

THE STORY OF A MINE.

thing but the business before him, he calmly awaited the intruder.

She came, and for an instant stood, hesitatingly, framing herself as a picture in the door. Mrs. Hopkinson was right—she had "no style," unless an original and half foreign quaintness could be called so. There was a desperate attempt visible to combine an American shawl with the habits of a mantilla, and it was always slipping from one shoulder, that was so supple and vivacious as to betray the deficiencies of an education in stays. There was a cluster of black curls around her low forehead, fitting her so closely as to seem to be part of the sealskin cap she wore. Once, from the force of habit, she attempted to put her shawl over her head and talk through the folds gathered under her chin, but an astonished look from the senator checked her. Nevertheless he felt relieved, and, rising, motioned her to a chair with a heartiness he would have scarcely shown to a Parisian toilet. And when, with two or three quick, long steps she reached his side and showed a frank, innocent but strong and determined little face, feminine only in its flash of eye and beauty of lip and chin curves, he put down the pamphlet he had taken up somewhat ostentatiously and gently begged to know her business.

"I think I have once before spoken of her voice—an organ more often cultivated by my fair countrywomen for singing than for speaking, which, considering that much of our practical relations with the sex are carried on without the aid of an opera score, seems a mistaken notion of theirs—and of its sweetness, gentle inflexion, and musical emphasis. She had the advantage of having been trained in a musical language, and came of a race with whom catarrhs and sore throats were rare. So that in a few brief phrases she sang the senator into acquiescence as she imparted the plain libretto of her business—namely, a desire to see some of his rare engravings."

"Now the engravings in question were certain etchings of the early Great Apprentices of the art, and were, I am happy to believe, extremely rare. From my unprofessional view they were exceedingly bad—showing the mere genesis of something since perfected, but dear, of course, to the true collector's soul: I don't believe that Carmen really admired them either. But the mix knew that the senator prided himself on having the only 'hot look' of the great 'A,' or the first artistic efforts of 'B'—I leave the real names to be filled in by the connoisseur,—and the senator became interested. For the last year, two or three of these abominations had been hanging in his study, utterly ignored by the casual visitor. But here was appreciation! "She was," she added, "only a poor young artist, unable to purchase such treasures, but equally unable to resist the opportunity afforded her, even at the risk of seeming bold, or of obtaining upon a great man's privacy," etc., etc.

This flattery, which, if offered in the usual legal tender of the country, would have been looked upon as counterfeit, delivered here in a foreign accent, with a slightly tropical warmth, was accepted by the senator as genuine. These children of the sun are so impulsive! We, of course, feel a little pity for the person who thus transgresses our standard of good taste and violates our conventional canon—but they are always sincere. The cold New Englander saw nothing wrong in one or two direct and extravagant compliments, that would have insured his visitor's early dismissal if tendered in the clipped metallic phrases of the commonwealth he represented.

So that in a few moments the black, curly head of the little artist and the white, flowing locks of the senator were close together bending over the rack that contained the engravings. It was then that Carmen, listening to a graphic description of the early rise of art in the Netherlands, forgot herself and put her shawl around her head, holding its folds in her little brown hand. In this situation they were, at different times during the next two hours, interrupted by five congressmen, three senators, a cabinet officer and a judge of the supreme bench—each of whom was quickly but courteously dismissed. Popular sentiment, however, broke out in the hall.

"Well, I'm blanked, but this gets me." (The speaker was a territorial delegate.)
"At this time of life, too, foolish! over pictures with a girl young enough to be his grand child." (This from a venerable official, since suspected of various kinds of irregularities.)
"She don't hand me any." (The honorable member from Dakota.)
"This accounts for his protracted silence during the sessions." (A serious colleague from the senator's own state.)
"Oh, blank it all!" (Omnes.)

Four went home to tell their wives. There are few things more touching in the matrimonial compact than the superb frankness with which each confides to each the various irregularities of their friends. It is upon these sacred confidences that the firm foundations of marriage rest unshaken.

Of course the objects of this comment, at least one of them, were quite oblivious. "I trust," said Carmen, timidly, when they had for the fourth time regarded in rapt admiration an abominable something by some Dutch woodchopper, "I trust I am not keeping you from your great friends"—her pretty eyelids were cast down in tremulous distress—"I should never forgive myself. Perhaps it is important business of the state!"

"Oh, dear, no! They will come again—it's their business."

The senator meant it kindly. It was as near the perilous edge of a compliment as your average cultivated Boston man ever ventures, and Carmen picked it up, femininely, by its sentimental end. "And I suppose I shall not trouble you again?"

men, "and I—I am—but—look you—only a poor girl from California, that you know not."

"Pardon me, I know your country well." And indeed he could have told her the exact number of bushels of wheat to the acre in her own county of Monterey, its voting population, its political bias. Yet of the more important product before him, after the manner of book-read men, he knew nothing.

Carmen was astonished, but respectful. It transpired presently that she was not aware of the rapid growth of the silkworm in her own district, knew nothing of the Chinese question, and very little of the American mining laws. Upon these questions the senator enlightened her fully. "Your name is historic, by the way," he said pleasantly. "There was a Knight of Alcántara, a 'de Haro,' one of the emigrants with La Casas."

Carmen nodded her head quickly. "Yes; my great-great-grandfather!"

The senator stared.

"Oh, yes. I am the niece of Victor Castro, who married my father's sister."

"The Victor Castro of the 'Blue Mass' mine?" asked the senator abruptly.

"Yes," she said quietly.

Had the senator been of the Gashwiler type he would have expressed himself, after the average masculine fashion, by a long-drawn whistle. But his only perceptible appreciation of a sudden astonishment and suspicion in his mind was a lowering of the social thermometer of the room so decided that poor Carmen looked up innocently, chilled and drew her shawl closer around her shoulders.

"I have something more to ask," said Carmen, banging her head—it is a great, oh, a very great favor."

The senator had retreated behind his bastion of books again, and was visibly preparing for an assault. He saw it all now. He had been, in some vague way, deluded. He had given confidential audience to the niece of one of the Great Claimants before congress. The inevitable ax had come to the grindstone. What might not this woman dare ask of him? He was the more implacable that he felt he had already been prepossessed—and honestly prepossessed—in her favor. He was angry with her for having pleased him. Under the icy polish of his manner there were certain Puritan callosities caused by early straight lacing. He was not yet quite free from his ancestor's cheerful ethics that Nature, as represented by an impulse, was as much to be restrained as Order represented by a Quaker.

Without apparently noticing his manner, Carmen went on, with a certain potential freedom of style, gesture and manner scarcely to be indicated in her mere words. "You know, then, I am of Spanish blood, and that, what was my adopted country, our motto was 'God and Liberty.' It was of you, sir—the great Emancipator—the apostle of that Liberty—the friend of the down-trodden and oppressed—that I, as a child, first knew. In the histories of this great country I have read of you, I have learned your orations. I have longed to hear you in your own pulpit deliver the creed of my ancestors. To hear you, of yourself, speak, oh! Madre de Dios! what shall I say—speak the oration eloquent—to make the what you call—the debate, that is what I have for so long hoped. Eh! Pardon—you are thinking me foolish—wild, eh?—a small child—eh?"



"To hear you, of yourself, speak."

Becoming more and more didactical as she went on, she said suddenly, "I have you of myself offended. You are mad of me as a bold, bad child! It is so?"

The senator, as visibly becoming limp and weak again behind his entrenchments, managed to say, "Oh, no!" then "really!" and finally, "The-o-ohs!"

"I am here but for a day. I return to California to-morrow, as it were to-morrow. I shall never, never hear you speak in your place in the Capitol of this great country."

The senator said hastily that he feared—he in fact was convinced—that his duty during this session was required more at his desk, in the committee work, than in speaking, etc., etc.

"Ah," said Carmen sadly, "it is true, then, all this that I have heard. It is true that what they have told me—that you have given up the great party—that your voice is no longer heard in the old—what you call this—the old issues?"

"If any one has told you that, Miss De Haro," responded the senator sharply, "he has spoken foolishly. You have been misinformed. May I ask who?"

"Ah!" said Carmen, "I know not! It is in the air! I am a stranger. Perhaps I am deceived. But it is of all. I say to them, When shall I hear him speak? I go day after day to the Capitol, I watch him—the great emancipator—but it is of business, eh?—it is the claim of that one, it is the tax, eh! it is the impost, it is the postoffice, but it is the great speech of human rights—never, never. I say, 'How arrives all this?' And some say, and shake their heads, 'Never again he speaks.' He is, what you call 'played'—yes, it is so, eh!—played out! I know it not—it is a word from Boston, perhaps! They say he has—eh, I speak not the English well—the party he has shaken, 'shook'—yes—he has the party 'shaken,' eh! It is right—it is the language of Boston, eh?"

"Permit me to say, Miss De Haro," returned the senator, rising with some asperity,

"that you seem to have been unfortunate in your selection of acquaintances, and still more so in your ideas of the derivations of the English tongue. The—er—the—er—expressions you have quoted are not common to Boston, but emanate, I believe, from the west."

Carmen De Haro contritely buried everything but her black eyes in her shawl.

"No one," he continued, more gently, sitting down again, "has the right to forecast from my past what I intend to do in the future, or designate the means I may choose to serve the principles I hold or the party I represent. Those are my functions. At the same time should occasion or opportunity—for we are within a day or two of the close of the session—"

"Yes," interrupted Carmen sadly, "I see—it will be some business, some claim, something for somebody—ah! Madre de Dios—you will not speak, and I—"

"When do you think of returning?" asked the senator, with grave politeness; "when are we to lose you?"

"I shall stay to the last—to the end of the session," said Carmen. "And now I shall go." She got up and pulled her shawl viciously over her shoulders, with a pretty pettishness, perhaps the most feminine thing she had done that evening. Possibly, the most genuine.

The senator smiled affably: "You do not deserve to be disappointed in either case; but it is later than you imagine; let me help you on the shorter distance in my carriage; it is at the door."

He accompanied her gravely to the carriage. As it rolled away she buried her little figure in its ample cushions and chuckled to herself, albeit a little hysterically. When she had reached her destination she found herself crying, and hastily, and somewhat angrily, dried her eyes as she drew up at the door of her lodgings.

"How have you prospered?" asked Mr. Harlowe, of counsel for Royal Thatcher, as he gallantly assisted her from the carriage. "I have been waiting here for two hours; your interview must have been prolonged—that was a good sign."

"Don't ask me now," said Carmen, a little savagely. "I'm worn out and tired."

"Mr. Harlowe bowed. "I trust you will be better to-morrow, for we expect our friend, Mr. Thatcher."

Carmen's brown cheek flushed slightly. "He should have been here before. Where is he? What was he doing?"

"He was snowed up on the plains. He is coming as fast as steam can carry him; but he may be too late."

Carmen did not reply. The lawyer lingered. "How did you find the great New England senator?" he asked, with a slight professional levity.

Carmen was tired, Carmen was worried, Carmen was a little self-reproachful, and she kindled easily. Consequently she said, icily: "I found him a gentleman!"

CHAPTER XV.

HOW IT BECAME UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

The closing of the — congress was not unlike the closing of the several preceding congresses. There was the same unfinished-like, impractical haste; the same hurried, unjust and utterly inadequate adjustment of unfinished, ill-digested business, that would not have been tolerated for a moment by the sovereign people in any private interest they controlled. There were frauds rushed through; there were long-suffering, righteous demands shelved; there were honest, unpaid debts dishonored by scant appropriations; there were closing scenes which only the saving sense of American humor kept from being utterly vile. The actors, the legislators themselves, knew it, and laughed at it; the commentators, the press, knew it and laughed at it; the audience, the great American people, knew it and laughed at it. And nobody for an instant conceived that it ever, under any circumstances, might be otherwise.

The claim of Rosecommon was among the unfinished business. The claimant himself, haggard, pathetic, importune and obstinate, was among the unfinished business. Various congressmen, more or less interested in the success of the claim, were among the unfinished business. The member from Fresno, who had changed his dwelling for a speech against the claimant, was among the unfinished business. The gifted Gashwiler, unused in his soul over certain other unfinished business in the shape of his missing letters, but dropping oil and honey as he mingled with his brothers, was King of misrule and lord of the unfinished business. Pretty Mrs. Hopkinson, prudently escorted by her husband, but imprudently ogled by admiring congressmen, lent the charm of her presence to the finishing of unfinished business. One or two editors, who had dreams of a finished financial business, arising out of unfinished business, were there also, like ancient bards, to record with pen or threnody the completion of unfinished business. Various unclean birds, scenting carrion in unfinished business, hovered in the halls or roosted in the lobby.

The lower house, under the tutelage of the gifted Gashwiler, drank deeply of Rosecommon and his intoxicating claim, and passed the half-empty bottle to the senate as unfinished business. But, alas! in the very rush, and storm, and tempest of the unfinished business, an unlooked-for interruption arose in the person of a great senator whose power none could oppose, whose right to free and extended utterance at all times none could gainsay. A claim for poultry, violently seized by the army of Sherman during his march through Georgia, from the hencoop of an alleged loyal Irishman, opened a constitutional question, and with it the lips of the great senator.

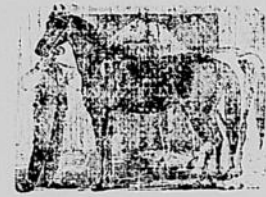
For seven hours he spoke eloquently, earnestly, convincingly. For seven hours the old

[To be continued.]

XXmas

If we cannot all have Christmas Trees, we can all glance down the long aisle at Whidden Bros.' Store and see an unequaled display of household and Christmas Goods

HUNTER'S LIVERY



Single or Double Rigs!

With or Without Driver; and Saddle Horses at all times. Land Hunters and Sportsmen will find the accommodation at this Stable equal to all their necessities.

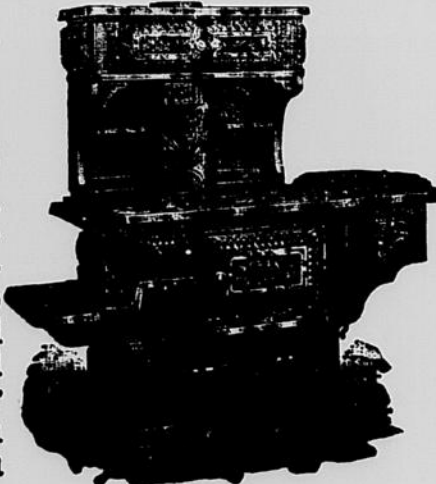
The patronage of the farming public is respectfully solicited. All stock left in the stable will be carefully attended to, at the lowest living prices.

OWING TO THE DEMANDS OF THE

HARDWARE BUSINESS,

Upon my time and attention, after the first day of January, 1887, I shall give up my office of County

Treasurer. a nice holi-for what was girl, but wh your better hooves you my bric-acy goods—Heating sto in the world Glass, Build and shelf har gether with farm machin



If you desire day present your best ich is now half, it be-to look at brac, and fan Cook and ves—the best --Tin ware, ing material d ware, to-ironfencing, ery, improv-

ed fire arms and ammunition, and a thousand household souvenirs.

ANTON ENGER.