ZOE'S DOUBLE CHAINS;

OR

FOR LIFE AND FOR LOVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY CALL BY E. LYNN LINTON.

CHAPTER I.

SHE was young, consequently thoughtless; and she was willful, as was but natural. Four brothers who were her devoted slaves—a father who idolized her—a mother who was like her elder sister, and as much a playfellow as a guide—how should she not be somewhat hard to manage and bad to bit and bridle when the humor for restraint took her? It was a mistake to try. She ought to have been given her head; and what came after was due to myself, and myself only. I should have understood her better. I should have been less exacting—less sensitive for my own part—more considerate of her weakness—call them even faults if you will. But it is so easy to be wise after the event! When passion is strong and the heart blinds the eyes, we see all things as through a veil; and we know the truth of what we have seen and the evil of of what we have done, only when too late.

We were engaged. It had been a hard fight to win her from the triple rank of guardians surrounding. Father, mother and brothers had all alike protested, the grandmother alone had taken my part. Zoe herself, while this opposition actively went on, had stood by me loyally and had refused to give me up. She had agreed to wait, and as she was but 18, I had not much to say against the three years' probation insisted on by the family. Perhaps it was only fair, as they all said, to give her the chance of changing her mind. She has seen nothing yet of life and did not know what she wanted out of it. Let her then have her three years of quasi-freedom, when I was not forbidden but she was not bound. If I could retain my position in her heart and make good my holding, well for me. If I could not, I had no cause, no claim, no charge against her. So things stood, and it must be ac-

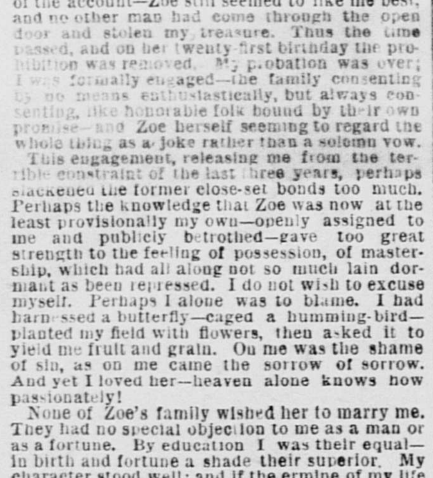
knowledged that it was an uncomfortable position for me. Still I was thankful to be allowed even so much, and I thought I could trust both my own influence and her constancy.

The most devoted lover is put in a false position when he comes into a family of which all the members are united in adulating, yielding to and generally spoiling the girl he loves. In the midst of these servile worshipers his rights are made to look like tyrannies, and the more he loves the more he offends. The jealousy which is inseparable from love—the doubt which must arise at times when the door is left open and he who will may come through and steal away the treasure, the sick suspicion that tortures itself more than any one else, the restless craving for some assurance—all this puts the lover at a disadvantage, and makes his very love a nuisance. You people want ease and pleasure; and Zoe above all shrank from the gravity of passion—the intensity of emotion. She was like some iridescent bubble flung off by the great soul of life—the very impersonation of jocund mirth and careless merriment. She was like some humanized elf brought from the underground world of fairies to serve a brief apprenticeship to man and sorrow beneath the sun. Like a cloud, you could not hold her; like a rainbow, you could not seize her. Beautiful, tormenting, inconsequent, willful, she was the human representative of some gem-like humming-bird flitting out of reach, but so seductively near as to seem close to your hand. Only when you thought to have her she escaped and flashed in the sun far above yaur head—gone! gone! I sometimes doubted if she had a heart at all. I sometimes doubted if she had a soul like other human beings. But her very willfulness was her charm and the more she eluded me the more she compelled me to seek and follow after her. And yet she was true. I knew that afterward.

My three years' probation had in it suffering enough to send many a man mad. I think I was sometimes almost mad. Ever fluctuating between hope and doubt, jealousy and love, my whole inner being was rasped and strained. Yet I dared not show what I felt. What kind of figure would a gloomy, saturnine and tortured lover cut in that house of facile gayety and easy rule? I had to eat my heart out in silence. When I "saw blood" I had to paint in rose color. When the world and all it contained were lying in the blackest shadow of death, I had to weave garlands with the rest, and crown the image of sorrow and despair with roses wet with tears for dew. But so far was to the good of the account—Zoe still seemed to like me best, and no other man had come through the open door and stolen my treasure. Thus the time passed, and on her twenty-first birthday the prohibition was removed. My probation was over; I was formally engaged—the family consenting by no means enthusiastically, but always consenting, like honorable folk bound by their own promise—and Zoe herself seeming to regard the whole thing as a joke rather than a solemn vow.

This engagement, releasing me from the terrible constraint of the last three years, perhaps slackened the former close-set bonds too much. Perhaps the knowledge that Zoe was now at the least provisionally my own—openly assigned to me and publicly betrothed—gave too great strength to the feeling of possession, of mastership, which had all along not so much lain dormant as been repressed. I do not wish to excuse myself. Perhaps I alone was to blame. I had harnessed a butterfly—caged a humming-bird—planted my field with flowers, then asked it to yield me fruit and grain. On me was the shame of sin, as on me came the sorrow of sorrow. And yet I loved her—heaven alone knows how passionately!

None of Zoe's family wished her to marry me. They had no special objection to me as a man or as a fortune. By education I was their equal—in birth and fortune a shade their superior. My character stood well; and if the ermine of my life was not entirely spotless, it was not disgracefully stained nor smirched. Still, had I been twice the man I was they would have disliked the marriage. They loved her too well themselves to wish to part with her to anyone. This was true of all; but Algernon, the youngest brother and the one immediately before Zoe, was perhaps the most hopelessly irreconcilable. He took the engagement as in some sort of personal affront, and he would have broken it off if he could, even at the eleventh hour.



His methods toward this end were various. Sometimes he found mares' nests of scandal, which he paraded as things proved and positive like so many sums in arithmetic. Sometimes he made mischief by repeating what I had said in another intention, or carrying as true reports what I had never said at all. Sometimes he tried despair, and sometimes entreaty—now he caressed and now he sulked; but all came to the same thing in the end—he wanted Zoe to break off her engagement. And she held firm, if indeed we can apply such a term to the light way she had of holding on to anything! At last he hit on another method altogether. On the principle of one nail knocking out another, he brought up to the house all the best and most eligible men he knew; and as Zoe was one to turn the head of an anchorite, she was now closely surrounded with "aspirants" of more or less pronounced devoted devotion. For men are not very honorable when the passion of love sets fire to the character; and rivalry is a game which recognizes no blow as foul, no stratagem as unfair.

Naturally I had nothing to say. The house was not mine, and if Algernon, or any other, chose to ask his friends it was not for me to object. I might see the motive, but seeing was no valid argument. Had I objected I should have put myself so much in the wrong as to be unable to ever get right again. I had nothing for it then but to possess my soul in patience for the one part, and to tighten so far as I could my hold on Zoe for the other. But that was just the difficulty. The closer I sought to hold her the more certain she was to escape. Like dancing foam, a touch destroyed her—like a golden cloud she drifted, changed, then vanished altogether; and the more strenuous the efforts to retain her the more certain was it all to end in discomfiture and loss. If I showed jealousy she retreated into the fastness of indifference—if I insisted, she hedged herself round with impenetrable obstinacy. If I in my turn assumed indifference, then she broke out into the wildest frivolity: and when that did nothing she adopted a manner of such flirtatious audacity as compelled me to drop my poor mask of poco curantism and take some kind of action. But whatever the kind I took she always, as it were, headed me and turned me back into the craven path of submission. And then, when she had it all her own way she made herself so infinitely lovely, so maddening sweet and seductive as to rivet her chains yet more securely. From righteous indignation she reduced me to blissful but essentially ignominious content. For all my love I knew the full extent of my fall.

Of all the young and handsome eligibles whom Algernon brought home as marshlights wherewith to mislead and seduce his sister from her allegiance, the one I most feared was Lindsay Kershaw. He was everything that I was not, and nothing that I was. Not above the middle height, fair-haired, blue-eyed, a little inclined "to put on flesh," as are so often the men of the fair races, good-tempered, full of fun, superficial without a touch of the darker passions—how different from the man I was—the tall, lean, dark-haired and sallow-complexioned offshoot of Southern France, with whom pin-pricks were like saber-thrusts, and a thistledown as heavy as with him would weigh a ton weight of pain! The very contrast made this young fellow, this Lindsay Kershaw, formidable to my mind, and gave his attentions to Zoe a meaning—a prepotency—that threatened to swamp all my own acreage. And that was what Algernon Hazeldine saw; and that was the reason why he brought him up to the house so persistently as he did. If Lindsay could distance me the way would be clear for every one. Algernon had no fear of the ultimate success of the young Oxonian. His claims he could manipulate. It was only I who threatened the peace of the family by taking from them their one incomparable jewel. The others went for nothing and could be managed.

CHAPTER II.

The day was heavy, close and gloomy. Thunder-clouds hung lowering in the sky, and the summer sun was hidden. A storm was evidently brewing, and all nature seemed to know that some catastrophe was at hand. The birds were silent; the butterflies, resting with folded wings, were indistinguishable from the moss, if patent enough on the flowers. No gnats nor day flies danced or flashed overhead; but big black hairy flies, blue-bottles, hornets, dragon-flies and all stinging creatures were in full activity, and in the breathless stillness the spiders wove their cruel nets in covered places without fear of failure from the wrecking of the wind.

I was as usual at the hall. Also as usual Lindsay Kershaw was there too. Algernon had brought him, as he did whenever he could—and that was whenever the young athlete had nothing more exacting on hand in the way of cricket or foot-ball. It was too sultry to sit in the house, and we were all scattered about the lawn—some lying on the tiger-skin and some sitting on the garden seats. Zoe was swinging lazily in the hammock, and I was standing by her. The atmosphere had evidently oppressed her, for she would not talk, but lay there with shut eyes, almost as if sleeping, and disturbed to petulance if I spoke to her. But I could see the shining line between her half-closed lashes, and I knew that she was not asleep. For some reason unknown to me, she was pouting—I will call it by no harsher name, and when she was in this kind of mood she was what the French call "impossible," and neither to be reasoned with nor coaxed out of her mood. I had offended her by some unexpected gaucherie, some masterful word or look, and she was taking her revenge. I wonder if she knew how much she pained me! I do not think she could!

Suddenly Lindsay Kershaw yawned, stretched himself and lounged up from the tiger-skin where he had been lying.

"I say, old fellows, this is slow work enough," he said, laughing. "Let us do something."

"All right," sung out Algernon. "What shall it be?"

"Yes, let us do something," cried Zoe, throwing off her pretense of sleep as if it had been a ribbon over her eyes.

"Let us take a ride," said Lindsay.

"No," said I; "a storm is coming on, and everyone will be drenched."

"You need not come, Justin," flashed out Zoe. "If you are afraid of a few drops of rain stay at home—no one wants you."

"I was thinking more of you than of myself," I answered; but I felt a kind of spasm go over my face and I knew that I turned pale.

"Much obliged, I am sure, old fellow," drawled Algernon; "but I think we may be trusted to take care of our sister."

"You shall not come, Justin," said Zoe, with her pretty little peremptory manner.

I did my best to smile as at a good joke, but I made a very poor affair of it.

"Why this comedy?" I asked, with the awkwardness of a man trying to conceal pain and mortification under a joking manner.

"I want to go with Algy," said Zoe.

"And I should be de trop?" I asked.

"Very much de trop," said Zoe, with mock gravity. "I never see Algy alone now, and I want to talk to him to-day very seriously."

"I am sorry," I began, and then I stopped; something choked my words, and I could not utter another sound.

Zoe looked at me, and for a moment seemed as if she was about to say something pleasant, sweet, soothing. Then the mutinous little expression came over her face again, and she turned her eyes from me to her brother.

"You are not quite married yet," said Algernon to me, disagreeably. "As Zoe says, she and I are never together now, and if she wants to be with me she shall not be thwarted."

"I do not wish to interfere," I said, with the same sense of choking in my throat.

"Well then, don't," was the reply.

All this time Lindsay Kershaw had been standing, silent but attentive to what was going on. He was deeply flushed, but save for this his face had no message to me nor to any one else.

"Come, Zoe, run and put on your habit," then said Algernon, "I will go the stables and get the beasts saddled, James"—to his eldest brother—"you will come? and Lindsay, you?"

"Yes," said both the men at once.

The earth reeled under my feet. I should have fallen had I not caught hold of a branch of the lime tree which formed one of the "uprights" for Zoe's hammock.

"I shall know what to think, Zoe, if you make yourself a party to this insult to me," I said in a low voice to my little love, who by this time had sprung to her feet and was standing near me. "I ask—I entreat you not to go—or at least if you do to include me," I continued, earnestly. "If you do not——"

There was my false move! My unfinished threat roused all there was of recalcitrant and mischievous, self-willed and thoughtless, in this wayward child. Her bright eyes flashed, her little figure stiffened.

"You may think what you like, and I don't care what you do think," she said; "I am going all the same: and you shall not come. If you do I shall stay at home."

On which she ran across the lawn and disappeared into the house.

I felt half mad and wholly bewildered. I knew to my cost what it was to quarrel with Zoe. Whatever had gone wrong was made ten times worse. If she had struck me with a whip before she then struck me with a braid of scorpions. And all these little tiffs—which are I suppose inevitable to the time of courtship—had only reduced me still more to a state of abject slavery, and increased her power and predominance. And if I dared not resent this affront on her, still less could I on her brothers. This would be to have her as well as them against me, and I could not afford that.

It was a terrible moment; but in all the press and passion of my thought came the one warning thought, like an inner voice speaking to me: "Patience! bear with patience." And, like a shining strip of light reaching in the far distance beyond the dark and dreary immediate surroundings, was the faith, the belief, the knowledge that, in spite of all her waywardness, she loved me. If I had not known that I would have flung up the whole thing, even though I had blown out my brains the next moment. But I knew that she loved me. She was wayward, and her pretty petty tyranny was meant for my discomfiture—but she loved me.

Bewildered by passion, dazed with suffering, I stood there scorning myself and scorned by them. What was I but a slave, taking from an adorned mistress such blows and buffets as she chose to bestow? Yet—how could I resist?—how could I resent? The brothers, as cruel in their own way as were Isabella's, would have been only too glad had I fallen into the snare they had spread for my feet. I should then play their game and they would win. They provoked me to reprisals as far as they dared, but for her sake had to bear all—even beyond the point of self-respect; for her sake, because she loved me though she tortured me.

Meanwhile Zoe was putting on her riding habit, and the horses were brought round, while the heavens grew darker and the threatened storm was now momently more imminent. There was that mysterious hush—that eerie silence below, broken by the strange soughings of the unfelt wind in the upper branches of the trees, which is so weird and almost ghostly. These signs were, however, of no avail. The Gods wished to destroy, and they first made the victims mad. The riding party assembled, and soon the horses were cantering down the drive. Zoe had so far relaxed in her forbidding humor as to allow me to put her up. Her little foot lay in my hand light as a flower, and she sprang into the saddle as if she had been a bird lighting on a twig. When fairly seated and adjusted, and as she was starting, she half reined in her horse and looked back at me, as if she were going to speak to me. She did not; she only smiled and waved her hand pleasantly, as if no shadow had come between us. At this moment she looked like a lovely child whose wayward will has been gratified. Being gratified her heart was now free to act. Where she had been willful and disobedient she now became penitent, and her eyes prayed for the grace of reconciliation. I am glad she looked like that at me. I see her now, her graceful little head turned over her childish shoulder, and the golden fringes of her hair glistening as if they were burnished by the sun. Those golden fringes and that tender smile seemed in a manner reproductive one of the other—the same thing in two different forms. With this I was fain to be content; and with this smile on my heart, lying as a ray of sunshine across a barren desert, I started to go to my desolate home—my sole possession of joy, a girl's fleeting, backward look.

But why should I not await their return at the hall? True, I had not been asked, and was not expected, but as Zoe's betrothed I was not exempt from such ordinary social prescriptions? It took all my self-control to keep me from directing my steps to the drawing-room, where Zoe's picture was hanging, where her piano stood opened and a number of her favorite songs lay upon the music-rack, where the very air would be perfumed by the charm of her individuality. I was, as it were, drawn thither by a magnet, and I twice turned my face toward that Mecca of my yearning soul and twice I refrained and turned back again.

At that moment I caught the sound of Sealskin's voice whinnying affectionately for me. I had left him at the stables, with directions that he shouldn't be unsaddled. My heart gave a joyous bound. I'd leap on Sealskin's back and overtake the merry party, for although not much of an athlete, I was an excellent horseman, and Sealskin could show his hind hoofs with ease to any horse in the neighborhood. But suddenly Zoe's words, "You shall not come, Justin," sounded strangely loud in my ears, and again I stood motionless, drawn by two forces of equal power. Now it was that some mysterious voice drompted another course. I caught the whisper, and quicker than thought itself, almost, I hastened to obey.

It was to disguise myself as a groom, overtake Huggins, who would naturally be nearly a quarter of a mile behind the party, send him back and follow the pleasure-seekers as their equerry. Would it look as if I was distrusting Zoe and was spying her movements? Oh, how silly such a thought! It would add to their merriment, and I pictured to myself how Zoe, with a sweet moue, would cry out:

"Huggins, dismount and arrange my stirrup. Huggins, fall back to your place. Huggins, don't sit your horse like a wooden man."

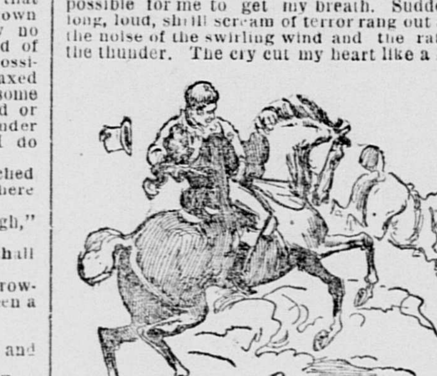
With a leap and a bound I was at the stables, where, with the aid of one of the men, I speedily transferred myself into a suit of Huggins' livery. Sealskin shot out of the yard like a bow from an arrow. But my joy was short-lived, for when I reached the open highway I became conscious for the first time of the rapid progress the storm was making. The rumble of the thunder was of that deep and booming kind which always foretells a violent storm, and in the western sky, now black as night itself, the lightning was zigzagging with a lurid hue.

I knew the course the party was to take, and in a few moments pulled up alongside of Huggins. Algernon had nettled me one day by telling me that I looked like Huggins, and I believe it now, for that man actually turned pale as his eyes rested upon his double. He told me afterward that he took me for his ghost, and had felt his hair stiffen with fear of death.

I slipped a sovereign into the fellow's hand and told him to turn bridle and put for the hall. He thrust his tongue into his cheek, gave me a sly wink and obeyed.

The air had thickened so now that I could scarcely see the figures of the riders ahead of me. I was quite certain that I knew their intent. It was to gain the club sheds on the road to the cliffs, and take shelter there till the rain was over. But I saw that they would not be able to accomplish their purpose, for the storm was upon us. It came with that sudden and tremendous violence which seems to shake the very earth to its center. Expected, it yet startled, stunned, appalled. It was more like a storm in the tropics than one in our milder-mannered temperate zone. The thunder pealed and the lightning flashed with terrifying force and vividness; and then the rain came down in very sheets of huge and pelting drops, whereby the rivulets were swollen to rivers, and the rivers became unmanageable torrents. Sealskin turned his beautiful head toward the play of the mad thunderbolts in the western sky and snorted nervously, but at the touch of my hand and a few words of encouragement he quieted down and bore himself like a rational being.

I had pulled up to within about a hundred feet of the others, for there was a dull and heavy pain about my heart, and it seemed almost impossible for me to get my breath. Suddenly a long, loud, shrill scream of terror rang out above the noise of the swirling wind and the rattle of the thunder. The cry cut my heart like a knife.



Sealskin answered my call, and stretched his splendid body till he seemed almost borne along on the wings of the storm. In a few seconds' time I was there. A mad fright had seized upon the three horses. Algernon's had reared and fallen upon him. Lindsay was making unskillful efforts to control his long enough to dismount and hasten to Algernon's assistance. A flash more intensely white and blinding than any yet showed me Lindsay's terror-stricken face, his parted lips and nerveless grasp, for, athlete though he was, he lacked entirely my courage and presence of mind.

Sealskin answered the reins as readily as if the soft, still air of a June day were over our heads. I had disengaged my right foot from the stirrup when to my horror I saw that Zoe was not there. Her horse had broken away with her. Frail child at the best, she had in her terror, at sight of her falling brother, lost all control over him and was now only heaven knew where—dead, perhaps, trampled beneath the pitiless hoofs of the maddened beast or dragged at his heels, her fair form beating against the roadbed; or, worse even than all, keeping her seat only to be dashed to death when the panic-stricken animal should come to make his last wild leap over the cliffs. I know not what kept me from breathing out my life then and there. I think it was Sealskin, who stood so like a thinking, reasoning creature, only waiting for me to come to myself and give him the word to go. At last my bewilderment vanished. I drew the reins tightly over the arched, velvety neck and cried like a madman—shrieked is a better word—"Go, go, Sealskin; for her life go, you beautiful beast, go! For Zoe's sake, go! You alone can save her—my Zoe, my life and my love!"

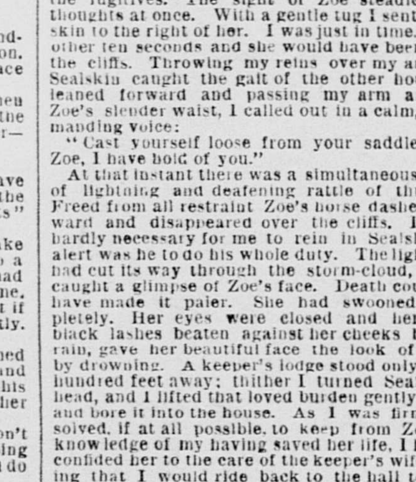
CHAPTER III.

Never, if I live to be a thousand years old, shall I forget the thrill of delight that entered my body from Sealskin's as he sprang forward at my call; his long beautiful neck stretched out and his delicate pointed ears laid back. Oh, it was a glorious sight! He pierced the black air like the very lightning which was flashing about us. I felt that he knew quite as well as I what needed of him. In a half minute it would be too late. Zoe's horse would reach the cliffs and carry that earthly angel to a dreadful death on the rocks below. Although I was cleaving the storm-lashed air at such lightning-like speed, yet it seemed an eternity to me ere the terror-stricken animal which was bearing that frail, girlish form away from me came in sight. But at last I caught and my horse caught the rattle of his hoofs. I could feel Sealskin lengthen out his stride. He was making a terrific effort to catch the fugitives. The sight of Zoe steadied my thoughts at once. With a gentle tug I sent Sealskin to the right of her. I was just in time. Another ten seconds and she would have been over the cliffs. Throwing my reins over my arm as Sealskin caught the gait of the other horse, I leaned forward and passing my arm around Zoe's slender waist, I called out in a calm, commanding voice:

"Cast yourself loose from your saddle, Miss Zoe, I have hold of you."

At that instant there was a simultaneous flash of lightning and deafening rattle of thunder. Freed from all restraint Zoe's horse dashed forward and disappeared over the cliffs. It was hardly necessary for me to rein in Sealskin, so alert was he to do his whole duty. The lightning had cut its way through the storm-cloud, I had caught a glimpse of Zoe's face. Death could not have made it paler. She had swooned completely. Her eyes were closed and her long black lashes beaten against her cheeks by the rain, gave her beautiful face the look of death by drowning. A keeper's lodge stood only a few hundred feet away; thither I turned Sealskin's head, and I lifted that loved burden gently down and bore it into the house. As I was firmly resolved, if at all possible, to keep from Zoe the knowledge of my having saved her life, I hastily confided her to the care of the keeper's wife, saying that I would ride back to the hall to get a carriage.

Up to this moment I had not given a thought to Algernon and Lindsay. Should I not ride to their assistance? And yet I hated to betray myself. As the storm had spent its fury and nature was once more serene and smiling I could get a view of a long stretch of roadway. My mind was relieved of a terrible weight of anxiety upon



seeing the two young men cantering slowly toward me. I had just time to avoid them. By the time I was back into my own clothes again the carriage came around from the stables, and springing upon the box I took the reins out of the coachman's hands, for I wanted to do everything myself, and would have been only too happy to drag the carriage. In a few moments I had clasped my beloved Zoe, radiant and smiling but a bit agitated, in my arms. She broke down completely the moment the carriage door was slammed upon us, and lay for a moment or so weeping and sobbing in my arms. Suddenly she burst out in a deliciously naive way:

"But, dearest, what shall I do for Huggins? What do people generally do when other people save their lives? It was really a piece of impertinence on his part, just as if I didn't know the cliffs were there. I have a great mind to discharge him. All at once her gayety left her, her face clouded up, her eyes opened with a strange look of mystification in them.

"Justin, Justin; look, look!" she half shrieked, "the print of your ring on the back of my hand. What does it mean? Speak, tell me; when did it happen? Oh, miserable man, I see it all; it was you and not Huggins who saved me. Look, look, wretch that you are; see the imprint left upon me. I felt it as you lifted me from my horse. Justin, Justin, you have branded me, poor slave that I am. I shall never draw another happy breath."

I did not know then what this wild talk meant. I thought it was natural that Zoe should be somewhat hysterical and paid little attention to her strange words. In fact, I attempted to pooh-pooh the idea that I and not Huggins had saved her life. But no, the evidence was overwhelming. There upon the back of her soft white hand was the perfect impress of a strange seal ring which I wore upon the third finger of my left hand—a class ring, a jeweled serpent coiled upon a large moonstone with his tail in his mouth encircling the Greek word "Aei" (forever).

So as we neared the hall I made a full confession, and, as I said to Zoe, "threw myself upon the mercy of the court." "Miserable man," she exclaimed, "you shall receive the heaviest penalty the law allows."

Zoe seemed quite herself when her father and mother met her at the door, both of them too much overcome to do more than rain caresses upon this wild and wayward child whom I had snatched from the very jaws of death for them and for myself.

And oh, what a season of sweet triumph this was for me, for me who had been for so many years the butt of indifference, the object of covert ridicule, the target of contumely at the hall, where I verily believe Zoe's love for me only saved me from death at the hands of these jealous brothers. Now they hugged me, quarreled for the privilege of handling me a cigarette or doing me some small service. And how sweet to me was the spectacle of the neglected Lindsay! How entirely delightful was it for me to find myself suddenly conducted from the lowest to the highest seat in the synagogue! And yet there was a voice, a low thin, cold voice that spoiled my triumph. I didn't recognize it at first and was startled to find that it came from Zoe's sweet lips. As she turned to go upstairs she leaned over the railing, drew her hand out of mine and whispered:

"That ring."

I took it off and handed it to her. When dinner was announced Zoe was a little late and we were waiting for her. To the surprise of all and to my secret disquiet, the beautiful Zoe glided into the drawing-room clad, not in her customary white, but in black. Although the material was a tulle and displayed through its diaphanous web the faultless symmetry of her figure, making her look as radiant as the evening star, yet I was troubled.

Hanging on the same chain with the locket which held my likeness was the mystic ring.

"You see, dearest," she murmured as she raised her speaking eyes to me, "your slave wears the symbol of her bondage. It is Aei, forever.

When night came a strange silence settled upon the hall. Every one seemed to be too weary for music or cards. Zoe and I parted at an early hour. But I could not sleep, and tossed about, passing the time studying the fantastic shapes paneled by the moonlight on the walls and hangings.

What was in my room to-night? What presence haunted it with forebodings of sorrow? Sighs seemed to fill the air—one would have said that a woman was gently weeping. I peered all around, but no one was to be seen. When I drew back the curtains and looked out, the moonlight lay like a silver sheet over the grass, and the moon herself shone high like a burnished shield in the clear unclouded sky. But in the room was still the consciousness of a presence, the faint echo of sigh, and a woman's quiet weeping.

I was not asleep; I had not lost consciousness for half a moment; when suddenly I became aware of something more than myself close to me. I opened my eyes, and there, leaning over me, but as if hovering in the air, not standing on the earth, I saw the form of Zoe. The moonlight shone on her the same as it shone on the grass and flowers of the gardens—as it shone on the silent trees and the still waters of the tranquil lake. I saw her as clearly as I saw that moonlight itself. She was as visible—and as intangible. I put out my hand to her, as she bent over me, but it met nothing—grasped nothing. It seemed to part, to disperse, the substance, whatever it was, that formed this intangible vision; and when I withdrew it and sank back on the pillow she reappeared as visibly as before.

She bent over me and her face came nearer to mine. As I live I felt the shadowy touch of her sweet lips on mine, and I heard—and yet I did not hear with my outer ears, but in my inner senses—her soft voice whisper tenderly: "Justin, I love you. Forgive me, I love you!"

"I love you. Don't doubt it, but I dare not be yours. Forgive me, poor, weak woman that I am, I cannot help it."

Hark, was that not a footfall? Whence came that faint rustle? I sprang up. A tiny white object lay upon the floor. I stooped and picked it up. It was a note from Zoe and contained these words:

Dearest, I am on my knees as I write these lines in prayer to you. I am about to put your love to a severe test indeed, for I come to you to-night to ask you to release me from my vow. You know, my loved Justin, what a wicked, willful and selfish woman I am and how long it was necessary for me to wrestle with this rebellious spirit before I could bring myself to part with my liberty to promise to become your wife. It was a terrible struggle, for I love freedom so. I revel in that spirit which knows no master and turns with disdain from the hand that would control. Nature made me so and man has improved on nature's work. Now that I owe my life to you, I shudder at the thought of wearing double chains. My sense of indebtedness to you hovers over me like some dread phantom. I was willing, dearest, to owe my happiness to you, but my existence, never. I shrink from being eternally reminded of the fact that though you might strike me down dead for my mutinous spirit I'd have no right to utter a word of complaint. Let this last act of yours be a loving one, Aei, dearest, and set me free again. It will be forever, forever, Justin, for it is my intention to enter a religious house, where my life will be spent in God's service and in yours. ZOE.

With a dreadful and paralyzing effect this letter smote the hearts of every one at the Hall, and so well did we all know Zoe's disposition that a dull, blank despair settled upon us. When I looked upon that beautiful face, so transfigured in a single night, it seemed to me that she was dead and that in reality it was naught but her spirit which glided noiselessly from room to room with a smile on its white face of such angelic sweetness that no one dared to speak the name of Zoe.

The family physician was hastily called in, but he shook his head mournfully.

"It is not in my line," he murmured in an absent-minded way, "but possibly I may be able to help you out. I'll go home and think it over. Ah, women are strange folk, very strange folk."

A day or so after the good doctor came again. He was bright and cheery and certainly had something important to communicate.

A family consultation was called. "Justin must fall ill," he began.

"Fall ill?" I repeated wonderingly.

"Yes, and very ill, too, apparently. I'll regulate your diet for you so as to make you lose flesh, and give you some harmless medicine to bleach you out. You must have chest pains, and when once you begin to have them you mustn't forget to keep them up, and you mustn't get frightened after a while when you see how near death's door you really appear to be."

I promised absolute obedience, and in a few days the first effects of the doctor's treatment began to be visible.

Zoe spent a great deal of her time at a convent near the Hall, where she was preparing to enter upon her novitiate; but I could see very plainly that my changed appearance was attracting her attention, and occupying her thoughts. She intercepted the doctor one day, and taking him aside questioned him in a subdued tone.

"In heaven's name, doctor, what's the matter with Justin?"

"A complication of ailments, Zoe, I regret to say."

"And you will make him well, dear doctor, will you not?"

"If I pull him through the winter it will be the very most I can do."

Zoe caught her breath.

About a week after this, as I was reclining in an easy chair before the open window, I felt a hand pass softly over my hair, and, gliding down my cheek, rest upon my shoulder

It was Zoe's.

"Poor, dear boy," she murmured: "would it be any comfort to you to have the Zoe you leave behind you bear your name?"

My heart gave a bound at these words, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that I could keep myself from bursting out with a joyful "Yes, yes, Zoe, my darling, my life and my love," and from throwing my arms around her in a paroxysm of delight. But I restrained myself and said with a sigh:

"Yes, dear Zoe, it would be a great comfort."

In a few days it was arranged to have the marriage ceremony performed, and the lovely Zoe, on her way to the convent, halted long enough in the drawing-room to speak the fatal words which made her my wife.

"I can do nothing more for him," said the doctor one day to Zoe, "but you, by tender nursing, may possibly add another month to his life."

Zoe determined that that extra month should be mine and began to lavish attentions upon me, and I commenced to mend so rapidly that I could see that Zoe was almost startled by the success of her efforts.

"Take care, Zoe, my life, my love, you may add more than that month the doctor promised you," and her only answer was to bury her beautiful head in my breast. Then I knew that the time had come for me to get well.

THE END.

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HYACINTHS IN POTS.

The Season for the Most Beautiful of Flowering Bulbs.

This is the season for planting the most beautiful of flowering bulbs, hyacinths, and the following from "Elliott's Fall Flowers" is opportune:

For the growth of hyacinths in pots the most favorable planting season for early bloom is September, and for a succession at intervals up to January. The size of pots is regulated by the space or convenience for placing them. When limited, and a rich massive effect is wished for, those of six or eight inches in diameter are recommended, in which three or four bulbs may be placed: but where more convenience is had a succession of single or double bulbs in smaller pots may be admitted—two bulbs in each are very effective and generally preferred; the colors of such may be regulated according to taste. In potting use a good, rich soil. Each bulb should remain one-third above the surface of the soil, and the base of each bulb should rest upon a stratum of clear river sand. After potting place them where intended to remain, upon a dry surface of ashes or sharp gravel in the rotation of their intended periods of bloom, each later potting plunged beyond the previous ones, and thus arranged water the whole well to imbed the bulbs firmly within the soil, allowing them to remain until the bulbs and surface are again dry, for one or two days; then cover the whole over to the depth of three or four inches with half-dried tan, sawdust, sand or soil, for six or eight weeks, in which position the preparatory root growth is made, necessary to a vigorous development of their flowerscapes. After the period adverted to, less or more, the first potted bulbs may be taken up, the soil and sediment carefully brushed off, and removed to a gentle hotbed or a warm, genial green-house or room where the bloom will progressively expand, care being taken to screen the leaf growth (made in darkness) for a few days. A short difference of a week or a fortnight between the periods of potting will produce a corresponding difference in the periods of bloom. They are very effective when massed in fern dishes, window boxes or in pots ten inches in diameter and six inches deep, either all of one color or assorted, according to fancy.

He Wouldn't Stop.

Two or three days ago an elderly gentleman, who was apparently waiting for a train at the Wabash Depot, began singing "Home, Sweet Home" in a high-pitched voice, and in two or three minutes every one in the waiting-room was laughing at him, says the Detroit Free Press. The depot officer finally approached him and said:

"My friend, that is against orders."

"What—to sing?"

"Yes."

"To sing 'Home, Sweet Home?'"

"Yes."

"I don't believe it! I don't believe there's a town in this United States where a feller who is clean busted and forty miles from home can't sing 'Home, Sweet Home' all he wants to without breaking the law. You go away and—

Be it ever so humble
There's no place like home."

AN ECCENTRIC COUNTESS.

The Peculiar Vagaries of Sarolta Vay, a Titled Hungarian.

She Dons Men's Clothes and Goes Out Into the World in Search of Adventure—Her Marriage With Nine Women.

THE young Hungarian Countess Sarolta Jay closed her mad career last January. Without money and without credit, shattered by dissipation and disheartened by disappointment, restrained at every turn by the inflexible hand of the law, and notorious beyond any other European woman of her generation, she then took refuge from the sporting world in the seclusion of a friend's house in Pesth. She abjured drinking, betting and gambling, fighting, dueling and debt-making. She continued to wear trousers and cutaways, but ceased to woo and win young women under such false pretenses. Her retirement from the sporting world, which she had helped to lead, caused the revival of many reminiscences of her bizarre record in the high life of Vienna, Pesth and Prague. But the Countess and her family and friends kept their mouths shut so tight concerning her carousals that only desultory bits of her history could be picked up here and there by the Continental dailies.

Recently, however, Professor von Krafft-Ebing got at the records of the Vay family, from the tenth century founder down to Countess Sarolta, and collected from them the facts for "psychological and physiological study," which he has just published. His book is far from being as heavy and abstract as its title might indicate. It contains a wealth of raw material for simon-pure gossip in the finer drawing-rooms of Emperor Franz Joseph's subjects, and from it the New York Sun made the following condensation:

Countess Sarolta Vay was born in 1866, just nine years after her mother's marriage. Her father was Count Ladislas Vay, a General and an Imperial Chamberlain. He had waited so long and with so great an anxiety for the birth of an heir that when Sarolta came her mother feared to tell him that his first born was only a girl. With the aid of the nurse she concealed from him the sex of the child, and, as time passed, took all the necessary precautions that occasion demanded to keep up the deception. Sarolta went into knickerbockers and roundabouts at the age of 5, played boys' games, got the elements of a boy's education, and when 12 years of age could hunt, fish and fence as could few boys of her age. In her fourteenth year her father decided to send her to a military school. To prevent this her mother was obliged to confess all. The Count swallowed his anger and chagrin, and tried at once to repair the topsy turvy condition of his family affairs by putting Sarolta into girl's clothes, calling her Sandor, and sending her off to a girls' school. In vain. Sarolta

REFUSED TO BE TRANSFORMED.

She stole into her trousers and jackets whenever she got a chance, and led her parents a sad life in her constant endeavors to get rid of the petticoats they tried to keep on her. She besought her father to allow her to enter the Honved Hussar Regiment. His refusal was the last straw, and she proclaimed her intention to tear up all Austria with her pranks as soon as she became of age.

She kept her word faithfully. On the first day of her majority she swung out into the world in a cutaway, tight trousers and a high hat and began a career of unprecedented dissipation. She did everything and did it with a zest that made her the most notorious person in the fastest circles of Vienna. She got head over heels in debt, and to extricate herself forged, embezzled and stole on a grand scale. Still her creditors were only half satisfied and hounded her constantly. They finally drove her to a step that caused her arrest on a dozen different charges, and eventually her retirement. To extricate herself she married Marie Engelhardt, a beautiful eighteen-year-old girl, whom she met at a summer hotel at Worthersee last fall. Papa Engelhardt, an army contractor, thought, of course, that his daughter was marrying a real Count Sandor Vay, and was so delighted to have her capture a title that he gave her dowry of $500,000. The marriage was celebrated with tremendous pomp, such as only a simple Continental citizen who has corralled a nobleman for his daughter knows how to exhibit with proper impressiveness. The Countess and Marie went on a wedding journey. The Countess threw away the dowry so rapidly that every one she owed heard of her showy extravagance; her creditors surrounded her, the victims of her dishonesty began to call for indemnification for their losses, and a general exposure followed. Despite all this, Marie clung fast to the Countess, and left her only when compelled to do so by her parents.

Sarolta, or Sandor, was imprisoned in Klangenfurth; was deprived of the right to contract legal debts, and was threatened with the insane asylum. She was released after two weeks of incarceration, and sought directly the quiet of the house of her friend, Fraulein Czeky, in Paris.

The idiosyncracies of the Countess Sarolta, which are back of all these curious features in her career, are ascribed by Professor Krafft-Ebing to heredity. A sister of her grandmother, he has discovered, was hysterical, somnambulistic, and lay seventeen years in bed, merely because she imagined she had hip disease. Another grandaunt passed seven years in bed because she imagined herself to be suffering from

AN INCURABLE DISEASE.

Her grandmother suffered from a delusion that a certain table in her drawing-room was cursed. Whenever a person laid an article on this table she cried: "It is cursed, it is cursed," and hurried with the article into an adjoining room, which she called the "Black Chamber." The key to this chamber she carried in her girdle in the day-time, and at night kept it under her pillow. After her death a dozen shawls ornaments, bank notes and gold pieces were found in this back room. A fourth grandaunt did not allow the servants to sweep or dust her room for four years, and neither washed herself nor combed her hair. All these women were, however, clever, well-educated and amiable. Sarolta's mother was nervous, and fell ill whenever she was outdoors in the moonlight. One branch of the mother's family was given over entirely to spiritualism. Four cousins on the mother's side shot themselves.

The majority of the members of the Vay family have been persons of unusual talents. Sarolta's father occupied for a long time posts under the Austrian Government, was a military man of considerable genius, and was a favorite at the Viennese court. He lost his high position, however, on account of his growing eccentricity of behavior and his inclination to throw away all money that came to his hands. In three years he squandered a million, and then fell out of public life. Sarolta's aunt on the Vay side, who lives in Dresden, partakes of the common eccentricity of the family. While Sarolta, in her thirteenth year, was at her grandmother's house, she was encouraged to play all sorts of high jinks in her masculine disguise, to make love to an English girl of 16, and finally to elope with her, although the grandmother knew from the first of the deception.

The desire of Sarolta to appear to be a man has always amounted to a partial mental derangement. Professor Krafft-Ebing says she fought six duels during the maddest part of her career with Viennese officers and students who reproached her with her sex. She insulted several more, who discreetly declined to challenge the prowess of her arm. She has been "married" by priests and civil officers to no fewer than nine women besides Marie Engelhardt. All of these women have seemed to catch the contagion of her own hallucination. Six of them still live in Vienna as divorced Countesses Vay. Two have tried to bring suits for alimony, and one is trying hard to get Sarolta back to live with her. Sarolta, however, still tries, she says, to remain faithful to her last wife.

"BEAUTIFUL MARIE!"

She exclaimed, recently, "I dream of you every night." "I hate everything that reminds me of my womanhood," she said to a friend of the professor. "I would formally insult a man who would call me a Countess. A friend who reminded me of my sex I would never speak to again."

Nevertheless the Countess Sarolta has small affection for mankind. "I have never felt the slightest inclination to become well acquainted with any young man," she exclaimed. "As the years pass by I become more and more convinced that none of them are worthy of my friendship. When I do associate with men, especially in the society of women, I prefer those of a plain exterior, because then I run no risk of being cast in the shade. The idea that a woman could prefer any other man to me has always caused me the deepest pangs of jealousy. In selecting my companions among women I have always chosen the intelligent rather than the beautiful. I have an inexpressible detestation of women's clothes and in general against everything feminine, so far as it concerns me alone. On the other hand, where others are concerned, I love only those of the gentler sex."

Professor Krafft-Ebing has also drawn some conclusions from the formation of the Countess Sarolta's handwriting. "The strokes," he says, "show firmness and certainty. They are thoroughly masculine. A close analysis reveals these characteristics: Wild passion, hatred, and opposition against everything which partakes of the nature of heartfelt love, an entire lack of poetic sentiment of the sentimental sort, nobility of aspirations, enthusiasm for everything beautiful and noble, a keen mind for science and the fine arts. The contents of her manuscript betray wide reading in the classics of all languages. She quotes freely from the poets, historians and ethical writers of all countries. Her poetical and other literary works are far above mediocrity. For several years she has contributed numerous articles of high merit to four Viennese magazines of wide circulation and considerable prominence."

The Countess Sarolta Vay is a woman of imposing presence. She is of medium height and has limbs of masculine development. Her shoulders are heavy, her chest is broad. Her hair is short, curly and almost black. Her nose turns up slightly and her mouth has the curves of Cupid bow. Although her years of dissipation have cut deep lines in her face, she is still handsome and looks like a boy of 21.

THE INDIAN JUGGLERS.

They May Hypnotize the Crowd But Not the Camera.

A Detective Box and Some Surprising Results. The Fakir Simply Controls His Audience and Hypnotism Does the Rest.

FREDERICK S. ELLMORE is a Chicago man who has just returned from a trip around the world. He has a theory that the wonderful tricks of the East Indian jugglers were performed by the aid of hypnotism. To a Tribune reporter Mr. Ellmore said:

"We had done East India pretty thoroughly, and had spent some time in Calcutta. From there we went north, stopping for a short time at Rajmahal and Dinabur. From the latter city we went south to Gaya, which we reached in July last. Lessing and I had frequently talked over the Indian fakirs and their marvelous performances, and had determined upon making a careful test of their powers. So we were constantly on the alert for some first-class juggler.

"One afternoon Lessing rushed into the room where I was taking a snooze, and told me there was a fakir in front about ready to begin his performances. I was as pleased as he was. Neither of us had been able previous to this time to see any of these fellows, but we arranged a little plan which we were to put into operation when opportunity offered.

"I had been impressed by a theory that the explanation of all their alleged supernatural performances would be found in hypnotism, but I did not know just how to get at it until Lessing proposed this plan to test my theory. While the fakir was going through his performances Lessing was to make a rapid pencil sketch of what he saw, while I at the same moment would take a snap shot with my kodak.

"Being prepared to put this plan in operation, we went out from our abode, and there found the fakir and a crowd of natives and one or two Europeans.

THE FAKIR

Was a queer-looking chap. His hair was long and matted, and his beard hung low on his breast. His only decoration was a copper ring or bracelet worn about his right arm, between the wrist and the elbow.

"His eyes were remarkable both for their brilliancy and their intense depth, if I may so term it. They seemed to be almost jet black, and were set unusually deep in his head. When we stepped into the little circle about him those eyes took us in from sole to crown.

"He had spread upon the ground a coarse carpet of peculiar texture, about four feet wide and six feet long. At his right stood a small earthen bowl, and across his knees lay a strange-looking musical instrument.

"Having received the signal that all was ready, he took the bowl in his hands and turned the contents—a reddish sand-like mixture—out upon the carpet. He mixed it about with his fingers, apparently to show that it contained no concealed objects.

"Replacing the sand in the bowl he stood it in the center of the carpet, several feet in front of his knees, and covered it with a small shawl, first placing in the mixture several seeds of the mango fruit. Then he played a weird air on his pipe, swayed back and forth and as he did so slowly took in each member of the crowd of spectators with those marvelous eyes of his. The swaying and pipe-playing lasted two or three minutes. Then he suddenly stopped and raised one corner of the shawl.

"We saw several green shoots, two or three inches high. He replaced the shawl, played a little more on his pipe, and I could have sworn I saw the shawl pushed three feet into the air. Again he stopped and removed the shawl. This time there was

A PERFECT TREE,

Two feet or more in height, with long, slender, flat leaves. Lessing nudged me, and I took my picture while he made a skeleton sketch.

"While we were watching this creation of the queer old man it seemed to vanish before our eyes. When it was gone he removed the bowl and spread the shawl on the ground before him. Then there was more music and more swaying, more looking at the crowd; and as we watched the dirty square of cloth he had placed on the ground we saw outlined beneath it some moving object. As we watched he grasped the shawl by each of two corners and snatched it from the ground.

"Upon the spot where it had rested but a moment before there sat the queerest dimpled Indian baby that I had ever seen in my travels. Lessing kept his nerve better than I did. I would have forgotten what I was doing if he had not reminded me.

"I took the picture and he made his sketch. The baby remained but a moment before Mr. Fakir recovered it with his shawl, and, drawing a knife, cut and slashed at the spot where the infant sat. In another instant he threw away the shawl and there was nothing there.

"We had scarce time to recover from our astonishment when the fakir drew from under his knee a ball of gray twine. Taking the loose end between his teeth, he, with a quick upward motion, tossed the ball into the air.

"Instead of coming back to him it kept on going up and up until out of sight, and there remained only the long swaying end. When we looked down after trying to see where the ball had gone we were all astonished to see standing beside the fakir a boy about 6 years old. He had not been there when the ball was tossed into the air, but he was there now, and at

A WORD FROM THE FAKIR

He walked over to the twine and began climbing it, a good deal after the fashion of a monkey climbing a grapevine.

"As he was starting I got his range and made a picture of him, Lessing at the same time making a sketch. The boy disappeared when he had reached a point thirty or forty feet from the ground, at least we could not see him. A moment later the twine disappeared. Then the fakir arose, rolled up his carpet, took the bowl away, and passed among the crowd soliciting contributions.

"I had no facilities for developing the kodak films, and it was these Lessing took with him as well as 1000 or more other negatives, to be developed. The fakir pictures, with a few others, I received this afternoon. After the fakir's departure Lessing filled in his sketches, and these he left with me. You'll see by comparing the ones that Lessing made with the photographs that in no instance did the camera record the marvelous features of the performance.

"For instance, Lessing's sketch shows the tree grown from the bush there. Lessing saw a baby and so did I, and he got it in his sketch, but the camera demonstrates that there was no baby.

"Lessing's sketch of the boy climbing the twine is evidence that he saw it, but the camera says there was no boy and no twine From which I am compelled to believe that my theory is absolutely correct—that Mr. Fakir had simply hypnotized the entire crowd, but couldn't hypnotize the camera. I'm going to write out a history of the affair and have copies made of the pictures and forward them to the London Society for Psychical Research. I have no doubt it will make good use of them."

The Queen's Presents.

It has been the practice and pleasure of the Queen to send hampers of household linen to various charity hospitals about London. Although designated "old linen," many of the contributions were better than brand new, because of their association and the royal crest embroidered on every towel, napkin, sheet and pillow-slip. It seems that an enterprising and impecunious matron, who received the royal donations, carefully assorted the linen and disposed of it at a profit to private concerns, the beautifully embroidered monogram and heraldic device enhancing its value and allowing a sufficient margin for the purchase of new linen to appease conscience as well as supply the deficiency in the contribution. By some strangely unfortunate accident this innocent form of speculation reached Windsor Castle, the hapless matron was dismissed in disgrace and now the High Chamberlain of the linen closet has orders to cut the royal trademark out of the linen before sending it to the hospital.—N. Y. World.

PERE DUMAS LE FILS DU.

Mademoiselle Jeannine, Daughter of Alexandre, to Marry.

She Will Become Countess d'Hauterive in October—The Home of Dumas, the Dramatist, on the Avenue de Villiers.

Special Paris Letter to THE SUNDAY CALL.

PARIS, Sept. 5, 1890.—Not very long ago Mademoiselle Jeannine Dumas said "I have firmly resolved never to marry, for I do not wish to leave my father." In spite of her strong resolution Mademoiselle Jeannine will become Countess d'Hauterive the 10th day of next October. The Count d'Hauterive belongs to one of the oldest families of the Dauphine, and he himself is a young cavalry officer of distinction. In 1793 his granduncle was French Consul-General at New York; recalled by the convention, he was charged by Prince de Talleyrand with the political service at the Foreign Office. In 1830 he died, after having aided in the arrangement of sixty-two treaties, and leaving no children his nephews inherited title and estates. Jeannine Dumas is a violinist of talent, and her teachers, Planel and Garcia, leaders of the Conservatory Orchestra, say that as a professional violinist she would win fame and fortune.

Alexandre Dumas has been very severe in the education of his two daughters. Colette, the elder, is now Mme. Lippmann, wife of a wealthy manufacturer. Before her marriage Mme. Lippmann had not seen the interior of the Comedie Francaise twenty times. It will be remembered that when he was received into the Academy, Dumas said: "I respect young girls so highly, that I should not like them to be conducted to the theater. I respect my art too much to bring it to a point where there would be no danger for such spectators."

Once before her marriage Mme. Lippmann was taken to a ball and there she met her husband. After her marriage she was too occupied with her children to dream of society, until her father decided that

AS AN AMATEUR ACTRESS

Colette would be surpassed by none, and her splendid home in the Rue Dumont-Durville was thrown open for a theatrical representation.

Dumas' "Une Visite de Noces" was chosen for the debut, and those who had seen the actress who first interpreted the role said, "She is a Deselee du monde."

However, Dumas, the author of "Francillon," Dumas, the father of the debutante, was more excited than he has ever been at a great premiere of the Comedie Francisea. At the close he was proud enough of his daughter's success to promise his friends a repetition at no distant day.

Mme. Lippmann has a right to her dramatic talent. Not only is she the daughter of an illustrious dramatic author, but her mother, a Russian beauty, had wonderful success in the theater installed by the Duchess de Berri in her Venetian palace—Vendramini, situated on the Grand Canal—a palace that belongs to the duke Della Grazia, son of Count Hector Lucchesi-Palli, Duke della Grazia, and the Duchess de Berri. The theater in the palace will seat 300 persons, and in the days of the amiable Duchess the front seats were reserved for imperial and royal highnesses. One evening a friend of mine, present at all these entertainments, counted thirty heads wearing or about to wear crowns.

In this circle Mme. Alexandre Dumas, then Mme. Narishkime, was a favorite because of her beauty and talent, and when Mme. Dumas heard the praise showered upon her daughter she must have recalled thirty years, when she herself was admired not only by litterateurs and artists but by sovereigns

FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Alexandre Dumas de la Pailleterie lives at 98 Avenue de Villiers, the quarter of successful artists and writers; at a very short distance is the colossal statue of Dumas pere, and a bronze replica nearly as large is the chief ornament of the vestibule in Dumas' house. In the court-yard are two ecclesiastical stalls of the Renaissance, and these are shadowed by the thick ivy leaves that cover the stone walls of the court-yard. A double glass door leads to the house proper; the drawing-room is divided into two parts by a pedestal covered with purple velvet, supporting a life-size marble nymph. One-half the room is furnished in Louis XV style, with furniture upholstered in rose-colored lampas, the other half is filled with Japanese and Chinese curios. The doors are of bamboo and the ceiling decorated with Japanese drawings, chairs and tables are of stained bamboo, and everywhere there are fans, lacquered screens and various Chinese bibelots.

UP TWO FLIGHTS OF STAIRS

Are the author's study and bed-room. The bed-room is filled with objets d'art, and the study is conspicuous only for an immense writing-table littered with paper, letters and goose-quills, the only pen Dumas allows himself.

The picture gallery, containing works of the best masters, and the other portions of the house are in perfect taste. This is the home of Alexandre Dumas from October 1st to May 1st each year. In May he, with his entire family, goes to Marly, where he has a beautiful residence not far from La Verduron, Victorien Sardou's summer home. In the beginning of July the Dumas family installs its lares and penates in the chalet at Puys, near Dieppe, and here they are joined by the Marquess of Salisbury, who owns Chalet Cecil, and Mme. Miolan-Carvalho, who possesses one of the most picturesque habitations on the Channel coast.

The Dumas' house at Marly, near Saint-Germain-en-Laye, is a two-story building with a three-story addition. On the ground floor are two drawing-rooms and a dining-room, opening on a veranda covered with rare plants. In the second story is the study of Alexandre Dumas, a room simply furnished, but filled with books.

THE BEAUTY OF THE PLACE

Is the superb park, from which one has a fine view of the neighboring country. Dumas and Sardou are very neighborly at Marly, and the hatred between these two dramatic writers has been proven a legend.

Unless the two authors are very diplomatic there is no jealousy between them. They seem to be not only friends, but to possess one for the other a profound esteem and admiration.

Certainly Alexandre Dumas is a constructor of systems, an advocate of theory, a promulgator of new ideas. He dares, like no modern writer, uses no precautions and says what he thinks, without reference to conventionality and prejudices. He seems cynical, and some twenty-five years ago he had an attack of what the French call maladie noire, from which he has never recovered. On the whole, however, he is a "good fellow," and when he believes a demand upon his purse a worthy one he responds generously. Stories of his avarice and selfishness seem very improbable to his friends, and for the son of the elder Dumas must be impossible.

BARONESS ALTHEA SALVADOR.

THE WRECKING TRAIN.

Something About the Outfit Carried in Its Cars and Always in Readiness.

Accidents will happen occasionally on the best managed railroads, and sometimes bad wrecks happen, the cause of which frequently is a mystery, and the tracks are blocked for hours. For every minute the track remains blocked money and time are lost, and passenger and freight traffic is interrupted. So the railroads are always prepared, and within thirty minutes after a wreck has happened a wrecking train is on the way with a trained crew of men, and if the telegram announcing the wreck says that passengers or employes are injured, the wrecking train comes along with its physicians, bandages and cots. A wrecking outfit is about the homeliest thing owned by a railroad company, but when they are needed they are needed badly.

The wrecking-cars are kept at the end of a division, and are directly under the control of the Superintendent of that division. The wrecking train is composed of three cars and a powerful locomotive, and all the cars are fitted with air brakes. The first car is what is known as the truck-car. The body of the car is very low, and upon it are carried two extra pairs of trucks, rails, cross-ties and spikes, for sometimes the track is torn up in a wreck.

The second car is the wrecking-car. It is built of the heaviest timber, and is mounted on two pairs of small, heavy trucks. Half of the car is covered over, and the other half is a mere platform, but arising from the center is a powerful derrick with a 28-foot boom. With this powerful contrivance trucks, cars and locomotives are swung about. The covered portion of the car resembles inside a store-room of a ship, as there are so many cables hanging around.

In one end of the car are two closets, one containing the food for the crew. The locker is always well filled, for there is no telling when the wrecking-train may be called into service. The other closet or locker contains medicines, bandages and a portable telegraph outfit, with several coils of wire. If the wreck is a bad one the instrument is brought into use. An operator is picked up at the first station along the road, and when the scene of the accident is reached the wires are set and a telegraph office is established. The car carries rope of every size and kind up to three inches in diameter, hydraulic jacks for raising engines and cars, levers, pulleys and derrick-tackle of all kinds.

On the Louisville and Nashville first division wrecking-cars are carried 300 feet of Manilla three-inch rope for putting engines on the track, 300 feet of two-inch fall line for pulling purposes, 275 feet of one and three-quarter inch rope for the derrick, two sixty-foot sections of three-inch switch rope for pulling on cars, 240 feet of two and one-half inch rope for the same purpose, and 230 feet of three-inch rope for putting on trucks, and 500 feet for guy lines. The next car is the "block car," containing short blocks of wood of every size for blocking up cars and locomotives.

At every wreck cars are generally tumbled about in confusion, and the wrecking crew begin on these. The shattered ones are pushed off the track, and those left in a little better condition are put on the track and drawn away. After this is done there is one or more disabled engines. The heavy cables on the wrecking car are attached to the disabled locomotive, and a live one at the other end of the rope generally by hard work pulls the disabled locomotive back on the track. When the track is clear the wrecking train picks up all the iron and trucks and comes back to town.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

PRETTY AT TENNIS.

A Hint to Young Ladies Who Play for Admiration.

An elderly woman, well dressed and jolly looking, sat on the big cool veranda of the Brighton Beach Hotel one day last week, watching four young women dressed in showy costumes play lawn tennis on the well-kept court that lies between the hotel and the ocean, having its seaward edge banked up with big bags of sand to keep the wild winter surf from knocking the sod into little pieces and covering it with sand and seaweed.

The court is surrounded on all sides by a great number of benches, and nearly all the seats were filled. The girls were all pretty, and the New York Tribune says they knew it, and their clothes were stylish and expensive, but they could not play tennis.

"Look at them," said the old woman to some younger companions who sat near her. "Poor little geese, perspiring away there in the sun, seeking for admiration. See how at every turn of their bodies they look out of the corners of their eyes to see if any one is observing them. But, after all, what makes me despise them is not so much their thirst for admiration, for that is natural, as the awkward way they go about to attract it. None of them can serve a tennis ball properly, and none of them can return a difficult stroke to their opponent. Yet they persist in serving swift balls to one another, which are invariably missed, after awkward attempts to hit them.

"Look at those men over there, laughing at the awkwardness of the players. They evidently understand tennis, and do you think they are anything like as much impressed with the girls as if the dear things could play the game just a little bit? Then look at those people who do not understand the game and yet know what lawn tennis is, have heard of its charms and are glad of a chance to see it played. They watch with interest as the girls begin. The first one to serve takes her position, raises her racket, tosses the ball up, catches some one gazing at her, forgets the ball in wondering how she looks, and lands the little sphere in the net. The failure annoys her and she hits the next one a sharp but ill-judged rap that sends it far beyond the court of her adversary and causes the latter to scowl in an altogether unlovely fashion as she walks lazily after it.

"Now, why don't they have the sense, or get it from some one who has," continued the old lady, "to do what tennis players call 'rally': that is, merely toss the ball back and forth across the net, placing the ball in as easy a position as possible every time for your opponent to return it, instead of making it as hard as possible for her to do so. Never mind about the lines of the courts, or about counting points or anything of the kind, but bend all your energies to seeing how many times you and you opponent, who is really a partner in this case, on the other side of the net, can return the ball without letting it roll away and stopping the game. It does not matter how many times the ball bounds before you return it, so long as you do so at all.

"'Just baby tennis,' you say. What of that? It will give you all the exercise you want. Instead of scowls and jealousy and efforts to make your companions miss the ball and look clumsy, you do as you would be done by, and good nature beams from your face and echoes in your peals of laughter. The spectators who do not understand the fine points of the game are delighted with the lively sport and think you must be splendid players. Those who do understand it see that you are out for fun only, and admire your graceful poses and agile movements all the more because their criticism is not aroused by your poor play.

"This way of playing the game is especially good for mere beginners, who get just as much experience in volleying, smashing, back-hand strokes, drives, placing the ball, etc., when they try to make their strokes in such a way as will be easy to return as when they do it in the regular way, and certainly it gives them ten times the amount of practice in the strokes. On the whole, my dears," added the old lady, as she gathered up her needlework and sought her room in the hotel, "when you go on the tennis court fishing for admiration let your watchword be 'Rally 'round the net, girl.'"—Boston Herald.

BEN BUTLER.

He Nods to a Conductor, Takes a Cigar and Reads a Paper.

A prominent public man, who was one of the thousands of visitors in Boston during "Grand Army week," has written the following of General Butler in a letter to a Plainfield (N. J.) friend:

"I had just secured my accustomed place in the smoking-car when 'Ben' Butler, the old veteran, entered the car and lazily threw himself into the seat just in front of me. Of course there was no difficulty in recognizing his individuality, and I was much interested in the old man's eccentricity. He produced from the innermost recesses of his aspiring Greenback Presidential pocket a cigar. To judge from its appearance I should say it was what is technically termed a 'three-for,' and proceeded to do with it just as a small boy would a stick or licorice. Without lighting it, he would fondle it, inspect it, then bite at it as tenderly as only the old war-horse could do. When the conductor appeared he gave a pleasant nod to 'Benny' and 'Benny' responded in lieu of a ticket. He then demanded the Boston Globe, which the accommodating conductor hastened to secure for him. I was amused to see the old gentleman turn over the pages until his eye (it is unnecessary to speak in the plural concerning Benjamin's optics, as you know), until his eye rested upon the base-ball column, and he scanned the scores with as much interest as the most devoted 'crank,' who causes the bleacheries to tremble by his uproar and excitement when his favorite makes a home run."—N. Y. Tribune.

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