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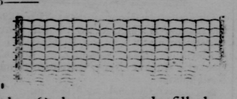

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AN ENDED SONG.

I sang of love to many a string,
With many a sweet conceit and rhyme,
And everywhere and every time
Of love and love I could but sing
Until my own heart felt the spell.
Ah, then, how soon my lips were mute!
How silent lay my untouched lute
Since what love was I knew too well!

Mary Ainge De Vere in Century.

A DEAN'S DAUGHTER.

The cathedral town of Mudcastle was stirred to its lowest depths, and in high places there was mourning and lamentation and woe. People spoke in whispers and went about softly with sorrow stricken faces. The very bells—and there were a good many of them—seemed to have lost their offensive hilarity, for the dean's daughter had gone on the stage, and the shadow of her unholiness had fallen upon the city.

To the cathedral society in which she had moved with so much sweetness and success the stage was only another name for the lower regions. It is true that the lyceum was sometimes patronized under protest during the May meetings, and it was whispered that one giddy young minor canon had been seen in the Savoy—a rumor that nearly caused an action for libel—but the ordinary worldly theater, where people went rather for amusement than instruction and where actresses occasionally showed more than their ankles, could not even be mentioned without offense.

And now the daughter of the dean, their brightest star of ecclesiasticism and learning, had left the fold of sanctity where she had so long been nurtured and burst forth as a burlesque actress in London. A burlesque actress, ye shades of St. Peter! Not a walking lady in a modern drama, but a lieutenant in tights. What wonder that Mudcastle bowed its head and blushed with shame!

Yet it would be unjust to say that every one in the town was prostrated with grief. The minor canons indeed who, confident in their £200 a year and singsong voices, had regarded themselves as possible suitors for her hand went about with longer faces than usual. But the young ladies of the place were filled with a secret joy and began to show redoubled attention to good works and their personal appearance, for Elsie Milton, the most beautiful girl in the town and perhaps in the county, was out of their way, and the hope of their earthly reward shone more brightly on the horizon.

On one point, however, every one in Mudcastle was agreed. Her conduct was both inexplicable and disgraceful. We of the outside world—the outer darkness, Mudcastle might call it—may have our doubts about the disgrace, but we are obliged to admit that she had acted in a very extraordinary manner.

For an explanation let us return to Elsie herself. She is in her dressing room at the Jollity theater putting the last touches to her personal appearance and talking to her friend, Lottie Legge, the skirt dancer. The room is half filled with sprays and bouquets of the rarest flowers. One or two open jewel cases with cards inside flash like rainbows in the electric light. But more lovely than flower or jewel case is the girl who is standing before the long pier glass softening the effect of the paint on her face with powder and arranging her sword to the utmost artistic advantage. Her figure is magnificent and is shown to perfection by her costume. Her violet eyes and dark auburn hair produce that wonderful effect which is so rarely seen, but once seen is never forgotten, and even the paint and powder cannot take away the sweetness and refinement of that marvelous oval face or the expression of that wonderful mouth.

Though her part in the burlesque is only a subordinate one, all London is raving over her, and the manager has had to raise her salary to that of a bishop to retain her. Night after night bouquets and jewelry are thrown at her feet. Night after night notes are brought to her dressing room, only to be tossed contemptuously aside. Invitations pour upon her from every quarter. They are all refused. No breath of suspicion has ever been allowed to rest upon her name. The flowers are not worn; the jewelry is returned. They call her the Queen of Snow, yet no one who ever looked upon her face could doubt that, though she might be pure as snow, she was as passionate and perhaps as mischievous as fire. Her acting is indifferent, her dancing more natural than skillful, her singing remarkable for nothing but expression. Her triumph has been entirely the triumph of beauty. There have been many such in these days.

"This—this is life, Lottie," she said, turning from the glass to her companion. "You, to whom I have told my story tonight, have no idea what it is to breathe the fresh air after the stuffiness of Mudcastle."

"It must have been a bit slow, dear," replied Lottie, doing up one of her shoes, "but still girls of your position don't throw it up without a very good reason. It's different with me. I never was anybody, and I have my living to earn."

"Position? Rubbish! I am being paid twice the salary my father receives, and if popularity is fame he isn't in it with me. For one who has heard of him a hundred know my name. As for my reason, the fact is I could not stand it any longer."

"Were you unhappy, Elsie? The home you have described to me must have been very beautiful."

"Unhappy? I was miserable. To be penned up in that little narrow ecclesiastical world, from which the faintest breath of life is kept lest it should contaminate it, is a living death. You who have lived in London all your life have no idea what Mudcastle is, what Mudcastle society thinks and talks about. You would laugh, Lottie, if you could see the dignataries of the church. Their dignity consists chiefly in the size of their persons and the slowness of their speech. The poor curate slaving in his populous parish has more true dignity about him than the whole lot put together. He is at least a man doing a man's work. And then the minor canons, dear! Perhaps you don't know what they are. They are a sort of cathedral curate, with nothing to do but sing and talk to ladies. They all wanted to marry me. Of course, now I have disgraced myself, they would not dream of it. They would look down on a poor playactress who earns their annual income in a fortnight and who has had half the aristocracy of London at her feet. And then conversation at dinners and 'at homes,' my father's sermons, who will get the bishopric of Rodney, the singing of the new minor canon, the missionary progress in Timbuktu, the last new theological work and all the cathedral shop you can imagine. Is it surprising that I wanted to escape and see the world?"

Lottie laughed. "You are very bitter," she said. "Are you sure you have no other reason besides being bored?"

Elsie turned a sharp glance upon her companion. "What do you mean? Do you not think that is a sufficient one?"

"Oh, yes, dear, amply sufficient, but still"—

"Still what?"

"There are other reasons, you know, why girls go on the stage." And she laughed slyly.

Elsie turned away from her contemptuously and began to open some notes that were lying on the table and fling them one by one into the waste paper basket.

"The same old thing, Elsie, I suppose," Lottie said in tone of envy. "I wonder people don't get tired of sending them. And, as for the flowers, I call it a sinful waste not to wear them. I wish I could get a quarter of the number."

"Yes, the same old thing, Lottie," she said, almost wearily, and then, as she took up a note and opened it, a gleam of triumph came into her eyes, and her whole face was lit up with a smile. She threw the rest of the notes unopened into a basket and read this one again and again. It was as follows:

"MY DEAR MISS MILTON—Well, of all the * * * I came up to town last night, and, hearing of the attraction of London, came to the Jollity. Like every one else, I have fallen a victim. I hear that you never wear the flowers that are sent you, but perhaps you will make an exception in favor of an old friend. May I see you after the performance and tell you the Mudcastle news? I will take your wearing the flowers as 'Yes.' Yours sincerely, B."

That night Elsie Milton wore flowers for the first time on the stage, and the whole house burned with a desire to know who was the lucky man that had given them to her.

Three months after all Mudcastle was intoxicated with the excitement of an enormous bazaar. For weeks the cathedral ladies had been working at impossible articles of apparel and decoration. Gum, cardboard and silk were scarcely procurable so large had been the demand on these indispensable commodities. Flags had been gathered from the four quarters of the globe to represent every nation and proclaim the world-wide importance of the undertaking.

The mind of the ecclesiastical female ran riot in the wickedness of fancy dress designs, for this was to be no ordinary sale of work, but a gigantic fraud for the cathedral restoration fund, and every woman had to be sufficiently bewitching to snare the gold of unwary and susceptible man.

The Duchess of Manborough had been asked to open it. She said she greatly regretted her inability to attend, but that they had given up their house for a time to their son, the young Marquis of Beaucaster, who had just been married and wished to spend part of his honeymoon there. She was, however, sure that the young marchioness, though she only arrived the day before the bazaar, would be charmed to take her place.

The cathedral authorities were delighted. A marchioness is not so good as a duchess, it is true, but still it is the next best thing, and so all Mudcastle was en fete to make the most of its opportunities.

At last the supreme moment has come. The town hall is filled with black coats and respectability. The bishop's wife glows in gorgeous purple and fine linen. The canons are whispering in clerical undertones. The canon's daughters are looking at themselves in mirrors, putting the final touches to the stalls and chattering like magpies.

"Do you remember last bazaar?" says one of them. "Poor Elsie Milton was at our stall." They always called her "poor" now, as if she were dead.

There was a stir at the door, and a murmur ran through the room. The people fell back respectfully, and the bishop's wife sailed down the channel made for her to welcome the honored arrivals. She knew Lord Beaucaster and made for him. He felt inclined to escape, but they had shut the door behind him, so he was obliged to stand his ground.

"Delighted to see you again, Mrs. Charlton," he said, with a slight bow. "May I introduce you to my wife?"

The eyes of all the room were turned to see the new bride and future Duchess of Manborough. For a moment they stared in wonder and silence at the lovely woman before them. Then a cry of amazement broke from their lips, for there, with face more beautiful than ever and a figure clothed with one of Worth's most magnificent creations, stood the despised outcast, Elsie Milton.

The bishop's wife was dumfounded. Her remarks on the conduct of the dean's daughter had outvied every one's in bitterness, and now she looked as though Lady Beaucaster had been listening to her all the time. She got very red and mumbled something. Elsie smiled at her confusion for two or three seconds—no woman can entirely forbear her revenge—and then said: "I am sure you needn't introduce us, Charlie. We are old friends." And moving forward she kissed Mrs. Charlton's ponderous cheek with that grace and sweetness which had brought the world to her feet.

This was the signal for a universal rush. All her old friends crowded around her with inquiries and congratulations. If they hoped to be kissed by a marchioness, they were disappointed. Elsie intended that one kiss to the head of the female ecclesiastical world to embrace all cathedral society. It was meant for the reconciliation of the church and the stage.

That afternoon the dean was sitting alone in his study when the door opened and a well known voice cried, "May I come in, father?"

He dropped the pen with which he had been writing and rose to his feet. Before he could speak Elsie had flung herself upon him like an avalanche and smothered him with kisses.

"I have come to be forgiven, father. I have left the stage."

"My dear child," he said, kissing her tenderly. "My dear child, I have suffered much pain, but the pleasure of your return blots out all the past. I forgave you long ago."

"You dear old father. I am sure you only thought me mad and not wicked like other people did. But what do you think brings me here today?"

"To see me, Elsie! Haven't you returned home for good?"

"No, father. I shall not be far off from you, though. I—I am married. I came here today to open the bazaar."

"To open the bazaar, Elsie! Are you, my little madcap Elsie, the new Lady Beaucaster?"

"Her ladyship stands before you. And that's why—that's the explanation of it all, father."

The dean looked mystified, so she continued:

"You know Charlie, don't you? He's a dear, good boy, but too fond of actresses. I—I think he always liked me a bit, but we poor girls have no chance against stage beauties. The young men of the present day like something lively. Wild horses would not have dragged Charlie into cathedral society. But I wasn't going to lose him. I think I have got even with the 'beauties of the English stage,' eh, father?"

The dean smiled at her worldliness. He was not sure that he was not a bit worldly himself. He had been buried so long in the mustiness of Mudcastle that perhaps he, too, would have liked to see life.

"You were the beauty of the English stage," he said slyly and not without pride, for he was still a man.

"I am now going to be a beauty of the English church—first of the series in the illustrated papers. I returned to the old life today. For, though the stage gave me a husband, it was the church that married us."

Lady Beaucaster is the patron saint of all bazaars and even acts for charities. She does not, however, appear in the character that made her famous.—London Truth.

Echoes.

Every one is familiar with the phenomenon of echoes. In a cave in the Pantheon the guide, by striking the flap of his coat, makes a noise equal to a 12 pound cannon's report. The singularity is noticed in a lesser degree in the Mammoth cave in Kentucky. In the cave of Smellin, near Viborg, in Finland, a cat or dog thrown in will make a screaming echo, lasting some minutes.

Too Smart For Profit.

Customer—What have ye got in the shape uv apples?

Smart Clerk—Several things, uncle. We have peaches, lemons, oranges and potatoes, all in the shape of apples more or less.

Customer—So I see. Got er monkey in the shape uv a human bein, too, but as I ain't lookin for no menagerie, I'll trade somewhar else.—Brooklyn Life.

Guess This Out.

A very funny man recently met a very funny friend, and the following dialogue ensued:

"By the way, Bill, if you were real fat, how old would you be?"

"Why, Thursday, of course," responded Bill. The joke is to find the joke. We give it up.—Philadelphia North American.

WONDERFUL STREAMS.

One River Is Black and Another Is Sour as Vinegar.

One of the most curious rivers that have come to the knowledge of men is the Webbe Shebeyli of eastern Africa, a deep and rapid stream, abounding in strange fish and ferocious crocodiles. Although it flows for hundreds of miles through fertile lands, the immense volume of water never reaches the sea. A short distance north of the equator the river is lost in a desert region a few miles from the Indian ocean.

Some of the more recent explorers of Alaska and British America claim that the Mississippi can no longer be regarded as the largest river on the North American continent. This distinction is claimed for the great Yukon river. According to Ivan Petroff, who spent over two years in Alaska collecting materials for the last census, the Yukon empties into Norton sound about one-third more water than the Mississippi pours into the gulf of Mexico. The Yukon basin comprises the larger part of northern Alaska, and 600 miles from its mouth the river is a mile in width. Many centuries before it was discovered by white men it very likely served as a water highway into the interior for tribes whom we believe to have crossed from Asia to the American continent. The Yukon river is over 2,000 miles in length.

Travelers report that in Algeria there exists a small stream which the chemistry of nature has turned into ink. It is formed by the union of two rivulets, one of which is very strongly impregnated with iron, while the other, meandering through a peat marsh, imbibes large quantities of gallic acid, which forms the small yet wonderful stream.

The Rio de Vinagre, in Colombia, is a stream the waters of which, by admixture with sulphuric acid, become so sour that the river has been appropriately named the Rio de Vinagre, or Vinegar river.

The Orange or Garieh river, in southern Africa, rises in the mountains which separate Natal from the Orange Free State. The length of this stream is 1,000 miles. Its banks abound in various rich copper ores. In this stream are many varieties of fish, which are found until the river passes through a rocky region containing copper, below which the water is said to be poisonous, almost instantly killing the fish that venture near it.

Another remarkable river is the Indus, a great stream in Hindustan. It rises in Tibet, and its course is a wonderful one. On reaching the Sussi, its most northern point, it turns southward, losing itself in the hills, and reappears at Takot, in Kohistan. The Indus is 1,700 miles in length. After receiving the waters of many tributaries its channel grows narrow, and here it divides into many channels, some of which never return to the parent stream. It abounds in fish and crocodiles.

That classical river, the Ganges, is erratic in its course, like the Hoang Ho. It is prominent both in the religion and geography of India. It varies not only from season to season, but from year to year, and frequently exchanges old passages for new ones. It has been said that the Ganges delivers into the sea every year 543,000,000 tons of mud, sand and other solid matter.—Philadelphia Press.

An Extraordinary Duel.

An extraordinary duel, which at the time created an immense sensation, was one in which the decision was arrived at, not by swords or pistols, but by means of a deadly poison. The men—who, it is hardly necessary to say, had fallen out over a lady—had left the arrangement of details to their seconds, and until they faced each other they did not know by what method they were to settle their differences. One of the seconds was a doctor, and he had made up for the occasion four black pellets, all identical in size and shape. "In one of these," he said, "I have placed a sufficient quantity of prussic acid to cause the almost instantaneous death of any one who swallows it. We will decide by the toss of a coin which of you is to have first choice, and you will alternately draw and swallow a pill until the poison shows its effects." Two of the pellets were then taken as the toss had decided, but without effect in either case. "This time," said the doctor, speaking of the two pellets remaining, "you must both swallow the pill at the same instant." The choice was again made, and in a few seconds one of the men lay dead on the grass.—Gentleman's Magazine.

Hay Fever.

Sufferers from hay fever may, according to a German physician, often temper an attack by rubbing the ears briskly when there is the slightest indication of fullness in the nose. The rubbing should be thorough and until the ears grow red and hot. The remedy is simple enough to insure a trial, and, if even moderately efficacious, will warrant its wide passing from one victim to another.

Out of the Question.

The happiness as well as the devotion of a man to his hobby is instanced by a little story told of Lord Walsingham, the well known English entomologist. Asked why he did not go to Ascot for the great race, he replied earnestly: "How could I? It was out of the question. I was expecting 20 or 30 moths and butterflies to arrive at any moment."