

CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.

gleaming sunnily through her gossamer veil.

The count had himself chosen her costly dress, bringing it as a wedding gift, and Valtie had donned it with childish delight catching up the heavy train, and running down the gloomy stairway, to show him a radiant vision of innocent vanity and joy.

Tomorrow would end her visit beneath the depressing roof of the Grange, and the enchantments of Paris would gladden her heart; she would be a countess with all the world at her feet.

"You should not have allowed Marc to see you in that dress before your wedding," Madame Delvont remarked as, smiling, Valtie suddenly appeared, her cheeks pink as wild roses as she tossed back her veil. "Don't you know that it is considered very unlucky to—"

"What a nonsensical supposition, Pauline! the count angrily interposed, and his eyes fairly blazed as he drew the beautiful little figure towards him. "Are you afraid that I shall bring misfortune into your life, my sweet?" he asked, meeting the soft azure of Valtie's eyes.

She laughed, a little pert turn of her head expressing disdain for Madame's ill-omened comment.

"You are the wonderful magician who can glorify my life with love and happiness dearest Marc," she cried.

And he caught her to his breast with a strange look of pain—pain that was fierce and desperate—on his handsome face.

When she had gone, he turned to Madame Delvont with an ugly scowl.

"Try not to blunder again, Pauline," he said, sternly. "Remember that I wish to keep one side of my double existence hidden from the knowledge of my wife who is guileless as a child. You and I have bungled over that last affair, delaying arrangements unpardonably. The traitor was dangerously left till daylight and to have put Valtie in the east room was the height of recklessness."

"That was Marc's mistake," Madame Delvont replied. "He should have chosen another part of the grounds for the atonement ceremony. Is there any sign of treachery on the part of comrade Nathalie?" she added, with the same slow, guarded utterance.

"Not the slightest."

"Be on your guard, Marc. I am not so convinced of her complete resignation. That girl was devoted to Montague."

"She shall be watched," was the curt response, and he quitted the room.

Pauline Delvont stood motionless where she had remained while talking to him, a baneful light in her glittering eyes.

"If I were to unseal my lips and repeat that warning, she would laugh in her ignorant arrogance and folly. She must take her chance now. The secret of the wood has been unveiled to her, and she has failed to see; she must bear the tie that will bind her to a fate of torment. In time she may become a brilliant accomplice to our plans."

Valtie was not the least apprehensive of the future when, her hand in the count's strong clasp, she heard him repeat those binding words—"With this ring I thee wed."

She was in a sort of dream, taking her vows without fear, scarcely trembling during the solemn ordeal.

As she was leaving the church, however, a singular incident occurred, sending a chill through her, startling her with a vague foreboding of evil.

From one of the shadowy pews someone scattered in her path a handful of white flowers—not fragrant orange blossoms but shrivelled, scentless immortelles.

With a start, Count Lodi flashed a sinister, piercing glance of inquiry across the aisle; but the height of the old oak pew hid the kneeling figure crouched low against the door—hid the vindictive face and flaxen hair of the young girl Valtie would have recognized as the grief-stricken mourner who had rushed, at the sight of her, in frantic terror, up the steep path of the cliff.

After the first little recoil from contact with those bleached death flowers, the pale cheeks of the new bride slightly flushed, and as she trod over them flinchlessly bringing a tender smile to Count Lodi's stern lips.

He made no allusion to this episode; but on their return to the Grange, as the grey horses dashed towards the glades of the wood, Valtie suddenly exclaimed—

"I wonder why those horrid immortelles were thrown at our feet, Marc? Isn't it queer that I should have met a girl on the beach, a day or two ago, who was casting some of the same flowers into the water? What can it mean?"

"Its meaning is a senseless enigma that need not trouble you, my darling," he said, with careless evasion. "Why think of anything so absurdly trivial?"

"The girl was so curiously frightened. When I saw that I had approached her, she seemed perfectly distracted, and ran away."

Grim and cruel was the shadow that flitted over the count's features.

It might have revealed the clue to some awful mystery to the trustful bride had she but noticed it.

"That has a guilty sound, Valtie," he lightly responded. "You must have intruded at a moment when the dread of detection was haunting her. Had she some crime on her conscience?"

"Oh, Marc! Valtie rebuked, the softness of her blue eyes sweetly reproachful through her cloudy veil. "She was in desperate grief—she was, indeed."

Again his eyes flamed fiercely, and he looked out at the tossing breakers on the beach with stormy brow.

Then the carriage plunged into the woods, and dashed up to the door of the gloomy dwelling Valtie hated.

An hour later bride and bridegroom were driven to a distant station, on their way to the French capital.

Valtie's prophecy had been fulfilled; she had made a brilliant match, apparently, and was very happy.

If she could only have known the mean-

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ing of that spectral mystery which had so bewildered and terrified her on looking from the east room window at the misty dawning of St. Valentine's Day!

### CHAPTER V.

In Paris Valtie whirled through a perpetual vista of unclouded gaiety.

She had written to her home, explaining the cause of her disappearance from Brookvale, dilating upon the happiness that was hers.

It was not until they returned to England that the faith of the young wife received a sudden shock.

She discovered that Count Lodi secretly went out in the dead of night?

Thrice she heard him creep from his room adjoining hers and furtively descend the stairs of their pretty house near Park Lane, and on these startling occasions, lying awake in mystified suspense and wonder, she also heard him return, stealing back in the twilight of dawn.

At first she could only marvel in utter bewilderment as to what it could mean.

But a fourth repetition of this bat-like marauding brought her, clad in her soft dressing-gown, wrathfully into his presence, and, with her curls, ruffled round a mutinous little face, she inquisitorially demanded—

"Where are you going, Marc?"

He turned pale to the lips, but instantly recovering himself, looked at her laughingly.

"What a fierce little wife! So you have scented a conspiracy in which you have not yet been asked to become implicated, eh, Valtie?"

"I do not know what you can mean!" she exclaimed. "Is it not right for me to insist upon your telling me just what the conspiracy is? You leave the house, without a word of explanation, at the most unearthly hours. Oh, Marc! have you friends of whom you are so ashamed that you fear to take me with you when you go to see them? You have on your evening suit; you are going to a dance, to which, it seems, I have not even been invited!"

A smothered sob checked the hot flood of wounded reproach, and, with one quick stride, Count Lodi had her in his arms.

His face was strangely haggard as he bent over her. The secret of his life was so dark and terrible that he hated to think its shadow might fall on his winsome wife and blight her joy and trust.

"You were not invited dearest, because, as you have vaguely surmised, the set is not good enough for you to mix with, and I would not hear of your being asked."

"But why do you visit people with whom your wife may not associate?" she questioned, with astonishment and misgiving.

"Why have you thought it necessary to keep me in ignorance of your unworthy friends? I can't bear to know that you have stolen from your own house like a thief at night, when you imagined me to be sleeping—what is the matter, Marc?"

As though stung, he had thrust her from him, his features set and livid, and she stood gazing steadily into his enraged eyes, her heart beating with a heavy palpitation, akin to fear.

She had never seen that gleam of savagery on his face until this moment, and it was like a glimpse into unholly depths of evil, from which she sank repelled, her whole soul shaken by a wild misgiving.

What had she said to make her husband recoil from her in such evident wrath?

He paced the room, gloom on his brow, leaving Valtie with a feeling of dread creeping upon her.

She recalled, in a flash of uneasiness, that weird dream of warning at the Grange, on the night of her elopement—her aversion to Madame Delvont and the attendant, Ciro; pictured again the alarming scene as her eyes had encountered on looking out at the wood that misty morning of her birthday.

Was there something concealed from her in all this? She watched the count with a feeling of painful disappointment.

Why had he chosen to deceive her in connection with these dances to which he would not take her?

The rebellious light returned to her blue eyes, and tossing back her red-gold curls, she asked—

"Do you mean to go to these odious friends of yours tonight, Marc?"

"My promise is a bond that I never break," he slowly answered.

"But if I wish you to break it very much?"

"It is impossible, Valtie!"

She gave him one look of incredulous amazement; then her lips curved in tremulous scorn.

She turned away without another word, leaving him a prey to his bitter feelings.

Devoted as he undoubtedly was to Valtie he, a minute later, softly emerged from the midnight stillness of the house.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Didn't Like It.

There is more in a dog than man's philosophy accounts for. No theory of instinct—sometimes defined as a faculty prior to experience and independent of reason—will explain some actions of a clever dog, whose case is reported by a correspondent of the London Spectator. I knew a dog in Ireland—a retriever—who had been taught always to bring his own tin dish in his mouth, to be filled at the late dinner.

For some reason his master wished to make a change, and to feed him twice a day instead of once. The dog resented this, and when told to bring his dish, refused and it could nowhere be found; on which his master spoke angrily to him, and ordered him to bring the dish at once.

With drooping tail and sheepish expression he went down the length of the garden and began scratching up the soil where he had buried the bowl deep down, to avoid having to bring it at an hour of which he did not approve.

## CANADA THE GREAT CRY IN ENGLAND

Mr. J. W. Lester, an Old Toronto Boy, Interviewed

### EXPERIENCES IN BUSINESS.

Canadian Goods, Owing to Their Undeniable Merit, in Favour in Old London.

(From The Mail and Empire)

A gentleman who has done much to bring Canada before the people of the Old Country is Mr. J. W. Lester, of London, England, who is at present a guest at the Queen's hotel. Mr. Lester is an enthusiastic Canadian, having, prior to his settling in London, been a prominent business man of this city, and an interview with him touching the spread of Canadian trade in the Old Land proved of more than usual interest.

"Canada for the Canadians used to be the cry here," said Mr. Lester, while seated in the corridor of the hotel on Saturday. "but I tell you now we Englishmen," and he smiled, "think Canada is for the Britisher. Why, we are all Britishers. When first I went to London, not much more than two years ago, hanged it they did not look upon a Canadian as an American. Everywhere you went they knew your accent, at least they thought they did and you were stamped 'American' at once. No use correcting them. Canadian was an unknown, another part of the United States as it were."

Big Cub of the Lion.

"The Jubilee helped Canada a little, but the glorious stand of our brave boys in this war in South Africa, who volunteered without being first asked by the Motherland, has cemented the ties between the Old Land and Canada as nothing else ever could."

"Yes, there is New Zealand and Australia, India, and all the other cubs of the British lion, but Jack Canuck is the favorite son of old John Bull, the big staunch cub of a great and powerful sire."

"The merit of the Canadian is now fully recognized in London. I find that Canadians who enter into business over there are always successful. Canadian goods are very popular, not because they are from the Dominion, but on account of the fact of them being Canadian stamps them as worthy of approval. My personal experience is that a Canadian will do business there where an American now will not."

"The English business man is very conservative, but the spread of our business, the Canadian firm which I represent in London, has been phenomenal. There is a great building up of the Empire going on, and Canada is in the front piling up the great structure trade."

An Australian Echo.

At this juncture Mr. R. C. Davison, of Melbourne, Australia, a former Torontonian, came along, and was introduced by Mr. Lester.

A word from Mr. Davison was very gratifying on the same subject. Canada, formerly very little thought of, is now watched keenly in the Antipodes, he says. Canadian goods are great favorites with the Australians, and during the past two years many Dominion trade agencies have been established there.

Here to Attend a Meeting.

Both Mr. Lester and Mr. Davison have come to Toronto to attend the annual meeting of the Dadds Medicine Company, Limited, when managers of the foreign branches of the company assemble from all sections of the globe to discuss the business campaign for the ensuing year.

Personal Business Experiences.

"As you know," continued Mr. Lester, "I left Toronto a few years ago to establish a London office for the Dadds Medi-

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cine Company, and at the same time Mr. Davison here left for Australia with the same object in view. The sale and reputation of these goods had spread so fast that the establishment of these two offices was absolutely necessary. The remedies have proved so efficacious that in England as in Canada they have come to stay."

"And in Australia, too," put in Mr. Davison.

"Why," continued Mr. Lester, "I understand the business of the company has spread in the United States, too, that the sales there are something enormous. But it is the spread of the sale of Dodd's Kidney Pills in England of which they are most proud, because the Englishman is such a conservative and cautious purchaser. However, the company were satisfied to place these pills and also Dodd's Dyspepsia Tablets before the public and wait for the merit of the medicines to speak for themselves, and I tell you they have. They are every bit as popular and heavy sellers to the trade in England as they are in Canada, and you know what that is."

Something to be Relied On.

"A reliable cure for kidney disease is worth its weight, not in gold, but in diamonds, and the Englishman realizes this. There are so many imitations, you know, that do more harm than good, and will never sell in this great world."

"Why, to day, you read of some 'great' (?) remedy, and in a few months it is gone, and as dead as many a poor sufferer who has used the 'just as good article' Dodd's Kidney Pills have been here in Canada for years and years, and are just what they are advertised to be."

"Without any foreign advertising the virtues of the Dodd's Kidney Pills have here in Canada for years and years, and are just what they are advertised to be."

"Without any foreign advertising the virtues of the Dodd's Kidney Pills had spread to such an extent that it was found necessary to establish a branch in London to supply the European trade. They are now being just as well received by the European public as in Canada and the United States where they have been selling for years."

"Australia has always been in touch with the Old Land, more so than Canada and with the increase of the London business that in the Antipodes grew proportionately as Mr. Davison has already told you."

Mr. Lester will be in Canada for about three weeks, and Mr. Davison for perhaps a little longer. They are both shrewd business men, and just such Canadians as will not only push their own business, but in doing so, bring before the outside world Canada and its trade resources."

Cured By Applause.

Louis Blanc, the eloquent Frenchman, lost his voice, not as Falstaff did, "with hallooing and singing of anthems," but through dread of an English audience. He found it again by aid of the welcome the audience gave him, which was so hearty as to cast out all fear. Mr. John Bigelow tells the story in his "Life of Samuel J. Tilden," as related to him by Monsieur Blanc.

After the fall of the government in 1848 Louis Blanc became an exile in London. When he had acquired a tolerable command of the English language, he was invited to deliver a lecture in English. On the appointed day, he dined with Hepworth Dixon, then editor of the London Athenaeum. The prospect of meeting a distinguished London audience, and attempting to talk to them in what was to him a foreign tongue, made him so nervous that during the dinner he suddenly lost his voice, and could only speak in a whisper.

He was in despair. The audience would be made up of the most distinguished in London society. There seemed to be but one course to pursue—to tell the truth and dismiss them. It was decided that he should show himself on the stage and let the audience see if they could not hear that he was unable to speak audibly.

Dixon went with him and made Blanc's excuses. When he had done Blanc stepped forward to verify his friend's statements. Dixon's remarks had been received with sympathetic applause, but when Blanc appeared the applause was deafening. When it had subsided he attempted to say a few words, mainly to show his voiceless condition. But to his surprise, and to the delight of the audience, his voice sounded clearer and louder than ever before in a public assembly.

He went on for two hours without the least inconvenience. The applause with which he was received had expelled the

nervousness which [alone was responsible for his vocal feebleness.

Sweet Sixteen.

In the very rarefied atmosphere of Brook Farm, doubtless no one could have been more welcome than a frolicsome girl of sixteen. Such was Ora Gannett Sedgwick, who gives, in the Atlantic, her reminiscences of some happy days spent there in memorable company. Shy and serious men are not usually so by preference, and one can imagine how a girl's witchery would have been appreciated by the reclusive whom it was intended to tease. She says:

I do not recollect Hawthorne's talking much at the table. One day, tired of seeing him sit immovable on the sofa in the hall, as I was learning some verses to recite, I daringly took my book, pushed it into his hands, and said:

"Will you hear my poetry, Mr. Hawthorne?"

He gave me a sidelong glance from his very shy eyes, took the book, and most kindly heard me.

One evening he was alone in the hall, sitting on a chair at the farther end, when my roommate Ellen Slade, and myself were going up stairs. She whispered to me:

"Let's throw the sofa-pillows at Mr. Hawthorne!"

Reaching over the banisters, we each took a cushion, and threw it. Quick as a flash, he put out his hand, seized a broom that was hanging near him, warded off our cushions, and threw them back with sure aim. As fast as we could throw them at him, he returned them with effect, hitting us every time, while we could only hit the broom. Through it all not a word was spoken. We laughed and laughed, and his eyes shone and twinkling like stars.

An American Post-Office in Paris.

Americans who go to the Paris exposition will find at least one feature of it that will remind them of home. There will be a model American post office. Arrangements have been made with the French authorities by which mail for Americans in Paris will be sent to this post office instead of going through the regular channels. In this way much time will be saved in the distribution of the American mails, and Parisians will have a chance to see how the American postal system works. A room about as large as an ordinary branch post office will be fitted up with all the modern postal appliances, and Americans visiting Paris will be able to transact all post office business just as they have been accustomed to transact it at home.

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