## THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1871

## A BALLERINA.

## FROM THE GERMAN OF ELISE POLKO.

It was a summer evening of the year 1735. Through the open doors of the little balcony came a sound of gay talk and laughter from the luxurious saloon of the charming Parisian danseuse, Camille Petitpas. The sweet fragrance of roses pervaded, like an enlivening breath, the brilliantly-illuminated apartment where, on satin-covered chains and tabourets, sat the loveliest women of the capital, sur-rounded by their elegant and distinguished admirers.

Petitpas.

SETTRE:-

follow her.

father is dying!"

The famous ballerina led a life of joy and

gayety, and, but for a cloudy remembrance of the lost Jacques which flitted now and

then across her sky, she could hardly have

But one evening, just at the close of the ballet, as she ended her dance amid the ap-

plauding shouts of the multitude, and, in her

ganzy dress and floating, rose-wreathed hair

stepped behind the side-scenes, a boy pressed

through the clustering throng of her al-mirers, and whispered to the beautiful dau-

"Come home, Camille Petitpas. Your

Camille forgot her waiting carriage-forgot

all but the one fact that her father was dying

and questionings, she threw a mantle over

her light costume, and ran out along the

street in her silken shoes so hurriedly that

the messenger of evil tidings could scarcely

Breathless with haste, she entered her

father's house. The workshop was lighted, for the master had ordered his bed to be re-

moved to the familiar room. The sick man

sat erect, surrounded by the dark forms of

his workmen, his eyes and cheeks glowing

with fever. He did not recognize his child,

if in terror. "Call my child to me-say merry little girl in the red shoes--that she

may dance my heart light, and I may hear

once more her joyous laugh !" Then the ballerina stole away into her own

little chamber of the old time, and took from

an old chest a simple little frock. With

trembling fingers she braided her hair, and,

twisting a scarf about her shoulders, ran

And Camille herself took down the keys

from the nail, and began to play, as once

Jacques had done, but the tears ran down her

cheeks, as she danced in her red shoes by the

firelight. A smile of rapture overspread the

"She looks like my poor wife once more,"

he murmured. "It is Camille, my happy

child-and Jacques will come and take care

"I will sleep now," he said, softly. "Greet

She kissed him, sobbing. He turned his

face to the wall. It was very still in the

workshop; no one dared to move; only the

sparks of the smith's fire crackled and flew

upward. Low and lower the ballerina bent

over the motionless figure; a cry escaped her

Years had passed since then. Camille Petitpas

was still the darling of Paris, unrivalled, ex-

cept by one-Anne Capuis de Camargo. But

jealousy had no abiding place in Camille's

warm heart, and if, sometimes, she wept a

tear or two, it was only to yield, next moment,

to her friend's irresistible charm, and em-

brace her with the more passionate enthu-

Sitting, one night, among her so-called

friends, of whom all except Camargo secretly

longed to eclipse and supplant her, Camille

"Who is the strange woman!" he cried, as

who, sobbing, seized his hand.

"Me voici, papa !" she said.

quickly downstairs.

face of the dying man.

He sank backward.

Jacques, and-kiss me !"

lips-her father was dead.

of her.

sissm.

Deathly pale, regardless of all anxious culls

believed in the existence of shadows.

Who could have recognized, in the richly-dressed mistress of the saloon, the little daughter of the locksmith of the Rue Montmartre, who eight years ago skipped, singing and laughing, about the obscure house of her father, or, with frock tucked up, and her pretty feet neatly encased in a pair of redleather shoes, delighted master and men with her merry, original dances, while Jacques, the youngest of the workmen, made quaint music with two great keys and a jewsharp! The heavy braids of her golden hair, loosened in the dance, fell like a mantle about her form; her saucy face glowed, her black eyes flashed, and the severest gravity could scarce resist the charm of her laughing mouth.

The grimy workmen gazed at her in wondering rapture. Their stout hands restedeven supper was awhile forgotten-no higher tribute could have been rendered.

The street-door was, by chance, left open one evening, and the ballet-master of the royal theatre, passing by, looked in upon the living picture-a circle of Cyclops, and the

little one in the midst, dancing upon the shop-floor by the light of a single work-lamp and the glare of the smith's fire. The unseen observer rubbed his hands with delight that his good genius had led him there at the fortunate moment. Only a few days before the famous Mad'lle Salle had suddenly gone with an English duke to his native country; the other dancers had grown faded and old in the storm of Paris life; the almost aerial frailty of Anne Camargo, his most promising pupil, gave him serious apprehension. But here bloomed before his ravished eyes as fresh a rose-bud as ever unfolded into perfect flower -a being of strength and vitality, sufficient, it seemed, to resist a simoom of the desert. He must have her, cost what it might !

On the very next day negotiations were begun. Camille had no mother, and aunts and cousins vied with each other in convincing the locksmith that a fortunate star had risen upon the house. The little girl herself was radiant with joy at the prospect of dancing all her life, admired by a larger and more distinguished circle than her father's workmen, and plying her little feet to music more intoxicating than that of poor Jacques' jewsharp.

Jacques opposed the ballet master's plans with strange violence, and seemed almost beside himself at the thought of Camille's becoming a dancer. His entreaties almost induced her to retract her consent. How handsome he looked as he caught her hands, with angry tears in his eyes, and, stamping his feet, adjured her to remain with her father! "Listen, Camille," he cried; "I swear to

you that I will do something great in the world, and then I will come and marry you, and you shall be a good, happy woman; you may dance for me every day if you will, only don't go among those wicked old monkeys and wanton girls who dance for all the world! Nobody else will love you as I do-only be-

Turning with a gay laugh to the Duke de || Betton, she exclaimed:hours and many admirers, and the Petitpas was still fresh and artless, and loved to listen "I shall never believe in the strength of to the praises of her black eyes, and rosy lips, and pearly teeth, her dimples, and her little

man's love until he has shown me the proof feet. It seemed a strange caprice that her et an all-subduing devotion. We women are shoes, though fashioned of the daintiest satin, pected to devote our whole lives to men a ho would not give up the pleasures of a single month for love of us!" were always bright red. All Paris knew and admired the "little red foot," and some noble ladies already began to wear shoes a la

The liveliest discussion was provoked by this avowal, and on all sides arose a sportive word-contest, which, here and there, grew londer and more earnest. The gentlemen crowded about the ballerina, begging for a test-the imposition of some sacrifice. The old days of chivalry seemed to have been revived, when knights and troubadours declared themselves ready to contend with monsters for the ladies of their hearts.

"Eh bien!" oried Camille, at last: "I will begin with the three nearest me-let my sisters follow my example! I demand only the knightly service of one month. Let each do for my sake what seems to him bardest; and, at the end of the appointed time, the company here assembled shall decide which has brought the most worthy offering of love.

"And then ?" asked the young captain. "Then? The reward of the bravest shall

be left to me-I will then cease to be fickle. "We devote ourselves to the trial!" cried

the duke, the philosopher, and the soldier. The ballerina extended to each of her three subjects her hand to be kissed, and supper

was then announced in the elegant little dining-saloon.

Roses were strewed upon the brilliant table; sparkling wine bubbled in the tall erystal goblets; laugh and jest hovered on beautiful lips; only on the captain's face a shadow rested, until the chiding glance and whisper of his lovely neighbor dispelled the gloom.

"I hope you do not mean to starve yourself for my sake," she said. "I should weep all my life over a sacrifice so great. Do you not wish to win the prize, four weeks from to-day?"

"How could the wish avail ?" he answered, with a melancholy smile. "I am the smallest and most insignificant in the hive of your adorers, and must content myself with the sight of their swarming."

During the following days and weeks, the dwelling of Petitpas, indeed, resembled a beehive. The story of the strange wager had flown throug's all Paris, and the curious flocked in and out of her doors incessantly, eager to be eye and ear witnesses of the wonderful deeds to be accomplished by these devoted three. New candidates announced their readiness to undertake a second contest after the decision of the pending wager-so tempting a prize seemed that strange, flighty something called Camille's heart !

There was little to see or hear.

The Duke, whose parsimony was proverbial, made the most strenuous attempts to ruin himself by the purchase of various gifts for the queen of his thoughts; but, in point of fact, his usual careful providence never for a moment forsook him, and, despite what he considered his unheard-of expenditures, he remained as rich as before. His raefal countenance, when the haughty daughter of the locksmith pushed all his presents carelessly aside, was a source of extreme amusement to all who looked on. No one could accuse the Petitpas of selfishness: she ac-cepted a fresh rose with the same grateful smile as a costly vase, and cared for a gold chain as little as a knot of ribbon.

The philosopher Etienne Cordillac appeared no more, since the eventful evening, in the presence of the ballerina. He had imnon himself the severe

cois could relight the lamps, they were al-ready at the door.

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Thus the days passed. Camille's eyes often had a sorrowful expression, and, for the first time in her life, her sleep was dis-turbed by frightful dreams! Starting up, sometimes, with a cry of terror, she would lean her arm upon the pillow, and weep like a frightened child.

At mass, she prayed longer and more fer-vently than ever before, and sometimes quite forgot to coquet with her admirers. Even the duke could not obtain a look from her. Where was Jacques?

At last the day arrived, on which the curious throng pressed into the salon, for the decision of the far-famed trial of love. What a host of eager, charming faces! Even the beautiful, proud Camargo wore an air of unusual excitement. " Camille herself, although in richest dress, was looking pale, and cast anxious glances toward the door, which Francois was incessantly opening, to admit fresh arrivals.

The philosopher, Etienne Cordillac, and the Duke de Balbe Berton appeared, each wearing a triumphant smile. Jacques was not there ! The dial-hand marked the hour of ten-the decision must be spoken !

The Dyke stepped gravely forward, and placed a small book in the hand of the ballerina, whose disquiet increased every moment. "You have only to glance over these pages,

fairest of the fair," he said, "to see that I have almost ruined myself for your sake. Here are my receipts noted down-there the expenses of the last month. I am ready to complete the sacrifice for the prize of your beart!

Petitpas laid aside the book, with a sad smile. "And what have you done for me, Etienne

Cordillac ?" said her sweet voice.

"I chose the hardest, voluntary exile! Who could do more for the queen of his thoughts ?" cried the renowned philosopher. "I!" replied a new voice, and Francois, the old servant, stood in the centre of the room. One moment, and the servant's dress fell upon the floor-the wig he removed with a low bow. In his uniform, his handsome face radiant with the ruddy glow of enthusiastic emotion, Jacques stood before his beloved and her brilliant circle.

"I think that I have accomplished the severest task," he said, sinking gracefully to his knee, and laying his wig at the feet of Petitpas. "I challenge all men to imagine a harder penance. Daily, hourly, to look upon the adored queen of my heart, without allowing myself to approach her, or receive one glance from her eyes-to do her a thousand little services, with the humble deportment of the most insignificant attendant-to lead to her with my own hands my most dangerous rivals, and to bring to her their letters glowing with love-could purgatory devise a sharper punishment ?"

A cry of applause followed. The ladies were enchanted with the handsome lackeythe gentlemen crowded, laughing, to his side, Balbe and Cordillac acknowledged themselves outdone. And Camille? Smiling and blushing, she gave her white hand to her childhood friend, then turned with bewitching grace to her vanquished adorers. "If he is guilty of the slightest negligence

in his service, I will send him away and employ another," she laughed, in exuberance of joy, with a tender glance at her beloved, "and who knows how soon I may be forced to do so, if-"

"Patience!" interrupted the philosopher, and the duke suppressed a sigh. But his face cleared again, as charming Mademoiselle Salle laid her little hand upon his arm, and

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OHAS. M. FREVOST.

lieve that! I will work and buy beautiful dresses for you, and gay ribbons, and the prettiest red shoes in the world!"

And, as he bent toward her with these words, and, half-shyly, half-boldly, encircling with his arm her slender waist, drew her to him and kissed her hair, she had already opened her lips to say, "Jacques, I will stay at home with my father," when just then she heard the voice of the ballet-master at the door, and burst hastily from his arms.

Jacques turned away, his eyes flashing with anger. An hour later all was arranged, and on the

same evening Camille Petitpas left her father's house for that of her teacher. In the twilight she met Jacques once more in the passage before the door of her room.

"Good-by, Jacques," she said, in a falter-ing voice, holding out her hand; "I cannot help it; I must go. But, of course, you will come to see me often, and then, Jacquesdo you not see?-we can marry just the same when you have become a great man, and Ia great dancer. I hope you will not forget to love me."

"I will neither love you nor marry you!" he broke in hastily. "Go; you deserve to be forgotten! You will never see me again!"

And throwing off her hand, he gained the staircase at a single stride.

The same evening he disappeared from the workshop, and the men said to each other, 'That proud Jacques has gone with the soldiers.

Camille was heartily grieved at the loss of her young friend, but she had little time to spare for regrets; there was so much to learn and to do. The locksmith's daughter was soon the darling of the ballet-master. Her beauty developed every day more brilliantly; she mastered all her lessons with wonderful quickness, and took the most difficult steps, as if for pastime. But in the society of her gay fellow-pupils she did not forget her father, and often coaxed for herself leave to spend a few hours with him, Yet she danced no more, in tucked-up frock and red shoes, by the light of the smith's fire.

A little thoughtful and grave she would sit there. Where could he have gone-that naughty, wild Jacques? If she could but feel his lips on her hair!

On her eighteenth birthday she first appeared in a solo pas as a nymph of the Seine, and her triumph and her rosy beauty were the three days' talk of Paris. Even the king remarked her, and cast an approving smile at his ballet-master. What a piece of good fortune! Pere Petitpas sat quite confused and frightened in the back part of a box among a crowd of relatives. He saw his child whirl to and fro before his eyes in herairy costume, but she seemed strange to him, and he only nedded sorrowfully when one of the aunts whispered to him that Camille was the most enviable creature in the world. She had danced far more beautifully, he thought, in the workshop at home. Even her face seemed less charming here. Then she was so like her dead mother; but all that had vanished ! And whither ?

From that evening the old man saw his daughter less and less often in the workshop.

Engaged as prima ballering, she new had an establishment of her own. Again and again she invited her father with the tenderest urgency; but the locksmith visited her only once-never again.

"My rough fists are not fit for your pretty things," he said. "Come to me if you want

looked radiant and care-free, as if some good fairy had laid in her bosom the gift of immortal youth and beauty. No one of them all had so child-like a laugh as she. She could not wear her costly robes with the Camargo's royal air, and many of her vivacious gestures and expressions recalled the locksmith's little daughter, dancing in the workshop in her red-leather shoes; but this only added piquancy to her charms.

Just now she sat in a somewhat careless attitude, beating time with her ravishing feet upon the back of her little lapdog. Her pretty head was thrown back; a leaf or two had fallen from the fresh rose at her left ear, and the string of pearls in her hair touched her rounded shoulder. A kitten, wearing a golden necklace, played with a faded bouquet, which lay upon the train of her costly, silkembroidered robe.

The new Duke Felix de Balbe-Berton and the philosopher Etienne Cordillac had taken their places beside the hostess, and upon the tabouret before her sat handsome Captain Jacques, just breveted for his gallantry in the war against Bavaria, at the side of young Louis Francois Conti, and under the command of the Marshal de Belle-Isle.

Who but the ballerina would ever have recognized in this stately hero, whose brave face and burning eyes took captive every woman's heart, the young journeyman smith who had vanished so tracklessly when Camille Petitpas went to the ballet-master's house? He had, indeed, "gone with the soldiers," and had made himself known to his foster-brother, the Prince de Conti. Returned to Paris, he hastened to call upon the renowned ballerina, who received him with loud exclamations of delight. Yet, with all her joy, she had little wish to become his wife. Jacques might, indeed, be the darling of the young prince; but-he was always poor, very poor, and Camille liked satin garments and Alencon laces, and a merry, careless life, and dreaded every serious attachment.

How different seemed the Camargo, sitting, a little way off, in her blue-silk costume how strangely grave the type of her beauty ! None could resist the charm of the features, modelled after the antique; the beaming, blue eyes, shadowed by long, black lashes the delicate, ethereal form; the slow, pure grace of motion; the chaste, sweet lips. But, hough men deified Anne Capuis de Camargo, they scarcely dared to love her; only women clung to her with passionate devotion. Voltaire was talking to her in his piquant, sparkling style, while Boufflet, the elegant young artist, clandestinely sketched the pure outline of her profile.

Therese Prevot, a ballerina who was growing old, strove, at least by her splendid toilet, to eclipse her younger rivals. What an embarras de richesse, of purple velvet em-broidered with gold, of laces and feathers; What glances and what smiles showered upon the young marquis who sat beside her!

The brilliant Mademoiselle Salle gave free play to her incomparable hands and arms, while disdaining the attentions of a colonel, to give audience to a young actor.

Love, the favorite theme of all ages, engaged the attention of these various groups. Now sighing, now smiling-now louder, now more low-they confessed the secrets of the heart, and praised the fascinating power which sways all human souls. The cheeks of the ladies grew roster, the eyes of the men more to see me." And, indeed, she did come sometimes; but a Parisian prima ballerina had few leisure

exile from her magic circle. He was sure of the prize. Could there be more perfect self-abnegation than voluntarily to relinquish the presence of the beloved one? He saw her only at mass, where, leaning against a pillar, he looked over to her as a shipwrecked mariner towards the distant shore. He followed her from the church, scarcely less faithfully than the lackey who carried her missal; and when, arrived at her house-door, with pretty coquetry she drew aside her silken veil a little, she always met his large. earnest eyes, and saw his bow of humble recognition. The daily-multiplying throng of Camille's admirers already awarded to Cordillac the palm of tender devotion, and with envious imagination saw him quit the field a conqueror.

The captain, to the astonishment of all, had for the second time in his life disappeared without trace. Nobody had seen him -nobody knew where he was staying. At first Camille scarcely missed him, amid the throng that gathered about her; but by degrees she began to speculate seriously upon his absence, and to grow restless and unlike herself. Secretly distressed, she sent her servant here and there for some clew of the vanished friend of her youth. This strange old man had entered her service but a short time before, but his bronzed and wrinkled face inspired her fullest confidence, as he stood at the door bowing low, while she spoke to him, and humbly retreating a step or two, as she advanced. Old Francois was the only witness of her daily-increasing anxiety for Jacques. He had heard often enough of the feats of her errant knightsurely, she might trust him with the most delicate and hazardous commissions! Perhaps Jacques had gone to Africa to tame lions for his lady-perhaps he was seeking to bring the teeth of some giant as an ornament for the fairest of necks! Perhaps he had become a monk, and thus thrown his life at her little feet-and she had lost him forever! Camille had more sad thoughts in that one month than in all her life before-she was frightened at herself. She execrated her foolish wager, that harebrained Jacques, and finally herself; and at Francois' quiet entrance she often looked up from her lace-work with eyes hot and swollen from weeping. Fortunately, such grief was not uninterrupted. The young Marquis Erequis was such a piquant jester, and the Chevalier Labord related to her so many petites histoires scandaleuses-Voltaire's sarcasms were so brilliant, and Boufflet's sketches so charming-she was forced to forget her trouble awhile. Then came the excitements of the stage-dance, and the triumph behind the scenes, where Francois waited with end ess patience, before he was allowed to cover, with her little blue mantle, the full shoulders of the ballerina, only to be pushed aside and trod upon, as he strove to assist his mistress into her carriage. Many a cavalier would have sworn that he had received, at such a moment, a smart cuff or a stout kick, from the old servant; but no! he must have been deceived-one glance at the bent form and withered visage plainly showed the impossibility of such violence.

Indeed, so infirm was he that, in lighting visitors down the staircase, it often happened that he tottered against the wall, under the weight of the chandelier, not without jostling somewhat rudely the guests nearest him. The lights were extinguished, and in the dark and troublesome descent the unfortunate admirers of the lovely Petitpas tripped and stembled, as if malicious spirits led astray their groping, uncertain feet. Before Fran-

whispered, teasingly:-"If I wanted a servant, there is nobody

whom I would rather engage than you!" They passed into the dining-saloon, Camille on the arm of her lover. The table glittered with costly furniture, and fresh

flowers breathed perfume from the marble vases. Boufflet and Cordillac sat next to Anne Camargo; Voltaire, opposite her, by Mademoiselle Salle; the duke on the other side.

Suddenly, the beautiful Camargo leaned backward for a moment, and looking, with a smile, upon her neighbors, asked, "Shall we also lay a wager?"

"In a year-only not to-day!" cried Balbe. with comic energy. "I shall need as much time as that to scrape a *livre* together!" "And I shall need, I fear, more than one

year to grow as handsome as the lackey of 'etitpas !" said Voltaire. Meanwhile, Camille's fingers were toying with a rose; softly they glided into the hand

of her young friend. "Are you not sorry that it is I who have vanquished you both ?" asked the young officer, softly, seeking Camille's eyes. "Are you happy, Camille ?"

"Oh, Jacques ! happy as in that sweet time when I danced for you in the red shoes !" Nobody ever heard of a change of servants in the house of the famous Petitpas; but all the ladies of Paris envied her so handsome, clever, and (aithful an attendant.-Appleton's Journal.

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