

"Grip's" Popular Series of Pirated Romances.

THE WOMAN IN—WHAT.

BY H. COLLIER WILLKINS.

A PRESENTIMENT.

We have all experienced at times a strange presentiment, as if some event still buried in the future, were suddenly revealed to our inner perception. Is this really a prevision, or is it only a fortuitous occurrence—who shall say?

Mrs. Arabella Bosco felt such a sensation thrill shudderingly along her nerves, as she drummed on the window pane, looking out into the street, where amidst the incessant rain, the good little Sunday-school boy hurried home.

Mr. Bosco came in laughing with an unctious laugh, as he fed the tame hedge-hog, that always perched on his shoulder.

"Arabella," he said, "I can read thoughts. Crush those that are now rising in your mind, and remember this; the possessors of secrets are not always the happiest people!"

He passed his short, fat fingers through his lustrous black hair, and went out.

THERE IS A SECRET.

Mr. and Mrs. Bosco lived in an old baronial pile, in a pleasant Midland County. One half only of the house was occupied, the other had long since been shut up, and the housekeeper mysteriously hinted at some good reasons for keeping the commanding door closed.

"There is a secret," mused Mrs. Bosco; "a secret, and I do not know it; Bossie knows it, and I will!"

Again the thrill passed through her nerves, and she thought of her husband's warning words. Well had she stopped there, and saved herself from the long train of after misery; well had she stifled every longing in her soul to know the mystery of the abandoned room; but impulses are even stronger than ideas, and she went on.

She worried herself over the secret, and Bosco seemed to know it, and the tame hedge-hog appeared cognizant of the thoughts passing in her mind.

THE SECRET DISCOVERED.

Bosco had gone to London on secret business. His sympathies were with the Fenian organization, and he had a Sunburst in Indian ink on his right breast.

Now was her opportunity; now would she unravel the secret. She called the old deaf housekeeper, obtained the keys, and started out for the abandoned chamber, followed by the housekeeper, and the giggling servant maid at a distance.

The passage was covered with dust, and hers was the first foot to disturb it for years. Would she turn back? She had still an opportunity; and the warning voice grew loud, and dinned into her ears, "Return!" But woman's obstinacy triumphed. "I will go on," she said, and stamped her foot until the dust rose in a cloud.

The room was reached, the housekeeper scant of breath, sat on the foot of the stairs; the giggling housemaid covered her face with her apron and stood still, afraid of ghosts. Arabella entered, and she felt a cold vapour rise from the crevices of the floor, which for a moment paralyzed her faculties, but she pressed on. An old picture with its face turned to the wall, a wash-stand, without a basin, a chair with three legs—was there nothing more? Yes, a small cluster of drawers. She instinctively felt that there lay the secret. She hesitated, but only for a moment. She opened the first drawer—only an old fine tooth comb; the next drawer contained a worn out tooth brush; but the third drawer—ah! a little piece of paper. She trembled as she unfolded the slip, read with eager haste, gave a great scream, and fell to the dusty floor.

"Loiks, here's maister," said the old housekeeper toddling in; seizing the clutched hand of her mistress, and taking away the folded paper, on which her dim old eyes could discern *Saunders's Hair dye, warranted to produce a lustrous black.*

"Bosco," she cried recovering, "take me away; take me away. Now I know the secret of those Black Locks! Take me away from a horrid wretch who dyes his hair!"

"I will take you away!" he hissed in her ear; "where none shall heed your secret!" The next morning a covered coach drove away with the inquisitive Arabella, the deaf old housekeeper, and the giggling housemaid, to a private madhouse, where they shortly after fell victims to the psychological experiments of the doctor.

On the memorable day of the Fenian rising, a corpse was found in the River Liffey, with a Sunburst on his right breast. It was he.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

(VERY MUCH BOILED DOWN.)

Three Judges sat like three black crows,
Reporters sat beneath in rows,
Witnesses waited in silence there,
For sapient questions from the chair.

A crowd as like as peas to each other
Said they knew nothing of all this pother,
Never heard tell of the famed Pacific,
Save from the *Globe's* remarks prolific;
Didn't know Mc Mullen, didn't know Sir Hugh,
Didn't know black from white, or yellow from blue,
In a word, they were all a know-nothing crew.

Sir John, he stepped up dapper and spry,
With a smile on his lips, and a wink in his eye,
He got cash from Sir Hugh in galore,
The pity it was, he didn't get more;
The Grits were bribing both left and right,
And he bribed too, with all his might.

Next stepped up the famed Sir Hugh, full
Of his little tale; and looked quite rueful.
He spent money, no doubt of that;
To catch the salmon, he threw the sprat;
But Sir John didn't promise to give him the charter,
Though he very well knew it was that he was arter.

Above is condensed from my short-hand diary,
And thus ends the Royal Commission enquiry.

"TO OUR FRIENDS."

I.

Follow John; never know
Go it strong,
He's the man you Tories blow,
Right or wrong.
He's the Hero of your story,
He's the one, has all the glory,
He's your own dear Brother Tory;
Love him long.

II.

Love him long; your *Mighty Brother*,
And his cause.
Truth, he'll never, never smother,
Nor her laws.
His an honest soul and pure.
Money! Dross! of that be sure,
He has told you, "*Then Endure.*"
Grits are straws,

III.

Grits are straws; 'tis so, he tells you;
Do not heed;
Grits are dying at each fell blow;
His the deed.
His the Arm the Mind, the Muscle,
He can stand the toughest tussle;
Courage his—the whiskey bottle
He'll ne'er bleed.

IV.

He'll ne'er bleed, nor cannot die,
So he says.
Gowan, Day, they dare not lie,
And live. Praise
The *Duffer*, that has *duffed* them.
Praise the way I've fooled 'em, stuffed 'em.
Grits are liars! thieves! I've cuffed them;
Such his lays.

V.

Such his lays! and the fools
Still believe.
Leader, Mail; Behold his tools!
They'll retrieve.
Honest soul, and pure they tell;
Honest—see—he's false as Hell!
None are spared: no matter. Well,
Learn and Leave.—"PHIS."