

FAIR MARGARET.*

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SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

MARGARET DONNE is an English girl, whose parents are dead, and who lives with Mrs. Rushmore, an American lady, in Versailles. Margaret's mother, who was Mrs. Rushmore's close friend, was also an American, and when she married Professor Donne, of Oxford, she expected to inherit a fortune. Her father, however—Margaret's grandfather—met ill-luck and died leaving nothing but a claim upon Alvah Moon, a California millionaire to whom he had assigned a valuable patent. Mrs. Rushmore has brought suit against Moon on Margaret's behalf, but there seems slight chance of success.

Margaret, who possesses a remarkably good voice, is determined to earn her own living. Her teacher, Mme. de Rosa, sends her to the famous prima donna, Mme. Bonanni, for advice. Going to the Bonanni house on the Avenue Hoche, Margaret breakfasts with the great singer—who is an eccentric but big-hearted woman, a peasant in origin and manners—and with a casual caller, Constantine Logotheti, a Greek financier. Mme. Bonanni predicts great things for the English girl, and promises to introduce her to Schreiermeyer, manager at the Opéra.

Margaret goes back in high spirits to Versailles. There she finds Mrs. Rushmore lunching with some friends—among them an archeologist, an English officer on his way back to India, and Edmund Lushington, a successful young author, who is staying at Mrs. Rushmore's house. In the afternoon, Lushington and Margaret walk together in the garden. With an embarrassment that shows deep emotion, he tells her that the name under which he passes is not his own; that he was not christened Edmund, but Thomas; and that for a reason which he cannot explain he must not tell her his inherited surname. Margaret begins to find that she cares for him more than she had supposed, and she is both puzzled and pained when he bids her a somewhat abrupt farewell.

Going to Mme. Bonanni's house for the promised interview with Schreiermeyer, she finds Lushington there, and discovers the secret he had refused to tell her—that he is the famous singer's son. But she cannot refrain from noting with sympathy and admiration how loyal he is to his mother, in spite of his utter aversion to the life she has led.

VII.

THERE had been a moment when it had hurt Margaret to think that Lushington probably accepted a good deal of luxury in his existence out of his mother's abundant fortune, but it was gone now. Even as a schoolboy he had guessed whence at least a part of that wealth really came, and had refused to touch a penny of it. But Lushington felt as if he were being combed with red-hot needles from head to foot, and the perspiration stood on his forehead. It would have filled him with shame to mop it with his handkerchief, and yet he felt that in another moment it would run down. The awful circumstances of his dream came vividly back to him, and he could positively hear Margaret telling him that he looked hot, so loud that the whole house could understand what she said. But at this point something almost worse happened.

Mme. Bonanni's motherly but eagle-like eye detected the tiny beads on his brow. With a cry of distress she sprang to her feet and began to wipe them away

with a corner of the napkin that was tied round her neck, talking all the time.

"My darling," she cried, "I always forget that you feel hot when I feel cold! Angelo, open everything, the windows, the doors! Why do you stand there like a dressed-up doll in a tailor's window? Don't you see that he is going to have a fit?"

"Mother, mother, please don't!" protested the unfortunate Lushington, who was now as red as a beet.

But Mme. Bonanni took the lower end of her napkin by the corners, as if it had been an apron, and fanned him furiously, though he put up his hands and cried for mercy.

"He is always too hot," she said, suddenly desisting and sitting down again. "He always was, even when he was a baby." She was now at work on a very complicated salad. "But then," she went on, speaking between mouthfuls, "I used to lay him down in the middle of my big bed, with nothing on but his little shirt, and he would kick and crow until he was quite cool."

Again Margaret bit her lip, but this

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time it was of no use, and after a conscientious effort to restrain herself she broke into irrepressible laughter. In a moment Lushington laughed too, and presently he was quite cool and comfortable again, feeling that after all he had been ridiculous only when he was a baby.

"We used to call him Tommy," said Mme. Bonanni, putting away her plate and laying her knife and fork upon it crosswise. "Poor little Tommy! How long ago that was! After his father died, I changed his name, you know, and then it seemed as if little Tommy were dead too."

There was visible moisture in the big dark eyes for an instant. Margaret felt sorry for the strange, contradictory creature, half child, half genius, and all mother.

"My husband's name was Goodyear," continued the prima donna thoughtfully. "You will find it in all biographies of me."

"Goodyear," Margaret repeated, looking at Lushington. "What a nice name! I like it."

"You understand," Mme. Bonanni went on, explaining. "'Goodyear,' '*buon anno*,' '*bonanno*,' '*Bonanni*'; that is how it is made up. It's a good name for the stage, is it not?"

"Yes. But why did you change it at all for your son?"

Mme. Bonanni shrugged her large shoulders, glanced furtively at Lushington, and then looked at Margaret.

"It was better," she said. "Fruit, Angelo!"

"Can I be of any use to you in getting off, mother?" asked Lushington.

Margaret felt that she had made another mistake, and looked at her plate.

"No, my angel," said Mme. Bonanni, answering her son's question and eating hothouse grapes; "you cannot help me in the least, my sweet. I know you would if you could, dear child! But you will come and dine with me quietly at the Carlton on Sunday at half-past eight, just you and I. I promise you that no one shall be there, not even Logotheti—though you do not mind him so much."

"Not in the least," Lushington answered, with a smile which Margaret thought a little contemptuous. "All the same, I would much rather be alone with you."

"Do you wonder that I love him?" asked Mme. Bonanni, turning to Margaret.

"No, I don't wonder in the least," an-

swered the young girl, with such decision that Lushington looked up suddenly, as if to thank her.

The ordeal was over at last, and the prima donna rose with a yawn of satisfaction.

"I am going to turn you out," she said. "You know I cannot live without my nap."

She kissed Margaret first, and then her son, each on both cheeks, but it was clear that she could hardly keep her eyes open, and she left Margaret and Lushington standing together, exactly as she had left the young girl with Logotheti on the first occasion.

Their eyes met for an instant, and then Lushington got his hat and stick, and opened the door for Margaret to go out.

"Shall I call a cab for you?" he asked.

"No, thank you. I'll walk a little way first, and then drive to the station."

When they were in the street, Lushington stood still.

"You believe that it was an accident, don't you?" he asked. "I mean my coming to-day."

"Of course! Shall we walk on?"

He could not refuse, and he felt that he was not standing by his resolution; yet the circumstances were changed, since she now knew his secret and was warned.

They had gone twenty steps before she spoke.

"You might have trusted me," she said.

"I should think you would understand why I did not tell you," he answered rather bitterly.

She opened her parasol so impatiently that it made an ominous little noise as if it were cracking.

"I do understand," she said, almost harshly, as she held it up against the sun.

"And yet you complain because I did not tell you," said Lushington in a puzzled tone.

"It's you who don't understand!" Margaret retorted.

"No. I don't."

"I'm sorry."

They went on a little way in silence, walking rather slowly. She was angry with herself for being irritated by him just when she admired him more than ever before, and perhaps loved him better; though love has nothing to do with admiration except to kindle it sometimes, just when it is least deserved.

It takes generous people longer to recover from a fit of anger against themselves than against their neighbors, and

in a few moments Margaret began to feel very unhappy, though all her original irritation against Lushington had subsided. She now wished, in her contrition, that he would say something disagreeable; but he did not. He merely changed the subject, speaking quite naturally.

"So it is all decided," he said, "and you are to make your *début*!"

"Yes," she answered with a sort of eagerness to be friendly again. "I'm a professional from to-day, with a stage name, a prey to critics, reporters, and photographers—just like your mother, except that she is a very great artist and I am a very little one."

It was not very skilfully done, but Lushington was grateful for what she meant by it.

"I think you will be great, too," he said, "and before very long. There is no young soprano on the stage now who has half your voice or half your talent."

Margaret colored with pleasure, though she could not quite believe what he told her. But he glanced at her and felt sure that he was right. She had voice and talent, he knew, but even with both some singers fail; she had the splendid vitality, the boundless health, and the look of irresistible success, which only the great ones have. She was not a classic beauty, but she would be magnificent on the stage.

There was a short silence before she spoke.

"Two days ago," she said, "I did not think we should meet again so soon."

"Part again so soon, you ought to say," he answered. "It is nothing but that, after all."

She bit her lip.

"Must we?" she asked, almost unconsciously.

"Yes," he said, almost fiercely. "Don't make it harder than it is. Let's get it over. There's a cab!"

He held up his stick and signaled to the cabman, who touched his horse and moved toward them. Margaret stood still, with a half-frightened look, and spoke in a low voice.

"Tom, if you leave me I won't answer for myself!"

"I will. Good-by—God bless you!"

The cab stopped beside them as he held out his hand. She took it silently and he made her get in. A moment later she was driving away at a smart pace, sitting bolt upright and looking straight before her, her lips pressed tightly together, while Lushington walked briskly in the opposite direction. It had all hap-

pened in a moment, in a sort of despairing hurry.

VIII.

CONSTANTINE LOGOTHETI had at least two reasons for not going out to Versailles as soon as Mrs. Rushmore signified her desire to know him. In the first place, he was "somebody," and an important part of being "somebody" is to keep the fact well before the eyes of other people. He was altogether too great a personage to be at the beck and call of every one who wished to know him. Secondly, he did not wish Margaret to think that he was running after her, for the very good reason that he meant to do so with the least possible delay.

Lushington, who was really both sensitive and imaginative, used to tell Margaret that he was a realist. Logotheti, who was a thorough materialist by nature, talent, and education, loved to believe that he possessed both a rich imagination and the gift of true sentiment.

Margaret delighted him at first sight, though he was hard to please and though she was not at all a great beauty. She appealed directly to that love of life for its own sake which was always the strength, the genius, and the snare of the Greek people, and which is not extinct in their modern descendants. Logotheti certainly had plenty of it, and his first impression, when he had met Margaret Donne, was that he had met his natural mate. There was nothing psychological about the sensation, and yet it was not the result of a purely physical attraction. It brought with it a satisfaction of artistic taste that was an unmarred pleasure in itself.

True art had gone much further in deifying humanity than in humanizing divinity. The Hermes of Olympia is a man made into a god; no Christian artist has ever done a tenth as well in presenting the image of God made Man. When imagination soars toward an invisible world it loses love of life as it flies higher, till it ends in glorifying death as the only means of reaching heaven; and in doing that it has often descended to a gross realism that would have revolted the Greeks—to the materialism of anatomical preparations that make one think of the dissecting-room, if one has ever been there.

Love of genuine art is the best sort of love of life, and the really great artists have always been tremendously vital creatures. So-called artistic people who are sickly, or merely under-vitalized,

generally go astray after strange gods; or, at the best, they admire works of art for the sake of certain pleasing, or sad, or even unhealthy associations which these call up.

Logotheti came of a race which, through being temporarily isolated from modern progress, has not grown old with it. For it seems pretty sure that progress means, with many other things, the survival of the unfit and the transmission of unfitness to a generation of old babies; but where men are not disinfected, sterilized, fed on preserved carrion, and treated with hypodermics from the cradle to the grave, the good old law of nature holds its own and the weak ones die young, while the strong fight for life and are very much alive while they live.

Such people, when transplanted from what we call a half-barbarous state to live amongst us, never feel as we do, and when they are roused to action their deeds are not of the sort which our wives, our mothers-in-law, and the clergy expect us to approve. It does not follow that they are villains, though they may occasionally kill some one in a fit of anger, or carry off by force the women they fall in love with. Such doings probably seem quite natural in their own country, and after all they cannot be expected to know more about right and wrong than their papas and mammas taught them when they were little things.

The object of this digression is not to excite sympathy on behalf of Logotheti, but to forestall surprise at some of the things he did when he had convinced himself that, of all the women he had ever met, Margaret Donne was the one that suited him best, and that she must be his at any cost and at any risk.

The conviction was almost formed at the first meeting. It took full possession of him when he met her again and she seemed glad to see him. By this time she had no reason for concealing from Mrs. Rushmore that she had seen him at Mme. Bonanni's, and she held out her hand with a frank smile. It was on a Sunday afternoon; on the lawn were a number of lions and half a dozen women of the world. Logotheti seemed to know more than half the people present, which is rather unusual in Paris, and most of them treated him with the rather fawning deference accorded by society to the superior claims of wealth over good blood.

The Greek smiled pleasantly and reflected that the nobility of the Fanar, which goes back to the Byzantine Em-

pire, is as good as any in France, and even less virtuous. He by no means despised his wealth, and he continually employed his excellent faculties in multiplying it; but in his semi-barbarous heart he was an aristocrat. He was quietly amused when people whose real names seemed to have been selected from a list of Rhine wines took titles which emanated from the Vatican, or when plain M. Dubois turned himself into "*le comte du Bois de Vincennes*." Yet since few people seemed to know anything about Leo the Tsaurian, under whom his direct ancestor had held office as treasurer, and had eventually had his eyes put out for his pains, Logotheti was quite willing to be treated with deference for the sake of the more tangible advantages of present fortune. In Mrs. Rushmore's garden of celebrities he at once took his place as a rare bird.

He crossed the lawn beside Margaret, indeed, with the air and assurance of a magnificent peacock. He was perhaps a shade less over-dressed than when she had seen him last, but there was an astonishing luster about everything he wore. Even his almond-shaped eyes were bright almost to vulgarity; though he tired the sight, as a peacock does in the sun, it was impossible not to watch him.

"What a handsome man Logotheti is!" exclaimed a Rumanian poetess, who was there.

"What an awful cad!" observed a fastidious young American to the English officer, who was still on his way to India, and was very comfortable at Mrs. Rushmore's.

The Englishman looked at Logotheti attentively for nearly half a minute before he answered.

"No," he said quietly. "That man is not a cad, he is simply a rich oriental, dressed up in European clothes. I've met that sort before, and they are sometimes nasty customers. That fellow is as strong as a horse and as quick as a cat."

Meanwhile the Greek and Margaret reached a seat near the little pond and sat down. She did not know that he had watched every one of her movements with as much delight as if Psyche, made whole and alive, had been walking beside him. He had not seemed to look at her at all, and he did not begin the conversation by making her compliments.

"I should have left a card on Mrs. Rushmore the day after I met you," he began in a rather apologetic tone, "but I was not quite sure that she knew about your visit to our friend, and she might

have asked who I was and where you had met me. Besides, as she is an American, she would have thought I was trying to scrape acquaintance."

"Hardly that—but you did quite right," Margaret answered. "Thank you!"

He was tactful. She leaned back a little in the corner of the seat and looked at him with an air of curiosity, wondering why everything he had said and done so far had pleased her so much more than his appearance. She was always expecting him to say something blatant or to do something vulgar, mainly because he wore such phenomenal ties with such gorgeous pins. To-day he displayed a ruby of astonishing size and startling color. She was sure that it must be real, because he was so rich, but she had never known that rubies could be so big except in a fairy story. The tie was knitted of the palest mauve, shot with green and gold threads.

"I have seen Schreiermeyer," he said. "Is there to be any secret about your debut?"

"None whatever! But I have said nothing about it, and none of the people here seem to have found it out yet."

"So much the better. In everything connected with the theater, I believe it is a mistake to try and excite interest before the event. What is said beforehand is rarely said afterward. You can be sure that Schreiermeyer will say nothing till the time comes, and if Mme. Bonanni talks about you to her friends in London, nobody will believe she is in earnest."

"But she is so outspoken——" Margaret objected.

"Yes. But no one could possibly understand that a prima donna just on the edge of decline could possibly wish to advertise a rising light. It is hardly human!"

"I think she is the most good-natured woman I ever knew," said Margaret with conviction.

"She has a heart of gold. Her only trouble in life is that she has too much of it! There is enough for everybody—she has always had far too much for one."

Logotheti smiled at his own expression.

"Perhaps that is better than having no heart at all," Margaret answered, not quite realizing how the words might have been misunderstood.

"The heart is a convenient and elastic organ," observed Logotheti. "It does almost everything. It sinks, it swells, it falls, it leaps, it stands still, it quivers, it

gets into one's throat, and it breaks, but it goes on beating all the time with more or less regularity, just as the violin clown scrapes his fiddle while he turns somersaults, sticks out his tongue, sits down with frightful suddenness, and tumbles in and out of his white hat."

He talked to amuse her and occupy her while he looked at her, studying her lines, as a yacht expert studies those of a new and beautiful model; yet he knew so well how to glance and look away, and glance again, that she was not at all aware of what he was really doing. She laughed a little at what he said.

"Where did you learn to speak English so well?" she asked.

"Languages do not count nowadays," he answered carelessly. "Any Levantine in Smyrna can speak a dozen like a native. Have you never been in the East?"

"No."

"Should you like to go to Greece?"

"Of course I should!"

"Then come! I am going to take a party in my yacht next month. It will give me the greatest pleasure if you and Mrs. Rushmore will come with us."

Margaret laughed.

"You forget that I am a real artist, with a real engagement!" she answered.

"Yes, I forgot that. I wanted to! I can make Schreiermeyer forget it, too, if you will come. I'll hypnotize him. Will you authorize me?"

He smiled pleasantly, but his long eyes were quite grave. Margaret supposed that it would be absurd to suspect anything but chaff in his proposal, and yet she felt an odd conviction that he meant what he said. Only vain women are easily mistaken about such things. Margaret turned the point with another little laugh.

"If you put him to sleep he will hibernate like a dormouse," she said. "It will take a whole year to wake him up!"

"I don't think so, but what if it did?"

"I should be a year older, and I am not too young as it is! I'm twenty-two."

"It's only in Constantinople that they are so particular about age," laughed the Greek. "After seventeen the price goes down very fast."

"Really?" Margaret was amused.

"What do you suppose I should be worth in Turkey?"

Logotheti looked at her gravely and seemed to be estimating her value.

"If you were seventeen, you would be worth a good thousand pounds," he said presently, "and at least three hundred more for your singing."

"Is that all, for my voice?" She could not help laughing. "And at twenty-two, what should I sell for?"

"I doubt whether any one would give much more than eight hundred for you," answered Logotheti with perfect gravity. "That's a big price, you know. In Persia they give less. I know a Persian ambassador, for instance, who got a very handsome wife for four hundred and fifty."

"Are you in earnest?" asked Margaret. "Do you mean to say that you could just go out and buy yourself a wife in the market in Constantinople?"

"I could not, because I am a Christian. The market exists in a quiet place where Europeans never find it. You see all the Circassians in Turkey live by stealing horses and selling their daughters. They are a noble race, the Circassians! The girls are brought up with the idea, and they rarely dislike it."

"I never heard of such things!"

"No. The East is very interesting. Will you come? I'll take you wherever you like. We will leave the archeologist in Crete and go on to Constantinople. It will be the most beautiful season on the Bosphorus, you know, and after that we will go along the southern shore of the Black Sea to Samsun and Trebizond, and round by the Crimea. There are wonderful towns on the shores of the Black Sea which hardly any European ever sees. I'm sure you would like them, just as I do."

"I am sure I should."

"You love beautiful things, don't you?"

"Yes—though I don't pretend to be a judge."

"I do. And when I see anything that really pleases me, I always try to get it; and if I succeed, nothing in the world will induce me to part with it. I'm a real miser about the things I like. I keep them in safe places, and it gives me pleasure to look at them when I'm alone."

"That's not very generous. You might give others a little pleasure, too, now and then."

"So few people know what is good! Some of us Greeks have the instinct in our blood still, and we recognize it in a few men and women we meet. You are one, for instance. As soon as I saw you the first time, I was quite sure that we should think alike about a great many things. Do you mind my saying as much as that, at a second meeting?"

"Not if you think it is true," she answered with a smile. "Why should I?"

"It might sound as if I were trying to make out that we have some natural bond of sympathy," said Logotheti. "That's a favorite way of opening the game, you know. 'Do you like carrots? So do I'—a bond at once! 'Do you go in when it rains? I always do—we must be sympathetic to each other?' 'Do you smile when you are pleased? Of course! We are exactly alike, and our hearts beat in unison!' That's the sort of thing."

He amused her; perhaps she was easily amused now, because she had been feeling rather depressed all the morning.

"I love to be out in the rain, and I don't like carrots!" she answered. "There are evidently things as to which our hearts don't beat in unison at all!"

"If people agreed about everything, what would become of conversation, lawyers, and standing armies? But I meant to suggest that we might possibly like each other if we met often."

"I dare say."

"I have begun," said Logotheti lightly, but again his long eyes were grave.

"Begun what?"

"I have begun by liking you. You don't mind, do you?"

"Oh, no! I like to be liked—by everybody!" Margaret laughed again, and watched him.

"It only remains for you to like everybody yourself. Will you kindly include me?"

"Yes, in a general way, as a neighbor, in the Biblical sense, you know. Are you English enough to understand that expression?"

"I happen to have read the story of the good Samaritan in Greek," Logotheti answered. "Since you are willing that we should be neighbors in the Biblical sense, you cannot blame me for saying that I love my neighbor as myself."

Once more her instinct told her that the words were meant less carelessly than they were spoken, though she could not possibly seem to take them in earnest. Yet her curiosity was aroused, as he intended that it should be.

"I remember that the Samaritan loved his neighbor, in the Biblical sense, at first sight," he said, with a quick glance. "But those were Biblical times, you know!"

"Men have not changed much since then. We can still love at first sight, I assure you, even after we have seen a good deal of the world. It depends on meeting the right woman, and on nothing else. Do you suppose that if the Naples Psyche, or the Syracuse Venus, or the

Venus of Milo, or the Victory of Samothrace suddenly appeared in Paris or London, all the men would not lose their heads about her—at first sight? Of course they would!”

“If you expect to have such neighbors as those, in the Biblical sense——”

“I have one,” said Logotheti, “and that’s enough.”

Margaret had received many compliments of a more or less complicated nature, but she did not remember that any one had yet compared her to two Venuses, the Psyche, and the Samothrace Victory in a single breath.

“That’s nonsense!” she exclaimed, blushing a little, and not at all indignant.

“No,” Logotheti answered imperturbably. “Besides, neither the Victory nor the Venus of Syracuse has a head, so I am at liberty to suppose yours on their shoulders. Take the Victory. You move exactly as she seems to be moving, for she is not flying at all, you know, though she has wings. The wings are only a symbol. The Greeks knew perfectly well that a winged human being could not fly straight without a feathered tail two or three yards long!”

“How absurd!”

“That you should move like the Victory? Not at all. The reason why I love my neighbor as myself is that my neighbor is the most absolutely satisfactory being from an artistic point of view. I don’t often make compliments.”

“They are astonishing when you do!”

“Perhaps. But I was going on to say that what satisfies my love of the beautiful can only be what satisfies my love of life itself, which is enormous.”

“In other words,” said Margaret, wondering how he would go on, “I am your ideal!”

“Do you know what an ‘ideal’ is?”

“Yes—well—no!” She hesitated. “Perhaps I could not define it exactly.”

“A man’s ideal is what he wants, and nothing else in the world.”

Margaret was not sure whether she should resent the speech a little, or let it pass. For an instant they looked at each other in silence. Then she made up her mind to laugh.

“Do you know that you are going ahead at a frightful pace?” she asked.

“Why should I waste time? My time is my life. It’s all I have. Any fool can make money when he has wasted it and really wants more, but no power in heaven or earth can give me back an hour thrown away—an hour of what might have been.”

“I’m sure you must have learned that in an English Sunday school! It’s a highly moral and practical sentiment!”

“I don’t know about it being moral in all cases, but it’s certainly practical. I wish you would follow the maxim and come with me to the East—you and Mrs. Rushmore.”

“You mean that if I don’t you’ll never ask me again, I suppose?”

“No. That was not what I meant.” He looked steadily into her eyes, till she turned her head away. “What I meant was that you might be induced to give up the idea of the stage.”

“And as an inducement to throw up my engagement and sacrifice a career that may turn out well—you have told me so!—you offer me a trip to Constantinople!”

“You shall keep the yacht as a memento of the cruise. She’s not a bad vessel.”

“What should I do with a steam yacht?”

“Oh, you would have to take the owner with her,” Logotheti answered airily.

“Eh?” Margaret stared at him in amazement.

“Yes. Don’t be surprised. I’m quite in earnest about it. I never lost time, you know.”

“I should think not! Do you know that this is only our second meeting?”

“Exactly,” replied the Greek coolly. “Of course, I might have asked you the first time we met, when we were standing together on the pavement outside Mme. Bonanni’s door. I thought of it, but I was afraid it might strike you as sudden.”

“A little!”

“Yes. But a second meeting is different. You must admit that I have had plenty of time to think it over and to know my own mind.”

“In two meetings!”

“Yes. Surely you know that in France young people are often engaged to be married when they have never seen each other at all?”

“That is arranged for them by their parents,” objected Margaret.

“Whereas we can arrange the matter for ourselves,” Logotheti said. “It’s more dignified, and far more independent. Isn’t it?”

“I suppose so—I hardly know——”

“Oh, yes, it is! You cannot deny it. Besides, we have no parents and we are not children. You may think me hasty, but you cannot possibly be offended.”

"I'm not, but I think you are quite mad—unless you are joking."

"Mad, because I love you?" asked Logotheti, lowering his voice and looking at her.

"But how is it possible? We hardly know each other!" Margaret was beginning to feel uncomfortable.

"Never mind; it is possible, since it is so. Of course I cannot expect you to feel as I do so soon, but I want to be before any one else." Margaret was silent, and her expression changed, as she listened to his low and earnest tones. "I don't want to believe there is any one else," he went on. "I won't believe it, not even if you tell me there is. But you would not tell me, I suppose?"

She turned her eyes full upon him and spoke as low as he, but a little unsteadily.

"There is some one else," she said slowly.

Logotheti's lips moved, but she could not hear what he said, and almost as soon as she had spoken he looked down at the grass. There was no visible change in his face; and though she watched him for a few seconds, she did not think his hold tightened on his stick, or that his brows contracted. She was somewhat relieved at this, for she was inclined to conclude that he had not been in earnest at all, and had idly asked her to marry him just to see whether he could surprise her into saying anything foolish. Yet this idea did not please her, either. If there is anything a woman resents, it is that a man should pretend to be in love with her in order to laugh at her in his sleeve.

Margaret rose during the silence that followed. Logotheti sat still for a moment, as if he had not noticed her, and then he got up suddenly and glanced at her with a careless smile.

"I wish you good luck," he said lightly.

"Thank you," she answered. "One can never have too much of it!"

"Never. Get a talisman, a charm, a *jadoo*. You will need something of the sort in your career. A black opal is the best, but if you choose that you must get it yourself, you must buy it, find it, or steal it. Otherwise it will have no effect."

They moved away from the place where they had sat and joined the others. But after they had separated Margaret looked more than once at Logotheti, as if her eyes were drawn to him against her will, and she was annoyed to find that he was watching her.

She had thought of Lushington often that day, and now she wished with all

her heart that he were beside her, standing between her and something which she could not define but which she dreaded just because she could not imagine what it was, though it was certainly connected with Logotheti and with what he had said. She changed her mind about the Greek half a dozen times in an hour, but after each change the conviction grew on her that he had meant not only what he had said, but much more. His eyes were not like other men's eyes at all, when they looked at her, though they were so very quiet and steady. They were the eyes of another race, which she did not know, and they saw the world as her own people did not see it, nor as Frenchmen, nor as Italians, nor Germans, nor as any people she had met. They had seen sights she could never see, in countries where the law, if there was any, took it for granted that men would risk their lives for what they wanted. She, who was not easily frightened, suddenly felt the fear of the unknown, and the unknown was somehow embodied in Logotheti.

She did not show what she felt when he strolled up to her to say good-by, but through her glove she felt that his hand was stone cold, and as he said the half-dozen conventional words that were necessary she was sure that he smiled strangely, even mysteriously, as if such phrases as "I hope to see you again before long," and "such a heavenly afternoon," would cloak the deadly purposes of a diabolical design.

Margaret was alone with Mrs. Rushmore for a few minutes before dinner.

"Well?"

Mrs. Rushmore uttered the single word in an ejaculatory and interrogative tone, as only a certain number of old-fashioned Americans can. Spoken in that peculiar way it can mean a good deal, for it can convey suspicion, approval or disapproval, and any degree of acquaintance with the circumstances concerned, from almost total ignorance to the knowledge of everything except the result of the latest development.

On the present occasion, Mrs. Rushmore meant that she had watched Margaret and Logotheti, and had guessed approximately what had passed; that she thought the matter decidedly interesting, and that she wished to know all about it.

But Margaret was not anxious to understand, if indeed her English ear detected all the hidden meaning of the monosyllable.

"There were a good many people,

weren't there?" she observed, with a sort of query meant to lead the conversation in that direction.

But Mrs. Rushmore would not be thrown off the scent.

"My dear," she said severely, "he proposed to you on that bench. Don't deny it!"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Margaret, taken by surprise.

"Don't deny it," repeated Mrs. Rushmore.

"I had only met him once before to-day," said Margaret.

"It's all the same," retorted Mrs. Rushmore with an approach to asperity. "He proposed to you. Don't deny it. I say, don't deny it!"

"I haven't denied it," answered Margaret. "I only hoped that you had not noticed anything. He must be perfectly mad. Why in the world should he want to marry me?"

"All Greeks," said Mrs. Rushmore, "are very designing."

Margaret smiled at the expression.

"I should have said that M. Logotheti was hasty," she answered.

"My dear," said Mrs. Rushmore with conviction, "this man is an adventurer. You may say what you like, he is an adventurer. I am sure that ruby he wears is worth at least twenty thousand dollars. You may say what you like. I am sure of it."

"But I don't say anything," Margaret protested. "I dare say it is."

"I know it is," retorted Mrs. Rushmore with cold emphasis. "What business has a man to wear such jewelry? He's an adventurer, and nothing else."

"He's one of the richest men in Paris, for all that," observed Margaret.

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Rushmore. "Now you're defending him! I told you so!"

"I don't quite see——"

"Of course not! You're much too young to understand such things. The wretch has designs on you. I don't care what you say, my dear, he has designs!"

In Mrs. Rushmore's estimation she could say nothing worse of any human being than that.

"What sort of designs?" inquired Margaret, somewhat amused.

"In the first place, he wants to marry you. You admit that he does. My dear Margaret, it's bad enough that you should talk of going on the stage in your cold-blooded way, but that you should ever marry a Greek! Good heavens, child, what do you think I am made of? And

then you ask me what designs the man has! It's not to be believed!"

"I must be very dull," said Margaret, in a patient tone, "but I don't understand."

"I do," retorted Mrs. Rushmore with severity, "and that's enough! Wasn't I your mother's best friend? Haven't I been a good friend to you?"

"Indeed you have!" cried Margaret very gratefully.

"Well, then," explained Mrs. Rushmore, "I don't see that there is anything more to be said. It follows that the man is either an agent of that wicked old Alvah Moon——"

"Why?" asked Margaret, opening her eyes.

"Or else," continued Mrs. Rushmore with crushing logic, "he means to live on you when you have made your fortune by singing. It must be one or the other, and if it isn't the one it's certainly the other. You may say what you like. So that's settled, and I've warned you. You can't afford to despise your old friend's warning, Margaret, indeed you can't."

"But I've no idea of marrying the man," said Margaret helplessly.

"Of course not! But I should like to say, my child, that, whatever you do, I won't leave you to your fate. You may be sure of that. If nothing else would serve, I'd go on the stage myself! I owe it to your mother."

Margaret wondered in what capacity Mrs. Rushmore would exhibit herself to the astounded public if she carried out her threat.

IX.

If Mrs. Rushmore's logic was faulty, and the language of her argument vague, her instinct was keen enough and had not altogether misled her. Logotheti was neither a secret agent of the wicked Alvah Moon, who had robbed Margaret of her fortune, nor had he the remotest idea of making that young woman support him in luxurious idleness in case she made a success. But if, when a young and not over-scrupulous oriental has been refused by an English girl, he does not abandon the idea of marrying her, but calmly considers the possibilities of making her marry him against her will, he may be described as having "designs" upon her, then Logotheti was undeniably a very "designing" person, and Mrs. Rushmore was not nearly so far wrong as Margaret thought her. Whether it

was at all likely that he might succeed was another matter; but he possessed both the qualities and the weapons which sometimes insure success in the most unpromising undertakings.

He was tenacious, astute, and cool; he was very rich; he was very much in love; and he had no scruples worth mentioning. Moreover, if he failed, he belonged to a country from which it is extremely hard to obtain the extradition of persons who have elsewhere taken the name of the law in vain. It is with a feeling of national pride and security that the true-born Greek takes sanctuary beneath the shadow of the Acropolis.

He had played his first card boldly, but not recklessly, to find out how matters stood. He had been the target of too many matrimonial aims not to know that even such a girl as Margaret Donne might be suddenly dazzled and tempted by the offer of his hand and fortune, and might throw over the possibilities of a stage career for the certainties of an enormously rich marriage. But he had not counted on that. He had really set Margaret much higher in his estimation than to suppose that she would marry him out of hand for his money. He had reckoned only on finding out whether he had a rival, and in this he had succeeded to an extent which he had not anticipated. The result was not very promising. There had been no possibility of mistaking Margaret's tone and manner when she had confessed that there was "some one else."

On reflection he had to admit that Margaret had not been dazzled by his offer, though she had seemed surprised. She had either been accustomed to the idea of unlimited money, because Mrs. Rushmore was rich, or else she did not know its value. It came to the same thing in the end.

Orientalists very generally act on the perfectly simple theory that nine people out of ten are to be imposed upon by the mere display of what money can buy, and that if you show them the real thing they will be tempted by it. It is not pleasant to think how often they are right, and though Logotheti had made no impression on Margaret with his magnificent ruby and his casual offer of a yacht as a present, he did not reproach himself with having made a mistake. He had simply tried what he considered the usual method of influencing a woman, and as it had failed he had eliminated it from the arsenal of his weapons. That was all. He had found out at once that it was of

no use, and as he hated to waste time he was not dissatisfied with the result of his day's work.

Like most men who have lived much in Paris, he cared nothing at all for the ordinary round of dissipated amusement which carries foreigners and even young Frenchmen off their feet like a cyclone, depositing them afterward in strange places and in a damaged condition. It was long since he had dined in joyous company, frequented the lobby of the ballet, or found himself at dawn among the survivors of an indiscriminate orgy. Men who know Paris well may not have improved upon their original selves as to moral character, but they have almost always acquired the priceless art of refined enjoyment; and this is even more true now than in the noisy days of the Second Empire. In Paris, senseless dissipation is mostly the pursuit of the young, who know no better, or of much older men who have never risen above the animal state, and who sink with age into half-idiotic bestiality. Logotheti had never been counted amongst the former, and was in no danger of ending his days in the ranks of the latter. He was much too fond of real enjoyment to be dissipated. Most orientals are.

He spent the evening alone in an inner room to which no mere acquaintance and very few of his friends had ever been admitted. His rule was that when he was there he was not to be disturbed on any account.

"But if the house should take fire?" a new man-servant inquired on receiving these instructions.

"The fire engines will put it out," Logotheti answered. "It is none of my business. I will not be disturbed."

"Very good, sir. But if the house should burn down before they come?"

"Then I should advise you to go away. But be careful not to disturb me."

"Very good, sir. And if"—the man's voice took a confidential tone—"if any lady should ask for you, sir?"

"Tell her that to the best of your knowledge I am dead. If she faints, call a cab."

"Very good, sir."

Thereupon the new man-servant had entered upon his functions satisfied that his master was an original character, if not quite mad. But there was no secret about the room itself, as far as could be seen, and it was regularly swept and dusted like other rooms. The door was never locked except when Logotheti was within, and the place contained no hid-

den treasurers, nor any piece of furniture in which such things might have been concealed. There was nothing peculiar about its construction, except that the three windows were high above the ground like those of a painter's studio, and could be opened, shut, or shaded by means of cords and chains. There were also heavy curtains, such as are never seen in studios, which could be drawn completely across.

In a less civilized country Logotheti's servant might have supposed that he retired to this solitude to practise necromancy or study astrology, or to celebrate the Black Mass. But his matter-of-fact Frenchman merely said that he was "an original"; they even said so with a certain pride, as if there might be bad copies of him extant somewhere, which they despised.

One man, who had an epileptic aunt, suggested that Logotheti probably had fits, and disappeared into the inner room in order to have them alone; but this theory did not find favor, though it was supported, as the man pointed out, by the fact that the outer door of the room was heavily padded, and that the whole place seemed to be sound-proof, as indeed it was. On the other hand, there was nothing about the furniture within that could give color to the supposition, which was consequently laughed at in the servants' hall.

It is a curious fact that when servants have decided that their masters are eccentric, they soon cease to take any notice of their doings, except to laugh at them now and then when more eccentric than usual. It being once established that Logotheti was "an original," he might have kept his private room full of Bengal tigers for all the servants' hall would have cared, provided the beasts did not get about the house. It was a "good place," for he was generous; and there were perquisites; therefore he might do anything he pleased, so long as he paid—as indeed most of us might in this modern world, if we were able and willing to pay the price.

On this particular evening Logotheti dined at home alone, chiefly on a very simple Greek pilaff, Turkish preserved rose-leaves, and cream cheese, which might strike a Parisian as strange fare, unless he were a gourmet of the very highest order. Having sipped a couple of small glasses of very old Samos wine, Logotheti ordered coffee in his private room, told the servants not to disturb him, went in, and locked the outer door.

Then he gave a sigh of satisfaction and sat down, as if he had reached the end of a day's journey. Having tasted his coffee, he kicked off first one of his gleaming patent leather slippers and then the other, and drew up his feet under him on the broad leather seat. Next he drank more coffee, and lit a big cigarette; after which he sat almost motionless for at least half an hour, looking most of the time at a statue which occupied the principal place in the middle of the room. Now and then he half closed his eyes, and then opened them again suddenly, with an evident sense of pleasure.

He had the air of a man completely satisfied with his surroundings, his sensations, and his thoughts. There was something almost Buddha-like in his attitude, in his perfect calm, in the expression of his quiet almond eyes; even the European clothes he wore did not greatly hinder the illusion. Just then he did not look at all the sort of person to do anything sudden or violent, to pitch order to the dogs and tear the law to pieces, to kill anything that stood in his way as coolly as he would kill a mosquito, or to lay violent hands on what he wanted if he was hindered from taking it peacefully. Neither does a wildcat look very dangerous when it is dozing.

On the rare occasions when he allowed any one but his servants to enter that room, he said that the statue was a copy, which he had caused to be very carefully made after an original found in Lesbos and secretly carried off by a high Turkish official who kept it in his house and never spoke of it. This accounted for its being quite unknown to the artistic world. He called attention to the fact that it was really a facsimile, rather than a copy, and he seemed pleased with the perfect reproduction of the injured points, which were few, and of the stains, which were faint and not displeasing. But he never showed it to an artist or an expert critic.

"A mere copy," he would say, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Nothing that would interest any one who really knows about such things."

A very perfect copy, a very marvelous copy, surely! It was one that might stand in the Vatican, with the Torso, or in the Louvre, beside the Venus of Milo, or in the British Museum, opposite the Pericles, or in Olympia itself, facing the Hermes, the greatest of all, and yet never be taken for anything but the work of a supreme master's own hands. But Constantine Logotheti shrugged his

shoulders and said it was a mere copy, nothing but a clever facsimile, carved and chipped and stained by a couple of Italian marble-cutters, whose business it was to manufacture antiquities for the American market, and whom any one could engage to work in any part of the world for twenty francs a day and their expenses. Yes, those Italian workmen were clever fellows, Logotheti admitted. But everything could be counterfeited now, as everybody knew, and his only merit lay in having ordered this particular counterfeit instead of having been deceived by it.

So Logotheti sat there in the quiet light, looking at it, the word "copy" sounded in his memory, as he had often spoken it, and a peaceful smile played upon his broad, oriental lips. The "copy" had cost human lives, and he had almost paid for it with his own, in his haste to have it for himself, and only for himself.

His eyes were half closed again, and he saw outlines of strong, ragged men staggering down to a lonely cave at night, with their marble burden. He heard the autumn gale howling among the rocks, and the soft thud of the baled statue as it was laid in the bottom of the little fishing craft. Then, because the men feared the weather, he was in the boat himself, shaming them by his courage, loosing the sail, bending furiously to one of the long sweeps, yelling, cheering, cursing, promising endless gold, baling with mad energy as the water swirled up and poured over the canvas bulwark that Greek boats carry, and still wildly urging the fishermen to keep her up. Finally, a sweep broken and foul of the next, a rower falling headlong on the man in front of him, confusion in the dark, the crazy boat broached to in the breaking sea, filling, fuller, now quite full and sinking, a raging hell of men fighting for their lives amongst broken oars, and tangled rigging and floating bottom-boards. Now one voice less, two less—a smashing sea, and then no voices at all, no boat, no men, no anything but the howling wind and the driving spray, and he himself, Logotheti, gripping a spar—one of those very long booms that the fishermen carry for running—half drowned again and again, but gripping still, and drifting with the storm past the awful death of sharp, black rocks and pounding seas into the calm lee beyond.

A week later, on a still October night, his great yacht was lying where the boat had sunk, with diver and crane and

hoisting-gear, and submarine light; and at last, the thing itself was brought up from ten fathoms deep with noise of chain and steam-winch, and swung in on deck, the water-worn baling dropping from it and soon torn off, to show the precious marble perfect still. And then "full speed ahead" and west-southwest, straight for the Malta channel!

Logotheti's personal reminiscences were not exactly dull, and the vivid recollection of struggles and danger and visible death made the peace of his solitude more profound. The priceless thing he had fought for was alive in the stillness with the supernatural life of the ever beautiful. His fingers pressed an ebony key in the table beside him, and the marble turned very slowly and steadily and noiselessly on the low base, seeming to let her shadowy eyes linger on him as she looked back over the curve of her shoulder.

Again his fingers moved, and the motion ceased, obedient to the hidden mechanism; and so, as he sat still, the goddess moved this way and that, facing him at his will, or looking back, or turning quite away, as if ashamed to meet his gaze, being clothed only in warm light and dreamy shadows; then once more confronting him in the pride of a beauty too faultless to fear a man's bold eyes.

He leaned against his cushions, sipped his coffee now and then, and let the thin blue smoke make clouds of lace between him and the slowly moving marble, for he knew what little things help great illusions, or destroy them. Nothing was lacking. The dark-blue pavement combed like rippling water and shot with silver that cast back broken reflections, was the sea itself; snowy gauze wrapped loosely round the base was breaking foam; the tinted walls, the morning sky of Greece; the goddess, Aphrodite, sea-born, too human to be quite divine, too heavenly to be only a living woman.

And she was his; his not only for the dangers he had faced to have her, but his because he was a Greek, because his heart beat with a strain of the ancient sculptor's blood, because his treasure was the goddess of his far forefathers, who had made her in the image of the loveliness they adored, because he worshiped her himself, more than half heathenly; but doubly his now, because his imagination had found her likeness in the outer world, clothed, breathing, and alive, and created for him only.

As he leaned against his cushions, lines of the old poetry rose to his lips, and the

words came aloud. He loved the sound when he was alone—the vital rush of it, the voluptuous pause, and the soft, lingering cadence before it rose again. In the music of each separate verse there was the whole episode of man's love and woman's, the illusion and the image, the image and the maddening, leaping, all-satisfying, softly-subsiding reality.

It was no wonder that he would not allow anything to disturb him in that inner sanctuary of rare delight. His bodily nature, his imagination, his deep knowledge and love of his own Hellenic poets, his almost adoration of the beautiful—all that was his real self placed him far outside the pale that confines the world of common men as the sheepfold pens in the flock.

It was late in the night when he rose from his seat at last, extinguished the lights himself, and left the room, with a regretful look on his face; for, after his manner, he had been very happy in his solitude, if indeed he had been alone where his treasurer reigned.

Going down-stairs—for the sanctuary was high up in the house—he found his man dozing in a chair in the vestibule at the door of his dressing-room. The valet rose to his feet instantly, took a little salver from the small table beside him, and held it out to Logotheti.

"A telegram, sir," he said.

Logotheti carelessly tore the end off the blue cover and glanced at the contents.

Can buy moon. Cable offer and limit.

Logotheti looked at his watch and made a short calculation which convinced him that no time would really be lost in buying the moon if he did not answer the telegram till the next morning. Then he went to bed and read himself to sleep with Musurus' Greek translation of Dante's "Inferno."

X.

ON the following day Margaret received a note from Schreiermeyer informing her in the briefest terms and in doubtful French that he had concluded the arrangements for her to make her début in the part of *Marguerite*, in a Belgian city, in exactly a month, and requiring that she should attend the next rehearsal of "Faust" at the Opera in Paris, where "Faust" is almost a perpetual performance and yet seems to need rehearsing from time to time.

She showed the letter to Mrs. Rush-

more, who sighed wearily after reading it, and said nothing. But there was a little more color in Margaret's cheek, and her eyes sparkled at the prospect of making a beginning at last. Mrs. Rushmore took up her newspaper again with an air of sorrowful disapproval, but presently she started uncomfortably and looked at Margaret.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, and sighed once more.

"What is it?" asked the young girl.

"It must be true, for it's in the *Herald*."

"What?"

Mrs. Rushmore read the following paragraph:

We hear on the best authority that a new star is about to dazzle the operatic stage. M. Schreiermeyer has announced to a select circle of friends that it will be visible in the theatrical heaven on the night of June 21, in the character of *Marguerite* and in the person of a surprisingly beautiful young Spanish soprano, the Señorita Margarita da Cordova, whose romantic story as daughter to a contrabandista of Andalusia and granddaughter to the celebrated bullfighter Ramon and——

"Oh, my dear! This is too shameful! I told you so!"

Mrs. Rushmore's elderly cheeks were positively scarlet as she stared at the print. Margaret observed the unwonted phenomenon with surprise.

"I don't see anything so appallingly improper in that," she observed.

"You don't see? No, my child, you don't! I trust you never may. Indeed, if I can prevent it, you never shall. Disgusting! Vile!"

And the good lady read the rest of the paragraph to herself, holding up the paper so as to hide her modest blushes.

"My dear, what a story!" she cried at last. "It positively makes me creep!"

"This is very tantalizing," said Margaret. "I suppose it has to do with my imaginary ancestry in Andalusia?"

"I should think it had! Where do they get such things, I wonder? A bishop, my dear—oh, no, really! It would make a pirate blush! Can you tell me what good this kind of thing can do?"

"Advertisement," Margaret answered coolly. "It's intended to excite interest in me before I appear, you know. Don't they do it in America?"

"Never!" cried Mrs. Rushmore with solemn emphasis. "Apart from its being all a perfectly gratuitous falsehood."

"Gratuitous? Perhaps Schreiermeyer paid to have it put in."

"Then I never wish to see him, Mar-

garet, never! Do you understand? I think I shall bring an action against him. At all events, I shall take legal advice. This cannot be allowed to go uncontradicted. If I were you, I would sit down and write to the paper this very minute, and tell the editor that you are a respectable English girl. You are, I'm sure!"

"I hope so! But what has respectability to do with art?"

"A great deal, my dear," answered Mrs. Rushmore wisely. "You may say what you like, there is a vast difference between being respectable and disreputable—perfectly vast! It's of no use to deny it, because you can't."

"Nobody can."

"There, now, I told you so! I must say, child, you are getting some very strange ideas from your new acquaintances. If these are the principles you mean to adopt, I am very sorry for you!"

Margaret did not seem very sorry for herself, however, for she went off at this point, singing the jewel song in "Faust" at the top of her voice, and wishing that she were already behind the footlights with the orchestra at her feet.

Two days later, Mrs. Rushmore received a cable message from New York which surprised her almost as much as the paragraph about Margaret had.

Alvah Moon has sold invention for cash to anonymous New York syndicate who offer to compromise suit. Cable instructions naming sum you will accept, if disposed to deal.

Now Mrs. Rushmore was a wise woman, as well as a good one, though her ability to express her thoughts in concise language was insignificant. She had long known that the issue of the suit she had brought was doubtful, and that as it was one which could be appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States it might drag on for a long time; so that the possibility of a compromise was very welcome.

What she could not understand was that any one should have been willing to pay Alvah Moon the sum he must have asked, while his interest was still in litigation, and that, after buying that interest, the purchasers should propose a compromise when they might have prolonged the suit for some time, with a fair chance of winning it in the end. But that did not matter. More than once since Mrs. Rushmore had taken up the case her lawyers had advised her to drop it and submit to losing what she had already spent on the suit, and of late her

own misgivings had increased. The prospect of obtaining a considerable sum for Margaret, at the very moment when the girl had made up her mind to support herself as a singer, was in itself very tempting; and as it presented itself just when the horrors of an artistic career had been brought clearly before Mrs. Rushmore's mind by the newspaper paragraph, she did not hesitate a moment.

Margaret was in Paris that morning, at her first rehearsal, and could not come back till the afternoon; but after all it would be of no use to consult her, as she was so infatuated with the idea of singing in public that she might be almost disappointed by her good fortune.

Mrs. Rushmore read the message three times, and then went out under the trees to consider her answer, carrying the bit of paper in her hand as if she did not know by heart the words written on it. For once she had no guests, and for the first time she was glad of it. She walked slowly up and down, and as it was a warm morning, still and overcast, she fanned herself with the telegram in a very futile way, and watched the flies skimming over the water of the little pond, and repeated her inward question to herself many times.

Mrs. Rushmore never thought anything out. When she was in doubt, she asked herself the same question, "What had I better do?" or, "What will he or she do next?" over and over again, with a frantic determination to be logical. And suddenly, sooner or later, the answer flashed upon her in a sort of accidental way, as if it were not looking for her, and so completely outran all power of expression that she could not put it into words at all, though she could act upon it well enough. The odd part of it all was that these accidental revelations rarely misled her. They were like fragments of a former world of excellent common sense that had gone to pieces, which she now and then encountered like meteors in her own orbit.

When she had walked up and down for a quarter of an hour, one of these aeroliths of reason shot across the field of her mental sight, and she understood that one of two things must have occurred. Either Alvah Moon had lost confidence in his chances and had sold the invention to some greenhorn for anything he could get, or else some one else had been so deeply interested in the affair as to risk a great deal of money in it.

(To be continued.)

THE REFORMER OF THE BRITISH NAVY.

BY FRED T. JANE.

SIR JOHN FISHER, THE REMARKABLE SAILOR WHO HAS REORGANIZED KING EDWARD'S FIGHTING FLEET, AND WHO WOULD PROBABLY COMMAND IT IN CASE OF WAR.

ADMIRAL FISHER first loomed on the world's appreciation at the time of the bombardment of Alexandria, in 1882. As captain of the turret-ship *Inflexible*, the vessel that carried the biggest guns then in existence, he appealed to the popular fancy; as the inventor of the armored train which played so important a part in the land fighting after the bombardment, he earned the distinction which all able men earn sooner or later.

He has spent more than fifty years in the British navy. Before he was twenty, he had seen service in two wars—the Crimean, in 1855, as a midshipman, and that with China in 1859 and 1860, when he was a lieutenant. The son of a captain in a Highland regiment, who settled in Ceylon and married a Singalese lady, he had no "power behind the throne" seeking his advancement, and his career has from first to last been one of merit forcing itself above that gilded interest which has too often been the path to promotion.

When he rose to the command of a ship, Captain Fisher was assigned to the *Inflexible*—a wonderful vessel in her day—on account of his reputation as a gunnery expert. The authorities naturally desired to test the capabilities of her great eighty-one-ton weapons by putting them into the hands of their best artilleryman. But Fisher quickly showed his many-sidedness by declaring that the best way for an *Inflexible* to attack an *Inflexible* would be by nocturnal dashes with the torpedo boats that she carried. Appreciation of the torpedo was rank heresy in those days. But Captain Fisher did more than that, for the British "torpedo schools" owe their existence to him. As captain of *Whale Island*, the great naval training-ground at Portsmouth, he made the torpedo a special study, and founded the torpedo school-ship *Vernon*. Seldom indeed does it happen that a specialist can see good in other branches of the service than his own!

In 1886 Captain Fisher became direc-

tor of naval ordnance, and with his occupation of that post came a great but now almost forgotten revolution. The breech-loader and the quick-firer, like the torpedo, owe it to him that they came into vogue five years sooner than they otherwise would have done. The old muzzle-loading gun had as fervent champions in those days as the cylindrical boiler has in these, and the dead weight of opposition to be overcome was very great. However, when Fisher vacated the post of director, after holding it for four years, obsolete weapons were doomed, and the nucleus of a thorough and intelligent study of gunnery was established.

From director of gunnery, Fisher became superintendent at Portsmouth Dockyard, with the rank of rear-admiral. The usual revolution in the methods marked his arrival. Early and late he was about, trying to extract a full day's work from every one of his subordinates. Those were the times in which the time-honored *Punch* joke, "Bill don't do no work now; he's got a job in the dockyard," went near to representing a profound truth. The story is told that one day, in going round his domain, the admiral encountered two men standing idle. Asking the reason, he was informed that they had gone ahead to keep the way clear for some other men who were carrying an oar across the yard. A little farther on he encountered five men sauntering toward him. These, on being questioned, explained that they were carrying the oar.

"But I see no oar," said the admiral.

The men stopped and scratched their heads. Then the leading man spoke.

"Hanged if we haven't forgotten the oar, sir," said he.

Exaggerated, no doubt, this tale may be, but none the less it is said to be a substantially correct picture of the conditions of "work" in the Portsmouth dockyards when Admiral Fisher fell like a bombshell into the *dolce far niente* of the place. Such halcyon days have not been for dockyard-men since, for under