick and fill with emery powder. Then cut a small strip of crimson felt, about three inches long and two and one-half wide. Slash it up about an inch and trim the four divisions into festoons of the long, pointed fuchsia petals. Fasten a ball of cotton batting to the bottom of the emery bag and cut out a piece of violet colored felt three inches long and a trifle more than an inch wide. Fashion the ball shaped petals for the bottom of the flower from this, joining them together at the top of the piece of felt. Wind this strip around the small ball of cotton and wind the red petals around the emery bag, letting their pointed ends hang over the ball in the way the natural fuchsia is formed. Fasten a piece of thin wire to the flower and wind it with a narrow green ribbon for a stem. Put a tiny ball of green for a calyx where the stem joins the emery bag. This ball can be made of the green ribbon, wound several times around the stem and "tacked" with a neat stitch or two of green sewing silk. Join two of these fuchsia stems together with a bow of violet ribbon and they will be ready for the sewing basket, to hang on the wall of the sewing room.

Intelligence and Trained Skill. Beauty and health and womanliness are some of their potency from being trained with intelligence and trained skill, and, if the woman holds her personal independence, she holds always a certain power over the errant wings of love. Men do not soon tire of what he does not wholly own. No step in life

Five thousand soldiers have been raised by the chiefs of the Clan Fraser for their sovereign's service since 1757.

is more important to personal happiness or to the progress of the race than right marriage, and no step is more uncertain. Our common saying that "marriage is a lottery" shows this. Often and often fine women draw blanks by mating with inferior or evil men, and as often fine men are united with weak, silly or vicious women. If women were trained to professions, it would better the chances of marriage in two ways—by improving the average in women and by enabling them to bear up against the possibly bad men. The business sense gained in any kind of useful work in the world (work in the home does not teach women business sense—no, not in 10,000 years) makes a woman better able to judge a man before she marries him and better able to get on with him afterward. It also—and this, too, is important—makes her able to get on with herself and the rest of the world.—Charlotte Perkins Gilman in Success.

Superfluous Hair. The removal of superfluous hair by electricity is certain of success. It is, however, somewhat painful and taxes to the utmost the endurance of both the patient and the physician. A fine needle or jeweler's brooch connected with the negative pole of a galvanic battery is introduced deep into the hair follicle, following the direction of the hair. The patient now closes the current by touching a sponge connected with the negative pole. Twenty to thirty seconds suffice to allow the caustic alkali which forms around the needle while the current is closed to destroy that part of the skin whence the hair develops. Fifty or more hairs may be removed at one sitting, and if the operation be performed skillfully very few return. Warts, moles and birthmarks can be removed in the same manner.

A Brave Russian Woman. A Russian woman, Eugenie de Meyer, has undertaken the arduous work of reclaiming the convicts at the penal settlement of Saghalian, where only the worst types of criminals are sent. The zarina is keenly interested in this work of her young subject and is taking all pains to have the work continue. Eight thousand murderers are among the convicts, and this brave Russian woman lives among them entirely unprotected save for the courtesy shown her by officials in charge. It is said that the conditions of life at this settlement are such that even the keepers become brutalized through association with so hardened a set of criminals.

Three Clubwomen. In a village lived three women who were asked to join a woman's club. "Alas," said the first woman, "I have lived but twenty years, and I have read but few books save those of a frivolous character. I do not know enough to join a woman's club." "But I," said the second woman, "have lived twenty-five years, and I have read Ruskin and Emerson and much of Browning. I know enough to join a woman's club."

To Blanch Parsley. Only a good cook realizes that chopped parsley for soup or any sauce must be blanched. This produces a bright green instead of a dull green. The best method is to place the parsley in a strainer and dip it for a few seconds in fast boiling water in which there is a squeeze of soda, then squeeze dry in the corner of a clean cloth and chop finely. Those who try this method will at once realize the improvement it is both to taste and color of the parsley.

Violet Perfume. A pleasant violet scent is easily made withorris root and spirit of wine. Cut half an ounce of orris root into little pieces, put it in a bottle and pour over it an ounce of spirit. Cork tightly and leave for about a week. A few drops of this on a handkerchief will have a smell of the sweetest and freshest violets.

A Dress Elnet. The girl with the too slender figure must have her clothes fitted in a shapey fashion, but loosely, that she may seem to fill them out, and the stout girl should always have her belt and waist trimmings point downward and should never wear figured materials of any kind.

White Enamelled Furniture. To keep white enamelled furniture in condition sponge occasionally with warm water and white castile soap, dry it and then apply a little whitening with a tanned cloth slightly dampened. When dry, wipe off the whitening and polish with a soft cloth or chamouis.

To Make a Filter. An excellent filter can be made from a common flowerpot. Close the opening with a sponge, then put in an inch thick layer of powdered charcoal, an inch layer of silver sand, two inches of gravel and small stones. Table mats of embroidered linen have a lining slashed in the center through which an interlining of asbestos is introduced, a suggestion for table mats of home manufacture.

Young women are employed as ushers in the Edinburgh theaters.

IN THE SENATE GALLERY

By A. H. JOHNSTON

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Vulgarity, the king of the lobby was and is supposed to deal in money—crisp banknotes of a denomination large enough that a number may be carried in the pocket without bulging, and yet may be passed over the counter by a representative of small resources without attracting attention. This is all very vulgar, and not here to be discussed. Certain it is that the king of the lobby never so fully realized until that day that his business lay not with banknotes in the analysis, but with subtle undercurrents of a human soul that no plummet fathoms.

He had spent—never mind, the figures were nowhere set down—but he had spent money actually and had sweat blood figuratively to pass the canal bill. The canal bill was to come to a final vote within fifteen minutes, and if a coin had been tossed up he would have held even money on heads or tails. As he looked out over the big hall, swinging a fine nez idly, not a muscle of his strong face twitched. His intelligent eyes narrowed to two cunning predatory slits, his glance fitting from the pink and white face of a girl in the gallery to the gray sprinkled head of a man who sat at a desk well forward in the room below.

Two persons perhaps in the assembly knew how the vote would turn, he thought. One of these was the girl and the other the man. On second thought the king of the lobby revised his opinion. The girl did not know, for Archibald, with the banknotes burning in a stuffy envelope in the inside pocket of his coat, could not have told her. Or if he banknotes were even now on their way back to the king of the lobby Archibald was still not the man to have told her. Archibald did not pose, what-ever he did. And at thirty and eight a politician and a bachelor does not get himself engaged to a girl for the purpose of talking statecraft with her, and perhaps not even questions of ethics.

This is the way that matters stood, as far as the king of the lobby could know. The oldest senator, and the memories of some of them went back to the days when old Dick Yates, the war governor, propped a refractory legislature and fitted out regiments at the expense of his own pocket, could not recollect a measure that had provoked as much heat as the canal bill. It was a bill about which one honest man might hold an opinion diametrically opposed to the opinion of another honest man, and as every one knows, such was the hue and cry that by the time the bill had passed the lower house and had reached the senate even its strong supporters were afraid to vote for it. At this juncture the men of money behind the bill, being also men of graft, came to an understanding with the lobby.

The king of the lobby, according to his custom, wrote down on a sheet of paper the names of all the honest men who were reckoned upon to vote against the bill, on another sheet the names of the honest men who would vote for it, and still on a third sheet he wrote the names of the "wabbler" and the "sell-ers." He employed plausible men to convince the "wabbler" and dispatched cunning lieutenants who bought the "sell-ers." All these names he added to the list of the canal bill's backers, and yet three names of the requisite number were lacking. He got two from the other side—no matter how. Then, as the days went on and the third was not landed, the lobby king, silent and patient and conservative, had given no inkling of the way that he intended to cast his vote. But Archibald was a man of character, so they said, and the most timid were never afraid to peep as Archibald peeped.

The king of the lobby heard things—stories of debts, and of the love affair that was gossip, and being a lobby king he saw a desperate chance and resolved to play it. It was not the business of the lobby king to deal in ethics, which in the long run every man must attend to for himself. So, late in the past evening, Archibald had been informed in the most delicate way that friends of the measure were deeply grateful to him for the vote which he intended to cast in their favor. As a trifling return a very small proportion of the about to be increased dividends of the canal company were transferred to him in a plain brown envelope by the hands of a messenger. The lobby king was accustomed to suspense, but it was a matter of some concern to him as the clerk stood up to read the long legal title of the bill that afternoon as to just what disposition had been made of the brown envelope.

Archibald sat composedly at his desk in the senate writing letters. Or, perhaps, he only pretended to write to conceal a latent nervousness. It is certain that he glanced at the girl in the gallery but once, and then surreptitiously and timidly. For that matter, politician as he was and considerably experienced in the ways of the world, Archibald was always timid in the presence of the girl. She was only nineteen, a slender slip of femininity just out of boarding school, but she had taught Archibald a great many things, or at least he thought that she had, and it is such the same. He did not defer to her judgment precisely, but he shifted his point of view to meet her sentiments. For example, the

Maria Schommer, a St. Louis woman unable to read or write, died there the other day, leaving an estate valued at \$200,000.

girl did not conceive of riding through life in other than a coach and four, as she had ridden thus for nineteen years by the grace of a parent who slaved and another parent who managed. Archibald was poor and latterly sunk into debt, but he accepted the idea of a coach and four as though he had been born to it. And this is not saying that it was thrust upon him. It was merely a part of the divinity that hedged about a handsome girl who spoke of ordinary politicians and their wives as "those people."

Where the money was to come from he had not the least idea, and he found it more tolerable on the whole not to dwell upon ways and means. He simply marked time, and his hair grew whiter and something came up every day to remind him that he was not getting any longer. Ordinarily the coarse blandishments of the lobby had no terrors for Archibald. But when you come to the love of a woman, a nice sentiment about marriage settlements, a mountain of debt and a dizzy sum of money in a plain brown envelope, and the bill is a good one perhaps anyway, and no one cares a copper whether you go up or down, why, that is another thing. Only that morning Archibald had taken the girl for a drive in a fancy cutter behind a pair of thin flanked bays. It might have been chance, but it looked like fate, that as they dashed past the steps of the capitol the lobby king, on the foremost step, had lifted his hat to them.

"Oh, by the way," said the girl, "I'm coming over at 3 to hear the contest on that horrid canal bill. It will be exciting."

"Don't, dear," said Archibald.

"Why?" pouted the girl, whose face shone temptingly pink and white over a gray fur boa.

"Because," stammered Archibald, very intent upon the restive bays, "the struggle is all over. There is nothing left but voting."

When the girl, with a bevy of other ladies, took her seat in the gallery that afternoon, Archibald did not look up at once, but he knew that she was there as well as if he had had eyes in the top of his head.

A strange calmness fell upon the buzzing senate chamber as the clerk's shrill voice took up the first syllable of his reading. Debate had been exhausted in weeks of turmoil, and nothing now remained but the formal ballot of the day. In the nervous tension of the minutes some of the men most interested sat with faces working despite strong efforts at self control some grinned foolishly and others tore up strips of blank paper and folded them with care. Many eyes turned toward Archibald, for by an unaccountable but not unusual telepathy the knowledge had spread that his might be the casting vote, and Archibald's name was the third on the list.

"The clerk will now please call the roll," said the lieutenant governor, rapping smartly on the desk. There was the audible rustling of a leaf, and then the clerk's shrill call.

"John T. Aldridge." Aldridge voted "aye," as it had been conceded that he would.

A DEFLECTED DUEL

By William J. Lampton

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"Why didn't I marry Mirandy Howe?" exclaimed Hiram Hostetter, flushing angrily in response to a taunt from the hostler. "S'pose you ask Mill Burgess over there why he didn't marry her?"

"The little crowd loafing in front of the livery stable in the country town picked up its ears and concentrated its interest on the hostler and Mr. Hostetter. Mr. Burgess in the meantime becoming more intent upon the corn-cob pipe he was laboriously constructing.

"How's that, Mill?" inquired the hostler in the same taunting tone. Evidently he knew more of the inner history of Hostetter and Burgess than the others did, for they were all curiosity and had no comments whatever to make. Both men were considerably past middle age and had come to the town several years before from the hill country, bringing no credentials other than a desire to better their condition and a fair ability to do so. They were sober, honest and industrious, and beyond that their acquaintances took no concern. The hostler in his more prosperous days had made a number of trips into the hill country, buying horses, and had heard some of the legends of that section.

"Oh, you git it out of H if you kin," responded Mr. Burgess, without looking up from his work.

"I never did hear the straight of it," said the hostler, the taunting tone giving place to one of soft persuasion, "and I'm sure these gents ought to know it just for the sake of your reputations. Don't you think so?"

"Well, I ain't objectin'," admitted Mr. Burgess, "if H wants to tell about it."

"You tell it, Mill," pleaded Mr. Hostetter.

"No, you do it, H," insisted Mr. Burgess. "I kin make a better cob pipe than you kin, but you kin outtalk me. You know that's what Mirandy always said."

Mr. Hostetter's face flushed, partly with pride, partly with embarrassment. "If you nry want to know the particulars," he said, "and Mill's willin', I reckon I might as well tell it so's you'll git it correct. You see, me and Mill was both courtin' Mirandy fit to kill and murder, and it was nip and tuck between us fer two year or more. As Mill says, I was a talkin' man than him, but he owned a farm, and that was bein' equal. As fer me and Mill, disrespective of substantial, Mirandy liked me."

"It was a heap sight better lookin' in them days than he is now," explained Mr. Burgess, whose personal beauty was not, to put it mildly, exactly phenomenal.

hand water in it. Anyway we was a hand prompt, fer we meant business didn't we, Mill?"

"Ruther, I reckon," responded Mr. Burgess to Mr. Hostetter's appeal. "An we wasn't no cowards neither."

"Much obleeged, Mill," said Mr. Hostetter gratefully. "As I was sayin', we was there prompt, and the general superintendent ranged us up about twenty feet apart and give orders that we was not to shoot till we got the word 'Fire' after he had counted three and drapped a hat."

"There wasn't no foolishness about it neither," put in Mr. Burgess, "fer me and H seen to it that they didn't put up no job on us by not loadin' the guns right, fer when they handed them to us, sayin' they was all right, we poured a handful of duck shot in each barl, so's there wouldn't be any mistakes."

"Much obleeged, Mill," said Mr. Hostetter. "As I was sayin', we was to shoot at the word, and we stood lookin' at each other, with murder stickin' out all over us till you could a' scraped it off with a chip. When a man is had in love, he's the worst, I reckon. Anyway, we never said a word; no hand-shakin', no nothin'; just cold killin' was what we was there fer, and we was goin' to have it. Our seconds kinder dallied around as if they was waitin' fer somethin', but we stood there waitin' fer the word to shoot."

"It gives me gooseflesh to think about it even this fur off," commented Mr. Burgess, with a shiver.

"Much obleeged, Mill," nodded Mr. Hostetter in full sympathy with his late antagonist. "As I was sayin', we stood there waitin' with our guns cocked and drawn tight to our shoulders, and the general superintendent begun to count one, two, three, and we tuck sight with intent to kill. The superintendent stopped at three, holdin' the hat ready to drap and say 'Fire!' when all at once there was a rustle in the brush, and Mirandy come bouncin' through and landed smack between the muzzles of the guns."

"Dern if I didn't think it was an angel drapped out of the sky," exclaimed Mr. Burgess feelingly.

"Much obleeged, Mill," responded Mr. Hostetter. "As I was sayin', Mirandy landed right betwixt us and throwed up one hand."

"What air you plumb iftin' goin' to do?" says she, lookin' first at one of us and then at t'other.

"Mr. Hostetter shot each other," said the superintendent, bowin' low.

Almost Racked to Pieces.

MISS SADIE E. RUSK, OF RUSKVILLE, ONT.

HAS A TRYING EXPERIENCE.

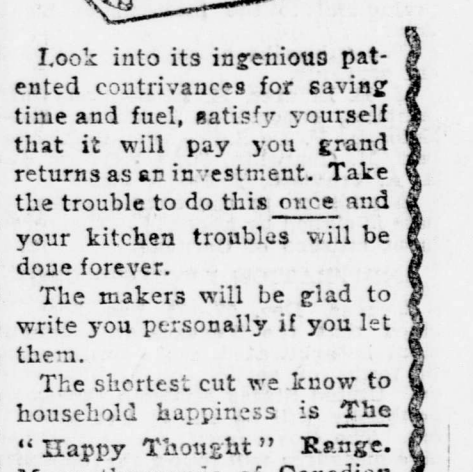
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