SOCIETY CHRONICLES

President Taft Will View Panama Pictures

—Photo by G. V. Buck.

MISS FRANCES EFFINGER.
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Effinger, of Washington and Staunton, Va.

Miss Frances Effinger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Effinger, of Staunton, Va., who have spent the last several winters in Washington, will entertain at a dance this evening at Rauscher's in compliment to her house-guest, Miss Elsie Halle, of St. Louis. Miss Halle arrived in Washington several days ago, and will be with Miss Effinger for a fortnight. Among the guests this evening will be Miss Alice Boutell and her wedding party.

Miss Margaret Worthington, who will be one of the bridesmaids at the wedding of Miss Alice Boutell and John Wood Brooks Ladd, of Boston, on Thursday, will entertain informally at tea this afternoon in honor of Miss Boutell.

Dr. Frank Anderson, U. S. N., and Mrs. Anderson will entertain at a dinner followed by dancing at the Chevy Chase Club this evening in compliment to Miss Harriet Bayne, whose marriage to Lieutenant Castle, U. S. N., takes place Wednesday. The dinner guests will be the members of the wedding party, and a number of additional guests will come in later for the dancing.

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Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Joseph P. Sanger will sail on Wednesday from New York, to pass the winter in Italy and Egypt.

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Congressman Henry G. Danforth of New York and Mrs. Danforth, who will arrive in Washington shortly, have taken the house at 1527 Eighteenth street formerly occupied by Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Hoppin. Last year they were at 1609 Twenty-second street.

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Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Downing and the Misses Downing are established at 2039 Hillyer place for the winter.

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Mr. and Mrs. Edson Bradley entertained a few guests at luncheon yesterday at the Chevy Chase Club, and had as guests at dinner last night at their home in Connecticut avenue Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Legare, Mrs. Marion Maus, wife of General Maus, U. S. A.; Miss Lacy, a house guest; Mr. Schmolck of the Netherlands legation, and Major Lafferty.

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Mrs. Reginald DeKoven, who was prominent in society here some years ago, when she occupied the house in Vermont avenue now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Frank B. Noyes, is visiting Mrs. Edmund Pendleton, at Stoneleigh Court.

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An evening of song, story, and monologue will be given under the auspices of the Woman's Alliance of All Souls' Church, in the ballroom of the New Willard on December 9 with the proceeds to go toward the building fund of the Edward Everett Hale Memorial.

Miss Jean Wilson and Mme. Doritley Johnstone-Baseler, will be among the artists of the evening. After the program there will be dancing.

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Society is greatly interested in the educational week of the Southern Industrial Educational Association, which will begin December 2, when the cause of the mountain children will be brought before the public.

The annual sale of mountain crafts and cabin industries will open in the headquarters of the association in the Southern building under the direction of Mrs. Gielow and Mrs. Stone.

The candy and flower room will be in charge of the junior branch of the association, consisting of the young society set.

The tea room, cake room, basket table, weavings, etc., will be in charge of many society women, and there will be several new features of mountain work, including beautiful feather fans and wonderful crocheted work of the mountain blind girls.

Illustrated stories of the mountain people will be given by Mrs. Gielow, and will be most interesting and educational.

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Miss Celestine Eustis, of New York, has arrived in Washington for a visit before going to Aiken, S. C., to spend the winter.

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The infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Watts, Vivian Chapin Watts, was christened at the Church of the Nativity yesterday morning by the Rev. Enoch Thompson.

The President and Mrs. Taft, the Secretary of the Treasury and Mrs. MacVeagh, and the Secretary of Commerce and Labor and Mrs. Nagel will be in the audience of almost midwinter brilliancy which will fill the Belasco Theater this afternoon to see the Kinemacolor pictures of the Panama canal under construction. The show is given under the auspices of the American Red Cross Society, of which the President is national president, and the object for which the benefit is to be immediately applied is the Balkan war relief fund.

The Assistant Secretary of War and Mrs. Huntington Wilson will have Mrs. A. Garrison McClintock and Lord Eustice Percy in their box. Mr. and Mrs. William J. Boardman and Miss Mabel Boardman will have Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Norton, the former, one time Secretary to the President, in their box. Mrs. Hope Slater, Mrs. Henry C. Corbin, and Rear Admiral and Mrs. Van Reypen are among the box and seat holders who will entertain parties.

The performance, which is a truly wonderful presentation, will be repeated at the Belasco tomorrow afternoon for the same purpose.

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Mr. and Mrs. Henry White returned to their home in Crescent Place today, from New York, accompanied by their son-in-law and daughter, Count and Countess Scherr-Thoss, of Prussia, and their children, who are to spend the winter here. This is the first visit Countess Scherr-Thoss has made in Washington since her girlhood days, when she was Miss Murial White.

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Mrs. David D. Porter, wife of Major Porter, U. S. M. C., who has recently arrived in Washington from Manila to visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel L. Mattingly, in Q street, will return to the Philippines early in February to join her husband, who is now on a tour of inspection.

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Miss Margaret Hoge is entertaining informally at cards this afternoon, having among her guests several of this season's debutantes.

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Mrs. Hardy, Miss Helen Hardy and Miss Mildred Hardy, wife and daughters of Congressman Rufus Hardy, of Texas, who spent the summer in Texas, have returned to Washington and have opened their residence in Massachusetts avenue for the winter.

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Miss Jeanette Allen, and Miss Desha Allen, daughters of Major Henry T. Allen, U. S. A., and Mrs. Allen, who have been in New York all week attending the Horse Show, returned to Washington today.

Miss Desha Allen will not be presented this winter, on account of mourning in the family, but she will go out informally.

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Miss Eloise Orme, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William B. Orme, of Georgetown, who will make her initial bow to society on December 21, will go over to Philadelphia Saturday for the Army and Navy football game. She will remain in Philadelphia for several days as the guest of Mrs. Benson Mann, and Miss Natalie Mann.

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Washington society will be well represented at the Army-Navy football game in Philadelphia on Saturday, and social events for that day will be almost entirely suspended.

The Secretary of the Navy and Mrs. Meyer have two boxes, as have also Col. and Mrs. Robert M. Thompson. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy and Mrs. Beekman Winthrop have a box and will take a party with them; Senator Lodge, Senator Brandegee, Senator Poindexter, Rear Admiral A. M. Knight, Rear Admiral T. B. Howard, Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Leonard Wood, Congressman Langley, Congressman R. B. Macon, Congressman L. C. Dyer, Congressman Levy and Rear Admiral Richard Wainwright all have seats or boxes and will entertain parties.

THE TIMES Question Box

Mrs. Taylor—"The President of the United States."

May Wolf—All of the questions which you ask will be answered by the Census Office. Churches and Government land are exempt from taxation.

Miss L. D. J.—For any information concerning the Indian Service you should apply to the Interior Department. Information concerning applications will include sample examinations.

E. F. H.—The question which you sent this department could not be entirely deciphered. If you will send again perhaps it can be made out. It concerned the making of some kind of cake.

A Reader of The Times—This department cannot answer through the columns of the paper any questions concerning the members of any company playing at the local theaters.

Daily Reader, D. D. C.—As it would require more research than this department is capable of devoting to this subject, little more than the meaning of the word can be given. Acacia tree: "The Australian species have usually vertical phyllodia instead of leaves, while the African and other species have bipinnate leaves. Some species yield gum arabia, tannin, catechu, etc. Others yield timber." This is from the Standard Dictionary, and no reference is made to a nervous system.

Mrs. H.—This matter cannot be published by this department. Write to the one who inserted the advertisement, care of the business office of this paper.

B. B.—All information concerning civil service examinations can be obtained by applying in person to the Civil Service Commission, 1724 F street northwest.

JULIA MURDOCK'S THEATER GOSSIP

Julia Murdock Finds Madame Frances Alda Thinks America Is Great for Its Ice Cream

Frances Alda, who is creating so great a furore throughout the country by her remarkable singing, and who, it is confidently asserted, is destined to be the sensation of the day when she appears at the Metropolitan Opera House next month as Roxane, in Walter Damrosch's new opera, has attained her preeminence not alone through her art, by reason of her extraordinary beauty, nor yet because of the magnificence of the gowns she wears, but must be recognized as one who both observes the things transpiring about her and makes such logical deductions as are profitable not only to her, but to her fellows.

Madame Alda is an Australian by birth, but has become so enamoured by the beauties of this country, the graciousness of its people, and the accomplishments of its captains of industry that she proudly links her fortunes with the Americans. Among her friends she is forever sounding the praises of her adopted country, and only the suggestion of a formal interview seems to place a quietus upon her vivacity.

Poets probably would resent the coupling of the immortal Bard with the prosaic output of the confectioner, but where the former

'Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Madame Alda finds incontrovertible indications of artistic capacity in the dainty ices which were conceived and brought to their present state of perfection by Americans.

With a view to diverting the diva's attention from the idea of an interview we had ordered two gorgeous portions of ice cream.

"This alone," remarked the singer, "is enough to place the United States among the artistic nations. What other country can exhibit a creation so unique, so delicate, at once so heating to the fancy and so cooling to the taste, and so miraculous withal in keeping its own nature under whatever rainbow-colored tint its outward look may be disguised?

"They talk of social revolution in Italy," continued the Australian Skylark, "but I flatter myself that when I introduced America ice cream in Milan the summer before last, I started a little revolution all my own. Would you believe it? The Milanese have gone crazy over ice cream. Men take it as an appetizer before meals, women take it as a tonic after. What's more, in smart Roman society American ice cream klatsches have completely driven English afternoon teas from the field. However, the most startling result of my innovation was an article by a noted physician recommending ice cream as a cure alike for obesity or thinness—two Boston bricks six times a day in the former case, one brick after each meal in the latter."

But what is more, Madame Alda has carried her exploitations into other

MADAME FRANCES ALDA.

realms, and believes she has discovered a section of the country where the words "mother" and "baby" are not yet obsolete. She was discoursing on the beauties of the great West and telling of the artistic triumphs she had attained there, always in a modest and retiring manner, for her concert tours there are always sources of delirious joy to her.

"The West has such delightful women and such lovable children," she says. "Why, even the men are adorable And how cozy eWstern homes are! Mind, I don't say that I am free form the spell of the pomp and glamour of the East. To be frank, it is not that I love the East less, but that I adore the West more. I'll tell you why. In Eastern households we sometimes find the good old maxim: 'What is Home Without a Mother' has less practical meaning than its parody: 'What is Home Without a Dog or a Kitten.'

"In the West, however, the words 'mother' and 'baby' are not yet obsolete, for they still represent actualities of which the people are not ashamed."

"Then you approve of Schumann-Heink?"

"Approve of her! I admire her intensely!" cried Madame Alda in a musical run reaching F in alt. "She has not only given society the benefit if a superb voice. She has given society the benefit of eight ruperb children. Her international fame is merited in a twofold sense: As a singer she is an artist, and as a mother she is doubly so."

Madame Alda, who is the wife of Gatti Casazza, harmoniously blends the imperious with the kittenish in a manner that is only one of the marvels that Frances Alda performs. As heretofore stated, she abhors interviews and declares that they are the price that celebrities pay to sorrow for living in this happy hunting ground.

"Why do I hate them!" she says. "Because they make me so frightfully nervous. An audience of 3,000 people is my delight. But a single interviewer unnerves me."

When pressed for something interesting regarding the parts in which she has triumphed, especially those of Desdemona and Manon, she protested: "I'd rather not! I love the parts I have already played, but I live in the parts in which I am ambitious to appear. Desdemona and Manon—I'm greatly attached to them, as I'm greatly attached to the memories of my Australian childhood. But it's the future, not the past, that stirs one's aspirations, isn't it? What little I have done so far belongs to the long ago."

It could not have been very long ago, for Mme. Alda is only thirty. To one who heard her talk so entertainingly, a splendid future seemed to lie securely before her. One doesn't need to rave with painters over her auburn hair, or dream with poets about her flashing black eyes. To hear her sing the "Ave Maria" from "Otello" or "L'ora o Tirsi" from "Manon Lescaut" is enough to learn what it means to have all heaven brought down to earth.

"Which parts do you like the best?" I asked, shaking myself out of my reverie.

"My best parts are in operas in which I have never sung—that is never at the Metropolitan. Elsa in 'Lohengrin' and Eva in 'Die Meistersinger' are the characters which I think I can do most justice to." The Metropolitan directors have announced that she will be heard in these roles this season, and also in that of Sweet Anne Page in the big production of "Falstaff." To the suggestion that at present the music lovers of the country are intensely interested in "Cyrano," the new opera by Walter Damrosch, and a query as to whether she liked the role of Roxane, which she is to create in this work, Mme. Alda replied:

"Like is a cold word for the passionate devotion I feel toward Roxane. I dare say you know that the leading feminine part was first offered to Emmy Destinn. This charming singer is possessed of a versatile talent singularly befitting the requirements of Damrosch's remarkable work. A certin unfamiliarity with English, however, caused Madame Destinn to hesitate about accepting Roxane. Thus by good fortune, the part fell to me. And when you consider that Mr. Damrosch has woven inspiring themes into a rich and musical fabric and that Mr. Henderson has written a libretto which for grace of diction and poetry of thought is unmatched, you will easily understand why this new musical offering engrosses me, heart and soul."

JULIA MURDOCK.

SANDMAN STORIES

For The Times' Children Just Before It's Bedtime

TONY AND THE IMP.

TONY was poor. But then Tony lived in Sunny Italy, where one did not need many clothes, and there was always plenty of fresh fruit to eat. Still, the boy found it far from pleasant to have no new suit for Sunday, when all the other children dressed in their best. But he decided not to grumble, for he knew how hard it was for a widow with eight children to feed so many mouths.

So black-eyed, curly-headed Tony sat one bright afternoon under the grape arbor watching the light glint on the purple clusters swaying over his head. All morning he had been gathering the fruit for his mother to make wine that she would sell in the market. But now he decided to rest in the heat of the day.

As he looked at the vine he saw a little black head peeping around the post; then slowly a very black imp came strutting toward him. Tony was not a bit afraid, for he knew that part of Italy had a great many imps, who made their homes in the hot, molten caves of the volcanoes, and whose time was devoted to making mischief for good people.

"Good-day, Master Tony," said the imp, with a sly grin; "I see you are gathering grapes. Pray what will you do with them?"

"My mother makes wine to sell in the market," said Tony, "and that is our only way of making a living for our large family. We are anxious to have this cask of wine very fine, as it is to be sent to the fair to try for the prize. If it wins we will have plenty of trade and be well off for the rest of our lives."

"Oh, ho!" laughed the imp. "So you intend trying for the prize. I will tell you where you can find some jewels in the mountain if you will do me a favor."

"What is it?" asked Tony.

"Why, old Guido, who lives at the corner, has some pigs shut in his pen. I want to undo the lock and let them run off," replied the imp. 'But the fastening is too heavy for me to lift. Unlock the gate and let the pigs out and I will reward you."

"Get out of here, you wicked imp," cried Tony, throwing a fat bunch of grapes at the black head. "You old rascal, trying to get me to help you harm a poor, crippled man!"

The imp dodged out of the garden and ran down the low wall out of sight, while Tony continued his grape-picking. Then he helped his mother press out the juice and put it away in stone jars. The next day he was busy in making a big, stout wooden cask to hold the wine. He worked over it for many days, sawing and hammering at the boards and binding them about with steel bands to hold them tight.

But always he could see that the imp was lingering about, skulking behind the hedge or hiding under a bush. Tony only laughed at the sly fellow, though he well knew that the creature was only waiting for a chance to play a mean trick. Several weeks went by, yet the imp saw no chance to do any mischief.

At last one morning the handsome cask was finished and ready for the wine, for the fair was to begin the next day. There it was, a fine, large cask, with shining wooden sides and bright bands of steel about it. Tony had gone into the house for a moment and left it alone.

"Ha, ha! there is my chance," laughed the imp. "I will make myself small, crawl into the cask, and pierce it full of holes so the wine will all spill out." So he shriveled himself up small and crept into the cask, but not before Tony, who was coming out of the kitchen with a bucket of cold water, saw what was happening.

Now, if there is anything in the world that an imp hates it is cold water, and Tony knew this. So he stole softly up and poured the water down into the cask. As soon as it struck the imp he set up a fiendish howl and sprang out of the cask, making the air blue with sulphur and smoke. Of course, you know that all imps live where there is much sulphur and fire, and when the water touches them they always flame up into sulphur fumes.

So the angry imp flew away over the garden, and Tony only laughed at his plight. Then he went on to work to fill the cask with wine. The next day it won the first prize at the fair for its fine flavor, and everyone in the village crowded about Tony's home to find out the secret of its making.

"Well," said Tony, "the truth is that the fire and sulphu flames of the imp burnt the cask slightly inside—it was that which gives our wine its fine flavor." And the villagers were so pleased with the reply that they all tried it, and their wine was fine, too.

Tomorrow's story: "The Bag of Gall."

THE TIMES' DAILY SERIAL STORY.

By ELIZABETH KENT WHO? Author of "The House Opposite"

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CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.

"BESIDES, the two men seem to have been motoring about the country almost at random, and it may have been the merest accident which brought them to the foot of the long lane just at the time when her ladyship was in all probability leaving the castle. Whether they gave her a lift as far as Newhaven, I do not know. How her ladyship reached the town constitutes the only serious—I will not call it break—but hiatus—in my theory. From 6:30 o'clock the next morning, however, her movements can be easily followed. A young lady, dressed as you know, approached the station with obvious nervousness.

Three things attracted the attention of the officials; first, the discrepancy between the simplicity—I might almost say the poverty—of her clothes, and the fact that she purchased a first-class ticket; secondly, that she was so heavily veiled that it was evident that she did not wish her features to be seen, and, thirdly, that she had no luggage except a small handbag. How her ladyship managed to elude the police, and what has subsequently occurred to her, I do not need to tell your lordship."

"You haven't the least convinced me that the young lady is her ladyship—not in the least. You yourself admit that there is a hiatus in your story; well, that hiatus is to me a gulf which you have failed to bridge. Because one lady disappears from Geralton, and another appears the next morning in Newhaven, you insist the two are identical, But you have not offered me one iota of proof that such is the case."

"What more proof do you want? She is the only person who left Newhaven by train or boat whoever vaguely resembled her ladyship."

"That means nothing. Her ladyship may not have come to Newhaven at all, but have been driven to some hiding place in the Frenchman's car.

"I think that quite impossible, for every house, every cottage, every stable and barn even for twenty-five miles around has been carefully searched. Besides, this would mean that the murder had been premeditated and the coming of the motor had been prearranged; and, lastly, as the gardener's wife testifies that the car left Geralton certainly no earlier than 11:30, and as the two men reached the hotel before 12, this precludes the possibility that they could have done more than drive straight back to the inn, as the motor is by no means a fast one."

"But, my man, they may have secreted her ladyship in the town itself and have taken her with them to France the next morning."

"Impossible. In the first place, they left alone—the porter saw them off; and, secondly, no one except the two Frenchmen purchased a ticket for the Continent, either in the Newhaven office or on the boat."

Cyril rose from his seat. Judson's logic was horribly convincing; no smallest detail had apparently escaped him. As the man piled argument on argument he found himself slowly and grudgingly accepting his conclusions.

"As you are in my employ, I take it for granted that you will not inform the police or the press of your—suspicions," he said at last.

"Certainly not, my lord. On the other hand, I must ask you to allow me to withdraw from the case."

"But why?" exclaimed Cyril.

"Because my duty to you as my client prevents me from taking any further steps in this matter."

"I don't understand you!"

"I gather that you are less anxious to clear up the mystery than to protect her ladyship. Am I not right?"

"Yes," acknowledged Cyril.

"Well, my lord, that is just what I cannot do. It is my duty, as I conceive it, to hold my tongue, but I should not feel justified in aiding her ladyship to escape the consequences of her action. In order to be faithful to my engagement to you, I am willing to let the public believe that I have made a failure of the case. I shall not even allow my imagination to dwell on your future movements—but more than that I can not do."

"You take the position that her ladyship is an ordinary criminal, but you must realize that that is absurd. Even granting that she is responsible for her husband's death, of which, by the way, we have no absolute proof, are you not able ta make allowances for a poor woman goaded to desperation by an opium fiend?"

"I do not constitute myself her ladyship's judge, but I don't think your lordship quite realizes all that you are asking of me. Even if I were willing to wave the question of my professional honor, I should still decline to undertake a task which I know is foredoomed to failure. For if I discovered Lady Wilmersley with so little difficulty, Scotland Yard is bound to do so before long. The trail is too unmistakable. It is impossible—absolutely impossible—I assure you, that the secret can be kept."

Cyril moved uneasily.

"I wish I could convince your lordship of this and induce you to allow the law to take its course. Her ladyship ought to come forward at once and plead justifiable homicide. If she waits till she is arrested, it will tell heavily against her."

"But she is ill, really ill," insisted Cyril. "Dr. Stuart Smith tells me that if she is not kept perfectly quiet for the next few weeks her nervous system may never recover from the shock."

"H'm! That certainly complicates the situation. On the other hand, you must remember that discovery is not only inevitable but imminent, and that the police will not stop to consider her ladyship's nervous system. No, my lord, the only thing for you to do is to break the news to her yourself and to persuade her to give herself up. If you don't, you will both live to regret it."

"That may be so," replied Cyril, after a minute's hesitation; "but in this matter I must judge for myself. I still hope that you are wrong, and that either the young lady in question is not Lady Wilmersley or that it was not her ladyship who killed my cousin; and I refuse to jeopardize her life till I am sure that there is no possibility of your having made a mistake.

"But don't throw up the case yet. So far you have only sought her for evidence of her ladyship's guilt; now, I want you to look at the case from a fresh point of view. I want you to start all over again, and to work on the assumption that her ladyship did not fire the shot.

"I cannot accept your conclusion as final till we have exhausted every other possibility. These Frenchmen, for instance, have they or have they not a connection with the case? And then there is Valdrigues. Why have you never suspected her? At the inquest she acknowledged that no one had seen her leave her ladyship's apartments, and we have only her word for it that she spent the evening in her room."

"True; but if I went on the principle of suspecting everyone who cannot prove themselves innocent. I should soon be lost in a quagmire of barren conjectures. Of course, I have considered Valdrigues, but can find no reason for suspecting her.

"Well, I could give you a dozen reasons."

"Indeed, my lord, and what are they?"

"In the first place, we know that she is a hard, unprincipled woman, or she would never have consented to aid my cousin in depriving his unfortunate wife of her liberty. A woman who would do that is capable of any villainy. Then, on the witness stand, didn't you feel that she was holding something back? Oh, I forgot you were not present at the inquest."

"I was there, my lord, but I took good care that no one should recognise me."

"Well, and what impression did she make on you?"

"A [illegible]ly favorable one, my lord. I think that she spoke the truth and I fancy that she is almost a religious fanatic."

"You don't mean to say, Judson, that you allowed yourself to be taken in by her sanctimonious airs and the theatrical way that she kept clutching at that cross on her breast? A religious fanatic, indeed! Why, don't you see that no woman with a spark of religion in her could have allowed her mistress to be treated as Lady Wilmersley was?"

"Quite so, my lord, and it is because Valdrigues impressed me as an honest old creature that I am still doubtful whether her ladyship is insane or not, and this uncertainty hampers me very much in my word."

"Lady Upton assured me that her granddaughter's mind had never been unbalanced and that his lordship, although he frequently wrote to her, had never so much as hinted at such a thing; and if you believe the young lady at the nursing home to be Lady Wilmersley I give you my word that she shows no sign of mental derangement."

"Well, that seems pretty final, and yet—and yet—I cannot believe that Valdrigues is a vicious woman. A man in my profession acquires a curious instinct in such matters, my lord."

The detective paused a moment, and when he began again he spoke almost as if he were reasoning with himself.

"Now, if my estimate of Valdrigues is correct, and if it is also a fact that Lady Wilmersley has been insane, there are certainly possibilities connected with this affair which I have by no means exhausted—and so, my lord, I am not only willing but anxious to continue on the case if you will agree to allow me to ignore her ladyship's existence."

"Certainly. But tell me, Judson, now can you hope to reconcile two such absolutely contradictory facts?"

"Two such apparently contradictory facts," gently corrected the detective. "Well, my lord, I propose to find out more of this woman's antecedents. I have several times tried to get her to talk, but so far without the least success. She says that she will answer any questions put to her on the witness stand, but that it is against her principles to gossip about her late master and mistress. She is equally reticent as to her past life, and when I told her that her silence seemed to me very suspicious she demanded—suspicious of what? She went on to say that she could not see that it was anybody's business where she lived or what she had done, and that she certainly had no intention of gratifying my idle curiosity; and that was the last word I could get out of her. Although she treated me so cavalierly, I confess to a good deal of sympathy with her attitude."

"Have you questioned Mrs. Eversley about her?" asked Cyril. "She was housekeeper here when Valdrigues first came to Geralton and ought to be able to tell you what sort of a person she was in her youth."

"Mrs. Eversley speaks well of her. The only thing she told me which may have a bearing on the case is that in the old days his lordship appeared to admire Valdrigues very much."

"Ah! I thought so," cried Cyril.

"But we cannot be too sure of this, my lord. For when I tried to find out what grounds she had for her statement she had so little proof to offer that I cannot accept her impression as conclusive evidence. As far as I can make out, the gossip about them was started by his lordship going to the Catholic Church in Newhaven."

"By going to the Catholic Church!" exclaimed Cyril.

"Exactly. Not a very compromising act on his lordship's part, one would think. But, as his lordship was not a Catholic, his doing so naturally aroused a good deal of comment.

"I asked Mrs. Eversley if his lordship and Valdrigues had been seen together elsewhere, and she reluctantly admitted that they had. On several occasions they were seen walking in the park, but always, so Mrs. Eversley assured me, in full view of the castle.

"She had felt it her duty to speak to Valdrigues on the subject, and the latter told her that his lordship was interested in her religion and that she was willing to run the risk of having her conduct misconstrued if she could save his soul from eternal damnation.

"She also gave Mrs. Eversley to understand that she had her mistress' sanction, and, as her ladyship treated Valdrigues more as a companion and friend than as a maid, Mrs. Eversley thought this quite likely, and did not venture to remonstrate further.

"So the intimacy, if such it could be called, continued as before. What the outcome of this state of things would have been we do not know, for shortly afterward both Lord and Lady Wilmersley died and Valdrigues left Geralton.

"When his lordship went away, a few days later, a good many people suspected that he had joined her on the Continent. Mrs. Eversley, however, does not believe this. She has absolute confidence in Valdrigues's goodness, and I think her testimony is pretty reliable."

"Bah! Mrs. Eversley is an honest, simple old soul. A clever adventuress would have little difficulty in hoodwinking her. Mark my words, you have found the key to the mystery. What more likely than that his lordship—whose morals, even as a boy, were none of the best—seduced Valdrigues, and that she returned to Geralton so as to have the opportunity of avenging her wrongs."

"I can think of nothing more unlikely than that his lordship should have selected his cast-off mistress as his wife's attendant," Judson dryly remarked.

"Not at all. You didn't know him," replied Cyril. "I can quite fancy that the situation would have appealed to his cynical humor."

"Your opinion of the late Lord Wilmersley is certainly not flattering, but even if we take for granted that such an arrangement would not have been impossible to his lordship, I still refuse to believe that Valdrigues would have agreed to it. Even assuming that his lordship had wronged her, and that she had nursed a murderous resentment against him all these years, I cannot see how she could have hoped to further her object by accepting the humiliating position of his wife's maid. It also seems to me incredible that a woman whose passions were so violent as to find expression in murder could have controlled them during a lifetime.

"But, leaving aside these considerations, I have another reason to urge against your theory: Would his lordship have trusted a woman who he knew had a grievance against him as he certainly trusted Valdrigues? She had free access to his apartments. What was there to have prevented her from giving him an overdose of some drug during one of the many times when he had stupefied himself with opium?

"Nothing. The risk of detection would have been infinitesimal. No, my lord, why Valdrigues returned to Geralton is an enigma, I grant you, but your explanation does not satisfy me."

"As long as you acknowledge that Valdrigues's presence here needs an explanation, and are willing to work to find that explanation, I don't care whether you accept my theory or not; all I want to get at is the truth."

"The truth, my lord," said the detective, as he rose to take his leave, "is often more praised than appreciated."

A Continuation of This Story Will Be Found in Tomorrow's Issue of The Times.

Seen in the Shops

An especial means of torture for the embarrassed man is the napkin-ring, made in gold or silver or bone, and always several sizes too small for the napkin. After ruining the napkin by rolling it as tightly as is possible, if the man is strong enough, and the cloth will stand the strain, it is shoved into the ring, to be extracted later by an irate matron. Or if the man happens to be boarding, it is doomed to stay by him, looking as if it had been in a wreck, for as many days as he refrains from casting food upon it. Why the napkin ring? At a jeweler's shop which is on the north side of F street, not far from the corner of Eleventh, solid silver napkin holders are to be had in pierced designs, with a place for an initial, for $1 and $1.50. They are simply clips like some paper holders, and can be slipped on the napkin easily.

There is no more attractive looking or serviceable hat for a child than a black beaver in plain black or in colors to match a costume. The Men's Store, at the corner of Seventh street and Pennsylvania avenue, is selling beavers in the style mentioned for either girls or boys, today only, at $1.95. These are the regular $5 beavers, this special price being for today only.

Liquid green soap is one of the best and most simply made of shampoos. At the drug store on F street, one door from the corner of Ninth, green soap is to be had at 25 cents the bottle. This is liquid soap of an excellent quality and is a thorough scalp cleanser.

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