

THE COLUMBIA SPY.

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

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Poetry.

From the London Times, May 11th.

The War.
AT AFRICA'S REVENGE,
There is a sound of thunder afar,
Storm in the South that darkens the day,
Storm of battle and thunder of war.
Well if it do not roll our way,
Storm! storm! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!
Be not deaf to the sound that warns:
Be not gull'd by a despot's plea!
Are signs of thistles, or grapes of thorns?
How should a Devil know what he means?
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!
Let your Reform for a moment go,
Look to your butts and take good aims.
Better a rotten borough or so,
Than a rotten feet or a city in flames!
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!
Form, be ready to do or die!
Form in Freedom's name and the Queen's!
True, that we have a faithful ally,
But only the Devil knows what he means.
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

The following improvement on the above is politely
dedicated to such of the readers of the Spy as it may
concern.

There is no sound of silver afar
Nary red in our pocket to-day
God of battles, be kinder to our dear,
That a subscriber would roll our way!
Pay! gentlemen pay!
Bill and receipt are ready this day!
Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen pay!
Is not deaf to the sounds that warn?
Be not gull'd by another's plea!
Are signs of thistles? Yes, in a horn!
Are promises payments? No sir-ee!
Pay! gentlemen pay!
Bill and receipt are ready this day!
Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen pay!
Let other debts for a moment go!
But no no buts, but settle arrears;
Heter a grumbling tradesman or so,
Than a muzzled press or a printer in tears!
Pay! gentlemen pay!
Bill and receipt are ready this day!
Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen pay!
Pay, that you be ready to die!
Pay, that we be able to live!
Pay, or our very faithful ally,
The Devil, will get you without reprieve!
Socks! gentlemen socks!
Step to the Captain's office and sock!
Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen socks!
Gentlemen not heeding this appeal are notified that
they will be "ghosted" by our Devils forthwith.

Selections.

Girlish Fancy.

Some years ago "all Europe," as the papers had it then, or "all the world," as they write it now, having condescended to include America in the artistic hemisphere, was driven perfectly wild with enthusiasm about the beauty, voice and talent of a prima donna called La Torsilla. Engagements followed closely upon each other's heels; the public thronged the houses wherever she went; money flowed like a Pactolus stream into her coffers; poets celebrated her beauty, and of course, and above all, lovers of every degree knelt, figuratively and positively, at her feet. Now La Torsilla was as tender-hearted as she was beautiful, suffering her indolent and tender nature abhorred; therefore she consoled a good many of these suffering and unhappy men, who all declared that the happiness of their lives depended on her exclusively.

Some, however, she was obliged to make eternally miserable. She had really not much time for love, for the labors of a prima donna do not, as the public are apt to imagine, consist exclusively in dancing, picking up bouquets, and curtsying in return for applause. There is a great deal more than this to be done; rehearsals, long and tedious, hard study, and, above all, a studious and systematic care of the voice, the most delicate of all human luxuries and endowments. La Torsilla, therefore, never lost sight, even in her most passionate moments, of "la mia voce." An extra glass of champagne, or an extra lover, was inexorably refused if *la voce* signified, by a suspicious hoarseness, that its limpidity was menaced. Amongst the adores to whom La Torsilla was inexorably cruel was the Count de Sellieres, a young French nobleman, handsome and distinguished, with whom La Torsilla became acquainted, in the height of her glory, at Naples, where he was secretaire d'ambassade. At that time her *ciccioco* was a jealous Spanish Hidalgo; and, though Torsilla admired the Count, it was far too much trouble for her to try to deceive the Spaniard, and plunge herself and her voice into the horrors of a

secret intrigue; therefore was she cruel to the Count. He, however, followed her with silent admiration, content to be received on sufferance, and consoling himself by lavishing the love which the mother disdain, on a lovely little girl of some two years old, the offspring of the invisible husband La Torsilla was supposed to possess. In due course of time La Torsilla went from Naples to Milan. Here again she encountered M. de Sellieres—but again he came just too late. A solemn Austrian general gravely held La Torsilla's shawl, carried her lapdog, and looked to the throwing of the requisite number of bouquets. Sellieres was again reduced to the society of the little girl, and Ninetta, more constant than her mother, recognized him, when she saw him, with a cry of joy, and, with the premature grace of womanhood, set about adoring and tyrannizing him in a way which did honor to her birth and her feminine instincts.

All this was very agreeably arranged, and for some two years the Count, always having a knack of arriving too late, followed in the wake of the prima donna. Then a change in diplomacy sent the Count to South America, and it must be confessed that before he reached Rio, La Torsilla had faded from his mind.

La Torsilla, however, pursued her career with uninterrupted success, until at last, getting rich and lazy, and being warned by the success of many new prima donnas, in the height of her glory she retired from the stage. At this time she was forty-two—old for a prima donna, old for an Italian, old for a woman who had exhausted all the emotions of the heart, the pleasures of variety and the senses. La Torsilla in abdicating her theatrical throne, abdicated also youth, beauty, love and ambition. She at once settled joyfully and comfortably down into all the privileges of an old woman. It was to her as great a delight to be freed from the necessity of being charming and beautiful, as it was to other women to achieve the conviction that they were both. It was such a rest to go about all day in a loose dressing gown, to twist up her hair as she pleased, to eat whatever she liked, and to follow her own humors. After all she was a kind-hearted, harmless body, for being left to herself, La Torsilla manifested none but the most peaceable and harmless qualities, and was a great deal more lovable than in the days of her triumph. She, however, had probably considered love as one of the peculiar privileges of a prima donna, and retiring into private life had left love behind her. She would talk of herself as though she were talking of some one else, and always mingled the accounts of her artistic triumphs with the account of the particular lover each particular triumph had entailed. She, however, regretted none, and hearing that the last admirer she had had in her theatrical career, was an adorer of the prima donna who had succeeded her, she felt no pang of jealousy, but on the contrary imagined the singer had as good a right to him as she had to La Torsilla's mock mantles, crowns and sceptres.

La Torsilla had settled in a charming villa, not on the lake of Como, but on the borders of the Bois de Boulogne. Here she slumbered, ate and drank, took a quiet ride in her own comfortable carriage, went to mass every Sunday, and to the opera every night, and enjoyed life as she had never done before. All the affections of her heart warm and true to they were, concentrated now on the only being with whom she could claim affinity, on her Sellieres' little play-fellow, her daughter Nina. But Nina would scarcely have now been a playfellow for Sellieres, for she was now fourteen, a beautiful, spoiled, noble hearted, wayward child, bright and intelligent, educated by fits and starts in the convents and schools of all the countries in which her mother had sojourned, but with true and pure instincts with which Heaven had endowed her, unspoiled by all.

It was, perhaps, one of the very luckiest events for La Ninetta, as her mother called her, that by the strangest chance, one night on coming out of the "Italiens," La Torsilla encountered and recognized the Count de Sellieres. It must be acknowledged that though the pleasure of meeting was mutual, the recognition was not, for Sellieres' imagination could not recognize in the expanded old woman wrapped in a slovenly shawl and buried in an unbecoming bonnet, the diva of his admiration and his adoration. When she spoke, however, he remembered her, and also recollected that twelve years had elapsed since they had met. It was easy to reckon; there stood Nina, a living record; she was four years old when he had left her, now she was sixteen; her mother was now forty-two as she ostentatiously proclaimed, lest he should think it necessary to bore her with declarations and give her the trouble of trying to be agreeable, and the Count himself was forty-four and three-quarters, a fact which he studiously kept to himself.

But if years had changed La Torsilla, they had not stood still for the Count. They had made him as handsome a man as Paris could produce renowned for his high-bred, his dignity of manner, his wit, and his diplomatic skill, as well as for his unbounded success in the female world of fashion. But years had done more for the Count in another way than for La Torsilla, who, at forty-two years, was a complete baby as knowledge of the world, and they had taken from him all the illusions of youth, all be-

lief in feeling and affection, and numerous passions he had inspired had utterly destroyed his reliance on the love of women, for whom it must be confessed he entertained a sort of well-bred contempt.

It was, however, delighted to meet La Torsilla, and as delighted as herself to find that she did not expect him to play the lover. As for Ninetta she was for him an exception to all other women; not that he was in love with her, the Count was incapable of such a feeling now; but remembering her in former years, and looking on her now, he considered her something exceedingly delightful, fresh and amusing, a cross between a baby and an angel.

As for Ninetta, she pretended to remember him, and treated him exactly as she had done twelve years ago, except that she was more exacting, more passionate, and more capricious. To the Count, *blase* with great ladies and great society, La Torsilla's flowery villa at Autenel was ahead of Eden, a rest from the wiles of the worldly serpent which had coiled itself around his life.—Gradually he got into the habit of coming every day and staying a little later, spending not only the greater portion of the day, but most of his evenings in this haven of rest, where he was more at home than in his own house, overrun with fashionable friends. He became the companion and confidant of Nina, who managed the whole household, beginning by her mother, arrogating to her self liberties and privileges that would have sufficed to shock the susceptibilities of the least prudish of Parisian mothers. The Count, who really felt the deepest interest in this beautiful girl, fought hand to hand against some of the most audacious of Ninetta's fancies, and interposed between the mother's indulgence and the girl's inexperience. Ninetta and the Count, when they were not in open warfare, were the very best of friends. One day the Count finding La Torsilla comfortably asleep in the boudoir, proceeded into the garden to Ninetta. He found her reading a letter; as he approached she looked up, her eyes flashing, and her lip quivering with indignation.

"Look here," said she, "I wish I was a man," and she shook her tiny fist, "would not I settle this impertinence."
The Count took the letter; it was a declaration of love, couched in the most respectful terms, and signed in full.
"Well," said the Count, "how did you get this letter?"
"Over the wall to be sure, round this stone, and I know who threw it."
"That is easy, it is signed Rodolphe Marcel."
"Yes, a painter."
"An artist of great renown."
"That's his studio then at the end of the lawn; he is always looking out of the window instead of painting as he ought."
"Marcel is young, famous and rich, I believe too, he is very handsome."
"Is he? I never looked."
"He is not a bad match for you, and he solicits—"
Here the Count was interrupted by Ninetta snatching the letter from his hand, and tearing it into pieces.

"How dare he write such things, impudent and insulting things, and you who pretend to be my friend, stand calmly by? A good match—does he think I want a husband?"
"Well that is not an extraordinary thought to marry one day, I suppose?"
"You have no business to suppose anything of the kind; I shall never marry."
"Never, Ninetta! bah! You will fall desperately in love some day."
"I shan't. I don't even know what love is."
"Why, then, I'll tell you." So taking her hand they sat down under the portico, side by side.

"To love, though the world is full of men of equal merit, is to see in it but one image."
"Yes."
"To feel in the presence of that being as if God had created the world for him and for you."
"In his presence," said Ninetta, almost unconsciously, "to understand God better, to see the beauties of nature doubled, to comprehend poetry, music as it has never appeared before, to feel created anew, to hear his voice when he is away, to watch for him when he is expected, to feel any torture would be light compared to that of not seeing him, to know that without him, life, existence, and youth, all would be vain. Is that love?"
"Yes," said the Count in astonishment; "yes, who taught it you so well?"
"You," said Ninetta, gazing with her pure, steady eye up at him, and taking both his hands in hers—"you; if that is love, it is love I feel for you, and if you say I must love and must marry, then you see how happy I am, for I will marry you."
"Nina," said the Count, "is this one of your jokes—it is unseemly in a young girl."
"It is not a joke; it is the truth; my mother will be happy; come—"

"Nina, do you know how old I am?"
"No; I know I am over sixteen; that is old enough to marry, is it not?"
"But I am forty-five—older than your mother."
"Nonsense; but I don't care. You love me, I know you do."
"Yes, Nina."
"Then why not let us be married at once?"

"Let me speak to your mother."
Nina consented, and the Count walked back into the house, not to speak to La Torsilla, but to reason with himself.

He felt within his heart a volcano bursting forth. In years gone by he believed in the flames that issued forth; now he knew such flames were but ashes; he doubted not Nina, but himself. Had he not loved ardently before—had he not vowed to love eternally? Often and often, and believed it when he vowed, and could scarce recall the names of those he had loved. Had he not, too, been told that his inconstancy would bring death and misery—and had not beings, as fair and pure as Nina, survived and loved again, and been happy? Would not Nina be the same Nina? The bride of sixteen might love him one, two, five, say over ten years. Then she would be twenty-six; a woman, in beauty, mind and passion; and he would be fifty-six. Five more years, and she would be still in the prime of life and beauty, and he would be sixty, an old man. Yet Count Goutrau de Sellieres was astonished to find how the buried illusions of his youth all came clustering back again; how easy it would be for him to deceive himself, and plunge into momentary rapture and years of jealousy, misery, and probably ridicule, which last, as a Frenchman and a *roue*, he dreaded most. Having thus reflected, he awoke La Torsilla.

"Amica," said he, "what do you think of Nina finding a husband?"
"I should not like her to go away from me."
"She has found one."
"Who is it?"
"Myself."
"How delightful. When will you be married?"
"Torsilla, do you remember how long it is since I first made love to you?"
"Oh! a good many years ago; how lucky I never loved you, was it not?"
"Perhaps, Torsilla, but that is not the question. Do you know I am an old man? I shall not marry Nina, but Nina must be married."
"Poverina, if she loves you."
"A mere girl's fancy; there is a worthy man loves her—rich, talented, of an age suitable to hers; he will cure her of her love for me. May he come?"
"Just as you like, *mie cara*, only don't make her cry; and tell your friend that he must not expect me to dress, or to keep awake. Povera Ninetta!" upon which La Torsilla, plunging her fat, white hands into the clustering wool of her monstrous poodle, relapsed with it into a comfortable slumber.

The Count, meantime, left the house and proceeded to the atelier of M. Rodolphe Marcel.
"Sir," said he, as the young painter advanced to meet him, "I am the guardian of Mlle Nina, to whom you wrote this morning."
"I am glad, sir, you have come to me, my views are most honorable—my love equal only to my respect. All I ask is an introduction."
"You shall have it this very evening. Nina is a spoiled child, M. Marcel, and she has taken a fancy into her head, I think it right to tell you of—it is a mere girlish fancy—she thinks she is in love with me."
"A girlish fancy, indeed," said Marcel; "of no consequence, of course."
Certainly not; such a fancy to a sober mind is perfectly—

"Ridiculous," interrupted Marcel, supplying a word that did not come readily to the Count. "I shall not even allude to it to Mlle Nina."
The Count having agreed to take Marcel that evening to the villa, returned home.—On his way he pondered over the whole matter. "Such a fancy is ridiculous," said the young man, alluding, of course, to the disparity of years, "I knew that would be the way the world would judge me. Poor Nina, if I had only been twenty years younger; but she will get over it, and I shall get over it, for I really love her; but then so I have many others."
Marcel made but little progress in Nina's affection; however, as the Count was always with him he was always civilly received.—At length, however, Nina took the Count aside.

"Mamma has told me all," said she "you will not be my husband, but," said she, "I shall love you all the same."
"Yes, dearest Nina, as a father."
"I shall love you always in the way I love you now, but I will marry Marcel if you like."
"Yes, darling child, it will please me, and in a few weeks you will thank me for your happiness."
"I am as happy now as I shall ever be, Goutrau; for though you will not love me, you have given me something to do to please you. I shall tell Marcel I marry him for your sake."
Marcel received the confession which Nina made to him with becoming gravity, but said, like Goutrau, that in a few weeks he would make her so happy that she would love him better than any one else in the world.

"I hope so," said Nina; "now I don't love you at all. I have simply no aversion to you."
This strange marriage was, however, concluded. The Count, who directed all, judged it best that immediately after the ceremony the young couple should proceed alone to Italy, leaving La Torsilla to her poodle and himself.

They were absent about three months.—On their return Goutrau hastened to see them. As he gazed on Nina he started back. How changed! The freshness of youth had faded like the bloom from a gathered fruit; the buoyancy of spirit was gone; the voice was cold yet deep, the eyes languid. "Poor Nina, are you ill," said the Count, his own heart feeling a pang he fancied he had schooled it to forget.

"No Goutrau, but as we are alone I will tell you that I have not found the happiness you promised, though Marcel is kind and loves me."
"But Nina, do you not love him?"
"No," said Nina, with a deep blush; "when I married him I felt indifferent—now I hate him."
"Hate him, Nina—your husband!"
"I know he is my husband, therefore I will not say why I hate him. I married him for your sake alone. Now I have seen you again, Goutrau, I know how wrong I was—how mistaken you were."
"Nina," said the Count, rising in uncontrollable agitation, "say no more; if we were wrong, it is irrevocable now. I will never see you again, I will leave France."
"Yes," said Nina, "never let me see you again. Farewell now forever. All is irrevocable."
Nina turned from him without even extending her hand, and left the room.

The Count, scarcely believing his own feelings, yet felt that he was wretched, and resolved to fly from the temptations that assailed him.
"I will never see her again; yet how I love her I did not know till now; could we then have been happy?"
The Count gave orders for immediate departure. At daybreak the next day he was awakened by his servant.
"A letter, sir."
He opened it; it was from Nina.
"When you receive this, Goutrau, I shall be cold and dead. I tried the happiness you had prepared for me; it was torture. I love you now, not with the fancy of a mere girl, but with the passion of a woman. But, as you say, all is irrevocable. You will all soon forget me, and I cannot endure life.—Life would bring bring strife, misery, and perhaps degradation; therefore, I die. Console my mother, entreat Marcel to forgive me, and, in after years, do you, the only being I ever loved, remember me when all others have forgotten me."
With the speed of lightning the Count hastened to Autenel. It was too late; as she had said, Nina was dead and cold.

"Was I wrong?" said the Count, the first time he felt strong enough to think, after the severe illness which followed the shock of Nina's death. And with feeble step he rose and paced the room. Suddenly as he turned he beheld his image in the glass.—For some moments he gazed steadily at it. He was an old man, sickness had destroyed the outward beauty which had cheated the world of twelve or fifteen years. "Was I wrong?" repeated the Count, walking slowly up to the glass. "No, this tells me I was right," as he spoke he passed his withered hand through his thin locks, now completely white; sooner or later she would have been miserable. Better she should die pure, with all youth's illusions for me, than after years of passion, regret and sorrow, perhaps disgrace, for another. Peace be with you, my Nina, we both are happier thus. Yes, I was right."

At the time aware of, he feared he could not have the pleasure of partaking of the hospitalities of my table, but, with my permission, he would wait till the appointed hour—which was then near at hand. Our conversation was resumed; and presently he asked my little ones to go to him. They obeyed at once, albeit they were shy children. This satisfied me that the stranger was a man of kind and gentle disposition. He took the children, seated them on his knees, and began to tell them a fairy story, (evidently of his own invention, and extemporized,) to which they listened with profound attention. Indeed, I could not help being interested in the story, so fanciful were the ideas, and so poetical the language in which they were expressed.

"The story ended, the stranger replaced the children on the carpet, and approached the table on which stood, in a porcelain vase a bouquet of flowers. These he admired, and began a discourse on horticulture. I listened with intense earnestness, so profound were his observations. We were standing at the table for at least eight or ten minutes, my boys hanging on to the skirt of my dress, and every now and then compelling me to beg of them to be silent.

"One o'clock came but not the major. I received, however, a note from him, written in pencil on a slip of paper. He would be detained at Government House until half-past two.
"Again I requested the fascinating stranger to partake of luncheon, which was now on the table in the next room; and again, with the same winning smile, he declined. As he was about, [as I thought, to depart, I extended my hand, but, to my astonishment, he stepped back, made a low bow and declined taking it.
"For a gentleman to have his hand refused when he extends it to another, is embarrassing enough, but for a lady! Who can possibly describe what were my feelings? Had he been the heir to the British throne, visiting that penal settlement in disguise, (and from the stranger's manners and conversation he might have been that illustrious personage,) he could scarcely have, under the circumstances, treated me in such an extraordinary manner. I scarcely knew what to think. Observing, as the stranger must have done, the blood rush to my cheeks, and being cognizant, evidently, of what was passing through my mind, he spoke as follows:
"Madam, I am afraid you will never forgive me the liberty I have taken already. But the truth is, the passion suddenly stole over me, and I could not resist the temptation of satisfying myself that the skill which made me so conspicuous in the mother-country still remained to me in this convict land."
"I stared at him, but did not speak.
"Madam," he continued, "the penalty of sitting at table with you, or taking the hand you paid me the compliment to proffer me—yourself in ignorance of the fact I am about to disclose—would have been the forfeiture of my ticket-of-leave, a hundred lashes, and employment on the roads in irons. As it is, I dread the major's wrath; but I cherish a hope that you will endeavor to appease it, if your advocacy be only a return for the brief amusement I afforded your beautiful children."
"You are a convict," I said, indignantly, my hand on the bell-rope.
"Madam," he said, with an expression of countenance which moved me to pity in spite of my indignation, "hear me for one moment."
"A convict felon, how dared you enter my drawing-room as a visitor?" I asked him my anger again getting the better of all my other feelings.
"The Major, Madam," said the stranger "requested me to be at his house at the hour when I presented myself, and he bade me wait if he were from home when I called. The major wishes to know who was the person who received from me a diamond necklace which belonged to the Marchioness of Dorrington, and came into my possession at a state ball some four or five years ago—a state ball at which I had the honor of being present. Now, madam, when the orderly who opened the front door informed me that the Major was not at home, but that you were, that indomitable impudence which so often carried me into the drawing-rooms of the aristocracy of our country, took possession of me, and, warned as I was with generous wine—I determined to trend once more on a lady's carpet, and enter into conversation with her. That much I felt the Major would forgive me; and, therefore, I requested the orderly to announce a gentleman. Indeed, madam, I shall make the forgiveness of the liberties I have taken in this room the condition of my giving that information which shall restore to the Marchioness of Dorrington the gem of which I deprived her—a gem which is still unpledged, and in the possession of one who will restore it on application, accompanied by a letter in my handwriting."
"Again I kept silence.
"Madam," he exclaimed, somewhat impassionately, and rather proudly, "I am no other man than Barrington, the illustrious pickpocket; and this is the hand which in its day has gently plucked them from the ladies of rank and wealth jewels which realized, in all, upwards of thirty-five thousand pounds, irrespective of those which were in my possession, under lock and key, when fortune turned her back upon me."

"Barrington, the pickpocket!" Having heard so much of this man and of his exploits, (although, of course, I had never seen him) I could not help regarding him with curiosity; so much so, that I could scarcely be angry with him any longer.

"Madam," he continued, "I have told you that I longed to satisfy myself whether that skill which rendered me so illustrious in Europe still remained to me in this country, after five years of disuse. I can conscientiously say that I am just as perfect in the art, that the touch is just as soft, and the nerve as steady as when I sat in the dress-circle at Drury Lane or Covent Garden."

"I do not comprehend you, Mr. Barrington," I replied. (I could not help saying *Mister*.)
"But you will, madam, in one moment. Where are your keys?"
"I felt my pocket, in which I fancied they were, and discovered that they were gone.
"And your thimble and pencil-case, and your smelling-salts? They are here!" (He drew them from his coat pocket.)
"My anger was again aroused. It was evident, I thought, a frightful liberty for a convict to practice his skill upon me, and put his hand into the pocket of my dress. But, before I could request him to leave the room and the house, he spoke again; and, as soon as I heard his voice and looked in his face, I was mollified, and against my will, as it were, obliged to listen to him.
"Ah, madam," he sighed, "such is the change that often comes over the affairs of men! There was a time when ladies boasted of having been robbed by Barrington. Many whom I had never robbed gave it out that I had done so: simply that they might be talked about. Alas! such is the weakness of poor human nature that some people care not by what means they associate their names with the name of any celebrity. I was in power then, not in bondage. Barrington has my diamond earrings!" once exclaimed the old Countess of Kettlebank, clasping her hands. Her ladyship's statement was not true. Her diamonds were paste, and she knew it, and I caused them to be returned to her. Had you not a pair of very small pearl drops in your ears this morning, madam?"
"I placed my hands to my ears, and discovered that the drops were gone. Again my anger returned, and I said, 'How dared you, sir, place your fingers on my face?'"
"Upon my sacred word and honor, madam," he replied, placing his hand over his left breast, and bowing, "I did nothing of the kind! The ear is the most sensitive part of the human body to the touch of another person. Had I touched your ear my hope of having these drops in my waistcoat pocket would have been gone. It was the springs only that I touched, and the drops fell in the palm of my left hand." He placed the ear rings on the table, and made me another low bow.
"And when did you deprive me of them?" I asked him.
"When I was discoursing on horticulture, you had occasion several times to incline your head towards your charming children and gently reprove them for interrupting me. It was on one of those occasions that the deed was quickly done. The dear children were the unconscious confederates in my crime—if crime you still consider it—since I have told you, and I spoke the truth, that it was not for the sake of gain, but simply to satisfy a passionate curiosity. It was as delicate and difficult an operation as ever I performed in the whole course of my professional career."
"There was peculiar quaintness of humor and of action thrown into the speech; I could not refrain from laughing. But, to my great satisfaction, the illustrious pickpocket did not join in the laugh. He regarded me with a look of extreme humility, and maintained a respectful silence, which was shortly broken by a loud knocking at the outer door. It was the major, who, suddenly remembering his appointment with Barrington, had contrived to make his escape from Government House, in order to keep it. The Major seemed rather surprised to find Barrington in my drawing-room; but he was in such a hurry, and so anxious, that he said nothing on the subject.
"I withdrew to the passage, whence I could overhear all that took place.
"Now, look here, Barrington, said my husband impetuously, 'I will have no more nonsense. As for a free pardon, or a conditional pardon, at present, it is out of the question. If getting you a ticket of leave I have done all that I possibly can; and, as I am a living man, I give you fair warning that if you do not keep faith with me, I will undo what I have already done. A free pardon! What? Let you loose upon the society of England again? The Colonial secretary would scold the idea, and severely censure the governor for recommending such a thing. You know, as well as I do, that if you returned to England to-morrow, and had an income of five thousand a year, you would never be able to keep your fingers of yours quiet.'
"Well, I think you are right, major," said the illustrious personage.
"Then you will write that letter at once?"
"I will. But on one condition."
"Another condition?"
"Yes."
"Well, what is that condition? You have so many conditions that I begin to

secretly wonder how you will ever get them all written."

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