

My New Novel
"SIR RICHARD ESCOMBE"
Will Begin Next Sunday in The Sunday Call
MAX PEMBERTON

THE CALL

LIBRARY
"THE SHOULDERS OF ATLAS"
Will Begin Next Sunday in The Sunday Call
MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

VOLUME CIII.—NO. 52. SAN FRANCISCO, TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1908. PRICE FIVE CENTS.

HITS FISK HARD BUT HOLDS JOB

T. J. Ford, Superintendent of Mails, Files Serious Allegations

Hitchcock Buries Document in Archives and Scouts Idea of Investigation

Astounding Revelation of Fisk's Official Acts Is Made to The Call

Deputy Derides Roosevelt's Order to Keep Clerks Out of Politics

Charges against Postmaster Arthur G. Fisk, which, if fairly investigated, must have resulted in the removal of Fisk or the summary dismissal of the subordinate who preferred them, were lodged with Postmaster General Meyer under date of May 4, 1907, by T. J. Ford, superintendent of mails in the San Francisco post-office.

Charges involving pernicious political activities ascribed to alleged orders from the post-office department, suppression of knowledge of a postal service contract said to be illegal, permission given to favorite subordinates to engage in private enterprises to the detriment of the service; employment of incompetent relatives; gross violation of civil service laws; promotion of incompetent favorites and resulting demoralization of the service; neglect of duty, incompetency and failure to account for moneys received from postal employes throughout the country after the disaster of April, 1906, have been skillfully pigeon holed in the archives of the postoffice department. The friendship of First Assistant Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock and Senator Flint has served to stall off an investigation which if honestly made would have shown up the rottenness of the San Francisco post-office or would have resulted in invaluable vindication of Fisk.

ASKS ONLY REAPPOINTMENT

Reappointment was the only vindication Fisk sought or that was demanded for him by his sponsors, Flint and Hitchcock. The charges have slumbered to the soothing tones of Hitchcock's lullaby. Postmaster General Meyer has pleaded ignorance of the existence of the charges and kept his promise to Senator Flint by securing Fisk's nomination, which, according to information from Washington, is to be confirmed without further investigation.

POINTS TO RECORDS

"The records of the department are the proper source of such information." "Is the report that you made such charges untrue?" "I must refer you to the department," deprecated Ford, declining to give a positive answer.

LABOR

Musicians intend to regulate traveling members who play in theater orchestras and supplant local members.

MARINE

Hartman line connecting Manzanilla with the interior is nearly completed and Mexican port is enjoying a real estate boom.

MINING

Leaders decline on the mining exchange, but some of the lower priced stocks register gains.

SOCIAL

Miss Anita Davis invites girls of younger set to luncheon at her home in Washington street today.

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SIMPLICITY OF EVELYN THAW STRIPPED AWAY

Jerome Makes "Angel Child" Show Herself Under His Pitiless Questioning

Prosecutor Quickly Disperses Atmosphere Brought by "Sob School"

Woman's Wit Leads Her to Hit Back With Story of Suicide Attempt

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE CALL

NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—Under the first onslaught in one of the most severe cross-examinations to which a woman was ever subjected in a court in this city, Evelyn Nesbit Thaw today dropped the mask of girlish innocence. She revealed herself as a shrewd woman of the world, at times more than a match for District Attorney Jerome, her questioner.

At the morning session of the criminal branch of the supreme court, where her husband is on trial for the killing of Stanford White, Evelyn Thaw repeated the story of her downfall in the studio of the architect. Her voice was tremulous as she told the degrading details of her associations with White, but she did not weep. She told her story with almost childish simplicity and candor, and it was evident she was trying hard to make the jurors see her an unsophisticated girl who barely understood the position in which she was placed.

Within less than five minutes after Jerome began his cross examination of her a remarkable transformation took place in Evelyn Thaw. The counterfeited simplicity disappeared and in its place there were seen—mental acuteness, anger, skillful verbal fencing and adroit dodging that enabled her to avoid most of the traps the prosecutor had laid for her.

ADROITLY DRAWS HER OUT

Any sympathy that may have been felt for the "angel child" was dispelled little by little as the adroit prosecutor asked questions calculated to elicit answers that would show Evelyn to be cunning and a worldly wise woman. He succeeded in dispelling the Laura Jean Libby atmosphere that has been created by the historical women writers known here facetiously as the "sob squad."

Mrs. Thaw's story was broken into today by the constantly repeated interruptions by the prosecution, which sought to exclude all details on the ground of immateriality. The frequent objections led Justice Dowling to request Littleton to cut this examination as short as possible. Littleton took the course officially suggested, to find that on cross examination Mr. Jerome insisted upon reading from last year's record nearly every word the witness had then uttered. He did this under the privilege of framing new questions.

Littleton objected to it, declaring that the district attorney, by reading the former testimony in a disagreeable manner, was trying to discredit Evelyn in the eyes of the jury when he could not discredit her in any way by a direct question. Jerome made no attempt to disguise a tone of complete contempt in reading the testimony. Contempt also characterized most of the questions he put to the witness, whom he attacked in the loudest voice he has yet used at the trial.

Jerome plunged immediately into the more intimate details of the testimony and made no delicate choice of words in framing his questions. Littleton's objections on the ground of "offensiveness and impropriety" frequently were sustained by the court. Mrs. Thaw matched wits against both District Attorney Jerome and his associate, Mr. Garvan, who was ever at his chief's elbow with new suggestions. She fenced with them as skillfully as she did a year ago, and at times reflected the mood of the district attorney by answering in a voice pitched in as low a key as his own. The prosecutor's pitiless and aggressive questions often struck fire, and once, when Jerome demanded to know if the young woman had told Thaw certain things, she replied:

OBJECTS TO HIS LANGUAGE

"Yes, I told him; but I did not use the language you are using." "Don't argue with me, madame," shouted Jerome, who then had the reply stricken from the record.

But a new feature appeared in the testimony of the witness. This was when she told about Thaw swallowing the contents of a bottle of laudanum at Monte Carlo in 1904 in an attempt to end his life. Previously to this, at the Grand hotel in New York, Thaw had talked of suicide, his wife declared, and had suggested that she also take poison, as both their lives had been ruined. Mrs. Thaw said she humored Thaw at the time and diverted his mind. She

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TETRAZZINI IS TRIUMPHANT IN SCORE OF LUCIA

New York Audience Accords Her Greatest Ovation in Career

Superb Singing of Aria Is Likened to Nightingale by Opera Writer

Frantic Enthusiasm of Her Hearers Almost Ends Performance

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE CALL

By Reginald de Koven
NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—A throng of people were mad at the Manhattan opera house tonight. Five thousand hands beat together in frantic applause amid a chorus of "bravas" for Tetrazzini, who in a few brief moments seemingly eclipsed her great performances of last Wednesday and Saturday. Superbly gowned women and dignified men united in the tribute to the marvelous voice and art of the new diva, whose achievement had thrilled them almost to the point of intoxication.

"Such a display has not been witnessed or heard in this city in years," cried Mrs. Clarence Mackay as the people continued their tribute. Women in the boxes stood up and waved their handkerchiefs, and they were followed by hundreds in the parquet and in the balconies. Men pounded one another on the back in a delirium of joy.

Tetrazzini had just finished her first big aria. For a time it looked as if the opera was to be stopped then and there. But the singer herself checked the ovation by simply raising one arm. In an instant the auditorium became stilled. People leaned back and caught their breaths, waiting for the curtain to fall that they might start afresh where they had stopped and proceeded until fatigue interfered.

HER SUCCESS COMPLETE

Never was verdict of an audience more spontaneous or unanimous; never was artistic success more complete and unqualified. Had Tetrazzini elected to appear first as Lucia I imagine that critical opinion might have been less varied and various, for there is no doubt that the role from every point of view suits her better than Violetta.

Allowing for the many points in which Tetrazzini surpasses and goes beyond the mere singer, when all is said, she is more remarkable as a coloratura singer than as a purely lyric artist and as such the vocal pyrotechnics which Donizetti provided and which she certainly amplified, gave her larger opportunity to exhibit her marvelous natural vigor and her little less marvelous artistic use of it to the best possible advantage.

Her costumes, too, were vastly becoming, and the stage illusion thereby heightened. One does not perhaps nowadays roam around the moors in satin and black jet; but then the tradition of costume in this opera has always to suggest local atmosphere as little on the stage as Donizetti has in the music.

WAIT FOR TETRAZZINI

The audience was late and the curtain late in rising. The first scene, with Ashton's air, though capitably sung by Sammarco, passed unheeded, and then to a pretty scene of rock and river the diva appeared, looking younger and altogether more attractive in face and figure than as Violetta.

And still there was a pause of expectancy while judgment for a few moments halted almost, for Lucia's opening air, "Reguaver Nislenzio," was indifferently, even carelessly sung, with several lapses from pitch and a striking lack of color and resonance in the medium register, the music lying in the worst part of the voice. I could see people turn to one another with an air of both question and surprise.

But then came the exquisitely vocal "Quando Rapita" and enthusiasm began and grew apace, for in the singing of this number the great artist stood revealed. I could think of nothing so much as the song of the nightingales in the wonderful birdlike facility which made light of roulades and trills, all executed with the greatest possible ease and finish, with perfect intonation and evenness of tone and ending with another of those marvelous high notes, a D this time, whose effect was electrical in its intensity and power and the astonishing facility of it.

IN STORM OF APPLAUSE

And then the audience fairly rose and the applause was even greater than on the opening night and the curtain rose again and again as if the audience could not often enough express their unbounded delight and enthusiasm. The duet at the close of the act was magnificently sung by both Tetrazzini and Zenatello, their voices blending beautifully.

So well to my thinking did Zenatello

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Eugene Schmitz (upper), whose careless attitude in court contrasted with the nervous, haggard expression worn by Abraham Ruef (lower to left); also a photograph of Alex Lathan, formerly Ruef's chauffeur, over a talk with whom Ruef clashed with Detective Burns.



UNMASKED RUEF BEGS FOR DELAY

Boss' Insolence Falls Away as He Pleads for Brief Continuance

Intense Nervousness Takes the Place of Crocodile Tears and Assurance

Clashes With Burns Over Former Chauffeur, Who Will Give Testimony

Ruef's Trial on Trolley Bribery Case Goes Over Until Tomorrow

Brought to bay at last, with all hope of the immunity on which he has so long relied torn from him and only a vision of years behind prison walls ahead, Abe Ruef clutched yesterday at the only straw which seemed to offer promise of postponing for a few short days the beginning of the trial from which he has so much to fear. Through George Keane, who acted as his mouthpiece, Ruef let fall his mantle of insolent independence, proclaimed himself a weakling unable to secure counsel who could preserve his rights and pleaded with the court to grant him three weeks—two weeks, even a single week—of grace in which to prepare to defend himself.

The prospect of immediate trial has changed Ruef more in 48 hours than eight months of imprisonment and contant dickering have done. It was not the smiling, debonair, confident Ruef who sat in Judge Lawlor's court yesterday morning, but a worn, haggard individual, too intent on the details of his battle for time even to attempt to keep up the sham which has shielded him so long. Even the keen, quick glance of the eye and the sunny affability which he has never before allowed to depart for an instant were gone and Ruef showed himself, possibly for the first time, stripped clean of every vestige of pretense and make believe.

DROPS HIS PRETENSE

Ruef's intense excitement and nervousness while the proceedings before Judge Lawlor were in progress yesterday morning were not the mimicry of rehearsed action, such as the tears he shed when he played his part before Judge Dunne eight months ago, uttering a meaningless plea of guilt and promising the support to decency which he had no intention of giving. His attitude was in vivid contrast to that of Eugene E. Schmitz, who sat with his attorneys, serene and almost smiling. There was also an expression of suppressed satisfaction on the faces of the attorneys for the indicted corporation magnates, who sat in a little group taking the deepest interest in all that was transpiring.

The appearance of Alex Lathan, Ruef's former chauffeur, who has been missing for several months, caused a stir in court and was the cause of an open clash between Ruef and Special Agent Burns. Lathan figures as an important witness against Ruef and some of the "higher up" graft defendants, as he was constantly with Ruef during the halcyon bribery days of the old administration, and made the famous trip on which Ruef carried the

Aged Hermit Rancher Nevada Sheriff Victim Is Slain by Robbers

Assailants Hurl Heavy Rock on R. A. Cordes and Ransack His Cabin for Gold

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE CALL

TRACY, Jan. 20.—R. Atger Cordes, a hermit rancher about 60 years old, was murdered in the kitchen of his cabin, near the Western Pacific tracks, at Midway, close to the Alameda county line, late Saturday night or early Sunday morning. Robbery was the motive, as Cordes was believed to have hidden several hundred dollars about his house. Every nook and corner in the house was ransacked in the search for the hidden coin.

A 25 pound rock was hurled at the old man as he was cooking doves, and his shotgun was broken off at the stock by the blow. A bullet hole in a post on the front porch shows that he must have fired a shot from the revolver he had strapped to his waist. After wounding the man the robbers tied his hands with cotton rope. This he broke in his death struggles.

Coroner Wallace has evidence to show where the rope was purchased by a man living not far from the Cordes ranch Saturday morning. This and other evidence in the possession of the officers may lead to the arrest of several ranchers. Cordes lived in fear of being robbed. He had bought knives hung a few feet apart all about the walls of his house, and last week he bought a large revolver. He said he would rather bury or lend his money to friends than to place it in banks. He leaves two cousins, ranchers near here. Farmers in the neighborhood say that if the murderers are caught no mercy will be given them.

AGED PIONEER DIES

NAPA, Jan. 20.—Poster H. Roper, a widely known and highly respected pioneer citizen of this county, died at his home here this afternoon, aged 78. He was a native of Massachusetts and is survived by a wife and five adult children. His only daughter is the wife of ex-Congressman Frank L. Coombs.

PRIESTS DIRECTED TO CAUSE PRAYER FOR RAIN

Bishop Conaty Sends Letter With Instructions to Each Parish in Diocese

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 20.—Right Rev. Thomas J. Conaty, bishop of this diocese, has issued directions to all the priests of the diocese and their congregations to pray for rain. A letter with instructions how to proceed in this matter has been sent to each parish in the city and vicinity. A special prayer for rain will be inserted in each mass, and the Catholics will follow out this plan until the downpour comes. Bishop Conaty issued a similar order once before. There are many indications of rain today.

Impertinent Question No. 34

What's the Matter With the Appellate Court? For the most original or wittiest answer to this question—and the briefer the better—The Call will pay FIVE DOLLARS. For the next five answers The Call will pay ONE DOLLAR each. Prize winning answers will be printed next Wednesday and checks mailed to the winners at once. Make your answer short and address it to IMPERTINENT QUESTIONS, THE CALL