

A NIGHT IN HER LIFE.

CHAPTER II.

Dinner was scarcely over before guests began to drop in. Phoebe sat by Cecily and furnished her with the name of each as he or she arrived.

Mrs. Luxmore had begged the girl to do as she liked about sitting up, and to retire to bed the moment she felt tired; and at first Cecily's impulse had been to plead fatigue, and slip off to the companionship of her own thoughts—to wonder what Oscar Mallinger and his fiancée were doing at Grayfield, and whether he was sorry to find her absent. But Vanda had pressed her so eagerly to wait that she yielded; and in a very short time all inclination to beat a retreat had left her, so new and interesting to her was the style of the Luxmore's friends.

"These are Mr. and Miss Bouverie. They are the people who have done so much for the work-girl. Doesn't she look nice and good? That is Jack Matthews, who has written a comic opera. There are Mr. and Mrs. Brace. He is editor of the National Critic. Here is nice Mr. Paul Randall—he can just sing! You must hear him. He is the tenor in the quartette; and over there, talking to mamma, is the bass, Walter Baylis—very nice and clever and funny. And here—oh, here at last is the very nicest of all, Mr. Kent—the novelist you know."

Cecily slowly removed her eyes from the handsome tenor, Paul Randall, and fixed them upon Mr. Kent. He did not coincide with her idea of a novelist—he was not like Mr. Oscar Mallinger. This was a man of five-and-thirty—perhaps rather more, clean-shaven, slightly bald, slightly gray, and wearing a double eye-glass.

"Phoebe," said Cecily slowly "have you ever read 'The Winter is Past'?"

"No. It is by Mallinger, is it not?"—

"Yes."

"Mother doesn't care for his books. She thinks them unhealthy, and so does Ric."

"Indeed! But he is a very popular writer, is he not?"

"Yes, I think so. But I have heard several people say his last book was poor stuff—'A Platonic Friendship' I think it is called."

The conversation was broken off here by the beginning of the voice quartettes. Cecily, before three of the melodious notes had struck upon her ear, was rapt; all the music in her nature was stirred. They sang again and again, the audience admiring and applauding. Then Paul Randall sang a solo, accompanied by Phoebe. Cecily's weariness was all forgotten. Madeline Selgwick sang, prettily and brightly—just the kind of voice and song which are most pleasant to listen to.

"Miss Rutland, will you give us a little thing, if you are not too tired?" said Richard Luxmore.

All the girl's artist nature was awake now; she thirsted for her violin. Mrs. Luxmore had not introduced her to many people, rightly judging that she would rather be let alone a little while first. There was a movement of general interest as the tall graceful girl in white crossed the room and unfastened her violin-case. Just behind her, a tall lamp cast down its radiance upon the bronze gleams of her hair and upon the exquisite curve of her arm and wrist; the dark red of the stones of her necklace enhanced the whiteness of her throat. On her face was that expression which is, above all others, so fascinating—the look of having passed through some vital experience, of having all the faculties of the soul awakened—the look which incites the spectator to gaze and gaze again, in the hope of reading more in that perplexing sweetness, of analysing its depths and its intention. She had been very attractive when Mallinger met her first; but now her attractions were doubled. She had to thank him for this; he had also put the finishing touch to her violin-playing. All of the restless rebellious pride and love and regret in her found its way to the sympathetic strings. Her first notes produced a strange stillness in her audience.

At Greyfield Mrs. Mylner had been heard to remark that she was excessively glad her daughters, Sibyl and Marjorie, did not play in Cecily Rutland's professional style. In fact, until Mallinger appeared upon the scene, the reception of her playing in the neighbourhood of Ryelands had been quite without enthusiasm. This had checked her, but it had not made her nervous, with her beloved violin in her hand she must let herself go—she could not be diffident or cold.

At the conclusion of her effort there was an instant's thrilling pause, and then such a round of applause as almost took the young performer's breath away. There was not one person in that room who was not a connoisseur, who did not know the exact worth of such playing as had just been heard. She was surrounded. Half a dozen people were asking to be introduced to her. Vanda thrilled with pride at her friend's triumph.

"I told you so!" she said in a low tone to Richard. "I knew she had only to be heard to be appreciated."

"Seen and heard too," replied Richard, with the warmth of an enthusiast. "Music seems to breathe from every pulse."

"Some more! Some more!" clamored every voice.

Cecily took up the bow again, thrilling with a new strange exultation. Mallinger had been right, then, when he poured praises into her ear: his verdict was true—she was unappreciated at Ryelands because she was not understood. She pulled out from her heap of music an almost unknown piece by Grieg—a wild Norse romance, simply called "A Farewell." Mallinger had invented a whole libretto for the music and imagined it to be the leave-taking of a Viking chief, to whom it had been prophesied that he should never return to the wife he adored. How well the girl remembered playing at Greyfield the night before his departure last winter! How she recalled the garish lights in the great drawing-room at the Manor; the Squire nodding over his field; Mrs. Mylner dozing over her croquet counterpane; Hugh—Cecily's brother—in a corner with Marjorie playing "Go Bang"; Sibyl casting tender glances at Squire Harding, who was longing to be in the back drawing-room with Miss Rutland and Mallinger! The scene lay before these two last, framed by the tapestry curtains of the archway. In the little back drawing-room where they sat there was no light save that given by the glowing fire and by the candles on the grand piano. Back to the girl's mind rushed every false note of Oscar's tender voice as he begged her to

play that once more. Wild rage and bitter humiliation swept over her by turns as she remembered how she had trembled and glowed at his broken words, his scarcely veiled hints of devotion.

She took up her bow with a firm hand and dashed away her weakness. It was over now. She was in London, among new surroundings; she meant to bury out of sight the follies of the past. She played. The piece, with all its stinging memories, took hold of her as it always did; it stirred in her something like inspiration.

At its close there was an odd silence, and Miss Bouverie was seen to be furtively using her pocket-handkerchief.

At last Mr. Brace the editor turned to Mrs. Luxmore.

"I congratulate you," he said. "The young lady is a genius!"

"Let me introduce you to Mr. Kent, Cecily," said Vanda.

"You have studied in Germany, Miss Rutland?" was the question at once put by the novelist, when he had made his bow.

"Yes," said Cecily simply.

"I hope you will accept my very genuine thanks for the enjoyment you have given me to-night."

"I am glad you like my playing," she answered; "but I am much in want of lessons. I live quite in the country, where I can get no teaching."

"What you would like to do would be to hear the very best playing in London—would you not?" he asked, turning his keen dark-gray eyes upon the girl.

She raised her eyes to him with a sudden light in them.

"Oh, I should!"

"I wish," said Julian Kent, "that you would allow me to gratify you. I should like to watch your face when first you hear Sarasate."

She fixed her eager questioning eyes upon his countenance and thought it both humorous and kindly in spite of the double eye-glass.

"If Miss Luxmore and you will do me the honor of dining with my mother and me to-morrow, I think it might be managed," he went on.

"Oh, do you really mean it—mean me to hear Sarasate to-morrow?" she said, quite breathlessly.

"Will that give you pleasure?"

"Great pleasure! You must know it!"

"Then we shall be quits, for you have given me great pleasure to-night. I can never feel quite comfortable when under the burden of an obligation."

"What a pretty way you put it!" said Cecily, breaking into a smile which made all her expressive face radiant. "But people who write books can always make pretty speeches," she added; and, as she spoke, the smile died away, and the corners of her mouth hardened.

"Have you had the misfortune to know one of my kind before, Miss Rutland?" asked Kent, who watched her narrowly.

"Even in the country one sometimes finds a stray celebrity," she said, and she laughed as lightly as she could.

"I must go and seek Miss Vanda," he said, after a long look at her, "and make her ratify your acceptance of my invitation."

Miss Luxmore approached at the moment.

"Oh, Vanda, you must!" cried Cecily eagerly.

"Miss Luxmore, I want to give myself a treat," the novelist said. "I want to indulge myself with a first sight of Miss Rutland when she first hears Sarasate. She has promised to dine at Chelsea to-morrow. Will you come with her?"

"That I will," said unaffected Vanda cheerfully. "I shall like it of all things. He is going to play Rhapsodie, and Phoebe and Ric will be at their orchestra practice; so it will be just the thing for us and me."

"I shall invite Randall to complete the party. Have you any objection?"

"None in the world!" was the reply as a faint additional color rose in the girl's clear cheeks.

It seemed to Cecily as if the whole evening flew by on wings. She was almost bewildered with the number of new faces and the new and strange topics on which the members of the party conversed.

When it was all over and she was safely tucked into her comfortable bed, she was far too tired to do more than just remember in sleepy surprise that Mallinger's name had scarcely occurred to her once during the whole evening, except when playing her violin. That feeling, so bitter to a woman, of being ignored, passed over, forsaken—that feeling which had poisoned her life for the past months seemed almost gone. Here in London, before she had been there for three hours, she was sought out, appreciated, made much of. It was a dangerous reaction.

Chief and above all was ringing in her head the crowning glory of the evening. Just before the guests separated, Richard Luxmore had come up and, on behalf of the committee, asked her to play at the approaching Artists' Benefit Concert. It was not until afterwards that Vanda made her understand fully what honor this was. The concert was to be held in Camelot House, the great historic mansion of the Duke of Lamorna. Half the items on the programme were to be performed by ladies and gentlemen of title. Recitations were to be given by a Marchioness of literary proclivities; the Ladies Adeline and Angela, the Duke's little daughters, were in the orchestra, and a few of the best singers of the day were gladly giving their services—it is to be feared more to oblige the Duchess than the needy artists who were to reap the fruit of their labours.

Of course, if she had a success, it meant instant fame to Cecily; and her dreams that night might have been of a most exciting description had she not been too tired to have any dreams at all.

CHAPTER III.

"She has dark reddish-brown hair, and a skin which by lamplight seemed to me to be faultless, but which perhaps will not bear the light of day." She moves like a queen, and last night wore a dress, about which I can tell you only two things—first, it was white; and, secondly, she ought never to wear any other."

"My dear Julian, how do you know? You never saw her in any other."

"I know by virtue of my art. She will

not wear it to-night, though—at least, if she were a London girl she would not. One of the unwritten laws about the dress of the woman of to-day is that it shall vary. If I meet Mrs. Brace at the Smith's on Tuesday in a toilette which it is a treat only to look at, I may be sure she will not wear it at the Browns' on Wednesday. I have complained several times to ladies whom I have the privilege of knowing well, but in vain! Had it not been my first introduction to Miss Rutland, I would have begged her to wear her white gown to-night. I want you to see her in it."

"My dear Julian, I wish you could give up looking at women as if they were pictures and think about one as a wife," said Mrs. Kent quietly, as she disentangled her crimson wool.

"The women of this generation were made for pictures and not for wives, mother. They won't wear. Seriously, I am a marrying man; and, had I lived a generation ago, I should have married at once—some good little soul who parted her hair in the middle and played at croquet as her wildest dissipation. But nowadays! Bless me, it takes women half the day to arrange their heads, and the rest to be fitted by their tailor!"

"You will always joke on this subject, Julian. I am sure Vanda Luxmore is not of the class you describe."

"No; she is of the wife class, I grant you, and of that opinion is Mr. Paul Randall, which is the reason I have asked him here to-night."

"You are so busy making up matches for other people, you forget to have one of your own," said Mrs. Kent tartly. "With whom are you going to pair off Miss Rutland?"

"Well," said her son, starting into the fire, "I haven't quite made up my mind yet."

"Oscar Mallinger would have suited her, from your description, I should think."

"But Oscar is flying kites and has climbed into exalted society," said Julian, smiling. "It is slippery up there, though. I wonder if he will keep his footing—eh?"

Little did Cecily dream whose name had just been uttered as she followed Vanda into the charming drawing-room.

The Kents lived in a flat in Chelsea—a palatial one, with every modern improvement. It just suited their wandering habits, for they were always travelling. This drawing-room, dark and rich in coloring, lighted by glowing fire and soft lamp, and filled with curiosities of every sort, seemed a fairyland to Cecily.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Kent was pleased with his visitor's appearance, for she wore the very same white dress as last night, garnet necklace and all.

Vanda, who knew Mrs. Kent intimately, went up to her and kissed her, and introduced her friend.

"My son has told me a great deal about you," said Mrs. Kent to the girl.

"How did he find out a great deal about me? It must be his wonderful knowledge of character, for he has not seen much of me," laughed Cecily, quite at her ease with the sensible, plain, well-bred old lady.

"He is a terrible hand at seeing to the bottom of people at a glance," said the novelist's mother.

Cecily turned round suddenly upon Julian, who was examining with interest a china kitten on the mantelpiece.

"Am I the kind of person one sees through at a glance?" she said, with grave gray eyes bent upon him.

He felt the challenge in these eyes; he felt that there were depths in this girl which he was not prepared to find. As she steadily looked at him, she was mutely defying him to find her out; he accepted her defiance with a gaze as determined as her own.

"I don't know about other people. I have not tried to see through you," was what he said with his lips. "If she is shallow, that will pique her," he thought.

She smiled tranquilly.

"I am so glad. Now I shall enjoy my evening. I shall not be tormented with the idea that you are trying to classify me. Remember, you are not a novelist, but a man to-night!"

"And a gentleman, I hope, Miss Rutland," Julian returned quickly. "Even a surgeon would scarcely vivisect his friend."

"Pshaw, my dear Kent, what's that you say?" cried Paul Randall, entering in his evening dress, looking very handsome indeed with his Neapolitan violets. "Novelists and doctors earn their daily bread by vivisectioning their nearest and dearest. I suppose you have seen this week's Forum?"

"Yes," answered Kent simply.

"A case exactly in point!" said Paul vehemently. "Look what you did for that little upstart! Who got him a place on the staff of the Forum? I beg your pardon, Mrs. Kent, most sincerely for this irregularity! How are you? Very well I hope! But this sort of thing does make one's blood boil, does it not?"

"Julian, what is this?" said Mrs. Kent. Randall checked himself suddenly and looked appealingly at Kent, who had made him one or two unavailing signals to be quiet.

"Have I let the cat out of the bag?" he cried penitently.

Julian laughed a little.

"And all her kittens! But it is of no consequence," he said good-humoredly. "I've been pretty roughly treated in the Forum—that's all, mother. I thought I would not tell you about it yet, lest it should spoil your enjoyment of Sarasate."

"A hostile review of you in the Forum? I cannot believe it, Julian," cried his mother. "What was the occasion of it?"

"The fifth edition of 'Matter of Taste,'" said Randall wrathfully. "But that is not the worst, Mr. Kent! Who do you think is the reviewer? Who do you think has the impudence—the sheer impudence—to put his name to the review? Oscar Mallinger, if you please!"

Cecily started. For her very life she could not have helped doing so. The start was quite momentary, and the general attention so fixed upon the speaker that only one person saw the tell-tale sign. It was a mercy for the girl that she was only expected to sit still, for she could not have spoken. What was this she was hearing? How were these people speaking of the man who was to her almost as a god—of him whom she believed to be the leader of the literary culture of the day?

"Oscar Mallinger," the old lady was saying—"the young fellow to whom my son was so kind, the handsome musical man whom he helped on, and for whom he got a post on one of the papers? Oh, Mr. Randall, you have been misinformed!"

"It's all right, mother; the paper's in my pocket," said the author tranquilly. "You must not be hard on Mallinger. He

would probably tell you, if you remonstrated with him, that no private feeling should interfere with the discharge of public duty, and that he owed it to his conscience and to art to say what he thought of me, even though we were friends."

"A little scrub like that! They ought not to dare to allow him to review any book of yours!" cried Paul, still furious.

"He is beside himself, I think. What do you intend to do, Kent?"

"Let him alone," was the amused answer. "He very likely believes himself to be sincere."

"He ought to be suppressed!"

"He will suppress himself, Paul, if you give him the chance. He is a little 'out of himself,' as the French say, on his engagement to her ladyship; he is presuming too far upon his notoriety, and everybody will perhaps not be as forbearing as I am. I have heard," he concluded, with a smile, "that he has a political pamphlet in the press. I fancy that will do for him—with the Earl, his future father-in-law, at all events. But come—they have announced dinner! Let us leave Mr. Mallinger alone and proceed to something pleasanter. Miss Rutland, may I escort you?" He turned to her and offered her his arm, with a smile which was peculiarly his own—sweet and comparatively rare. "Let me have the honour of reminding you all," he continued, "that I am not a novelist, but a man to-night!"

The stalls at St. James's Hall were crowded with the great violinist's recital. Cecily sat rapt—the half her attention concentrated on what was passing round her, the other half in fierce self-questionings about what she had heard.

Womanlike, her first impulse had been to take up the cudgels for the man she had so adored. Mallinger—the Mallinger she had known—was surely incapable of such baselessness as this she had just heard discussed! But then a voice whispered in her ear, "How did this man treat you? If he could throw over the woman who loved him, would he hesitate to injure his friend?"

"Oh, why—why cannot I get away from the remembrance of him?" she thought passionately. "I fled from home to avoid him and have fallen into the midst of his friends—or his enemies, to speak more correctly. I did all I could to forget him, but it has been of no use. Here, as everywhere, I cannot escape from my misery."

The change which had fallen upon her spirits did not escape Kent's notice. His intense quickness of sympathy was what had made him the novelist of the hour. He could, as it were, read the human heart from his subject and hold it up to the view—but not brutally. So tenderly did he touch the longings, the failings, the hopes and fears of the men and women of his day that those who read felt their hearts warm with sympathy towards those who moved, lived, suffered, and were glad in his pages; and red tears fell upon the records of sin and blotched them out, as the tear of the recording angel blotted out Uncle Toby's oath.

This was the man who was now making a study of Cecily Rutland. He had an idea—a vague one at present—that he was on the verge of discovering the secret of the girl's face. Some vital experience had left its mark upon her—that had been his very first impression. This experience had had a saddening effect. Almost involuntarily, as soon as he had begun to talk to her, he found himself searching for a clue. One speech of hers had at once roused his attention.

"People who write books can always make pretty speeches," she had said; and the look which accompanied the words had been a very bitter one. To-night, her involuntary start at Mallinger's name recalled both the words and the look. She had listened eagerly to the conversation which followed, but had taken no part in it. At dinner the subject came up again. Mr. Randall and Vanda Luxmore discussed Oscar's novels with much spirit. Cecily still preserved silence.

"Do you read Mallinger?" Kent had asked her.

"Yes," she had replied.

"What do you think of him?"

"I like his books—I mean, I think them very clever," was the hurried response.

"So," reflected the novelist, "she never heard of me?"—for Phoebe had retailed to him this interesting fact. "She never heard of me, but has read all Mallinger; also, having read him and admired him, she does not care to talk about him. What does this portend?" He set to work to think it out. In a pause of the concert he asked her—

"What is your part of the country, Miss Rutland?"

She told him.

"Ryelands?" he said. "I fancy I have met a man who came from those parts, Miller—Mylner, was the name?"

"Robert Mylner? Is he at the bar?" she asked.

"That's the man. Do you know him?"

"Of course I do. We have been almost brought up with the Mylners of Greyfield; we shared a governess as children, and Sibyl was with me at Dusseldorf."

Kent had ascertained all he wished to know. He was well aware that Mallinger, at whose rooms he had met Robert Mylner, had stayed for a month at Greyfield last Christmas.

The knowledge made him feel dissatisfied and cross, he hardly knew why. As Cecily sat, her lovely pathetic eyes fixed upon Sarasate, he angrily imagined that she was paying no heed to the treat he was giving her; her heart was away with his rival.

He started. His rival? In what sense, pray? He, the great Kent, had never in his life admitted that Mallinger was his rival from a literary point of view. What then—what could he have meant? A rival for the regard of this country parson's daughter, whose delicate profile was turned towards him, whose white arms lay motionless with hands folded in her lap? His angry gaze fixed itself upon her with such fierce persistency that she felt it and turned slowly toward him.

The violinist was in the midst of a phrase of such exquisite pathos and sweetness that the audience was listening in breathless silence. Kent could see in a flash that the music, and that only, was filling Cecily's soul. With one hand she made him a little gesture not to move or speak and kept her beautiful eyes fixed upon him, a smile just dawning in their depths. He felt that he held his breath till the passage closed, dying away in a low pathetic wail of the strings. Then she whispered with a slight vibration of her sensitive figure—

"It makes one shiver, does it not?"

He held her eyes with his, to make her continue to look at him.

"Do you like it—is it giving you pleasure?" he asked, almost in a whisper.

"It is wonderful—it is bewilderment! I cannot thank you properly now," she murmured.

"You have thanked me with your eyes. Like Jane Eyre's, those features are tell-tales and reveal more than you know."

"Do they?" she said, with sudden consternation; and Kent railed at himself for a clumsy fool, as he saw that his own words had reminded her of what, at the moment, she had absolutely forgotten.

It was the end of the first part, and the people began to move about and talk. It seemed as if all the Kents' set could speak of was Mallinger's attack upon him in the Forum. Amongst others who came up was Mr. Brace, the editor of the National Critic whom Cecily had met the night before at Mrs. Luxmore's.

"Well, Kent," was his greeting, "this is the most impudent thing of the season, isn't it? It must be put a stop to at once. The young man has exposed himself quite enough. He must have his quietus."

"You are all too hard upon him," said Kent unemotionally. "The thing is rather clever; there are some good bits in it."

"The thing is impertinent trash from end to end," cried the editor angrily. "The Forum ought to be above such balderdash. We have had a good many funny things in literature lately, but 'pon my life, I think the spectacle of Mallinger sitting down to criticise Kent beats the record!"

"I don't see it," said the novelist. He had been very successful.

"Successful! With whom? Among whom? Hysterical advanced young women and morbid men! But I'll put a stop to it. Wait till I get my knife into him!"

During the whole dialogue Kent's eyes had been fixed upon Cecily. Her changing color, quickened breath, and silent interest exasperated him unaccountably.

"Les absents ont toujours tort, is it not so, Miss Rutland?" he said with a most a sneer.

"Absent? Yes; he's not in London just now. He is staying with Mylner down at Greyfield, you know, with his aristocratic fiancée," said Brace unamiably. "He is done for, though. I warned him, some time ago, that he was not the great man he fancied himself; but it was of no use. He is rushing on his own destruction!"

Julian Kent knew everything now, even the reason why Cecily had come to London. He felt himself exulting quite cruelly over his advantage. The girl was silent; she could not speak; she was afraid of betraying herself. He watched her grow whiter and whiter, until he was afraid she would really faint; but she was not weak enough for that. Unfurling her large white fan, she moved it slowly to and fro; and, when Mr. Brace spoke to her—told her how he looked forward to the Artists' Benefit Concert, and how one of his reporters would be there—she was able to answer him with a composure that astonished Kent. But of the second half of the programme she heard nothing, and he knew that she did not. She was thinking only of Mallinger.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

DIAMOND DEALERS OF PARIS.

Men Who Know by Sight Most of the World's Costliest Gems.

On the second floor of the cafe in the Boulevard Montmartre, in Paris, the market or bourse of precious stones is held, always in broad daylight. Very few strangers to the trade can penetrate this sanctuary, not because the access to it is difficult, for the door is always open, but because the portfolios close and the stars disappear the moment an unknown face appears at the threshold. Don't believe for a moment that these dealers in precious stones are afraid of robbers. That is the smallest thing that bothers them. What they dread, according to the Boston Globe, is to let the small jewelers know the real value of their goods. As soon as the stranger departs the arms stretch out and the portfolios reappear. The greater number of these portfolios are made of tin and are closed with a lock and key. In a moment the tables are covered with little bundles of white paper formed like those in which the druggists put rhubarb or sulphate of magnesia. These packages are opened, and in less time than it takes to tell the tables, including the billiard table, are covered with precious stones which might startle the shah of Persia. Each one of perhaps 10,000 packages contains a large number of brilliants. After they are disposed of the rare stones are introduced. Here there are sapphires as big as nuts. There lies a black diamond almost as large as the twelve pearls that surround it. Here, again, is a necklace made of fifteen emeralds that would make as many snuff-boxes.

"Here is a rare bargain," shouts one of the men cents, "one of the finest pieces of ancient jewelry known! It is a necklace that belonged to Mme. la Princesse Guemee, Mounting diamonds and all are ancient. Prince Proisetoiloff refused 75,000 francs for it twenty years ago." The necklace is passed from hand to hand. Indecision and doubt are painted upon some faces. At last the necklace is passed to Michel. He is the great judge. He takes it, weighs it in his hand, looks at it with an indifferent air and says:

"The two brilliants are ancient. They come with their mounting, from the Countess de Prejean. The two others, still finer, once formed part of a necklace which was stolen in Venice in 1804 from Mme. Merosini. This necklace belonged lately to Lady Temple, whose husband purchased it at Candahar of Isaac Lieven. Lady Temple gave it to her daughter, who sold it three days after her marriage. As for the sapphire in the centre, that comes from the sale of Mlle. Schneider. The rest is new and comes direct from Hamburg. But, after all, it is well preserved, and 75,000 francs does not seem to be too much for it."

As extraordinary as it may appear, there are now living five or six individuals who know most of the costly diamonds and rich jewels in the world, and they are able to recognize them after a lapse of thirty years, even when they had first seen them only a moment, as certainly as a tailor would recognize at thirty paces the customer who forgot to pay him.

Fogg—"My wife is really getting complimentary." Brown—"Ah! how's that?" Fogg—"Why, she came mighty near speaking of my raven locks." Brown—"How near, for instance?" Fogg—"Why, she said my head looked like a crow's nest."