LUCILLE.

It was towards the end of 1870 that I, Henry Dalton, was staying at the Cerf d'Or at Tours, a small, cheap hotel not a stone's-throw from the cathedral. When I say that my allowance from an old aunt was not more than £60 a year, it will be seen that I could not afford to go to a better one. However, at the last Salon I had sold a picture for £32, and on the strength of that I was living in a much more luxurious fashion than I usually did as an art student in Paris.

Situated near the barracks, the Cerf d'Or was much frequented by officers, more especially by those who had nothing to live on but their pay, and wanted to get the best value they could for their money. I had been at the hotel more than a month, and having been at table d'hote every night, I got to know several of them very well, and from their conversation I learned a good deal about military affairs. There was only one other Englishman there—if I may so call a raw Scottish student who was going to be an architect. He had come to Tours to study the chateaux which abound in that district. Though our temperaments were diametrically opposed, Duncan and I got to be very good friends.

Table d'hote had nearly finished one evening, when a door opened and the most lovely girl I had ever seen looked in. She was decidedly tall for a French girl, yet so perfect was her figure that her height was scarcely noticeable. Her olive complexion, raven hair, and bright dark eyes, gave me the idea that she was Spanish, more especially as her hair was parted at the side. She was evidently looking for some one.

"Can I do anything for you, mademoiselle?" I asked, rising.

"No, thank you," she answered, in a sharp, brusque manner; and giving me a haughty stare, she disappeared.

"Ma foi!" I exclaimed, "what a lovely girl!"

"Yes, she's a comely lass," said Duncan.

"Don't you know who that is?" said Gartier, a lieutenant in the 169th Line.

"No; do you?"

"Yes; I'll tell you all about her afterwards."

"Well, who is she?" I asked, as he came and brought his coffee to my side when the meal was finished. It was too cold an evening to smoke in the courtyard, so we used to stay in the salle-a-manger.

"She's Lucille Charvet."

"What! the girl whose photograph is all about, and who is going to sing tonight for the wounded?"

"The very one."

"Let's be off, then," I replied, "to get a good place."

"You seem pretty hard hit. There's plenty of time. Give me a cigarette, and I'll tell you how I came to know about her. Her real name is Lili Cariac, and she was the daughter of a banker at Marseilles. It was his intention that she should marry a distant relative of his, enormously rich, but old enough to be her father. She's a hot-tempered, passionate girl, and the idea did not suit her at all. However, as her father threatened to put her in a convent, she had to submit. It happened that, shortly before her marriage was to take place, she and her father and sister (for she had no mother) went to Biarritz, where she made the acquaintance, at a ball at the Casino, of a singer named Royer. He had no great standing in his profession, but he was uncommonly handsome. Mlle. Lucille fell desperately in love with this deuce of a lady-killer, and one fine morning they were missing. It happened that, two years after they were married, Royer was singing one winter at Nice. Now Madame Royer was very fond of riding, not only because she looked charming in a habit, but because she was a fine horsewoman. It was Carnival-time, and one afternoon she and her husband were starting for a ride, when they came across a procession of masqueraders. They stood to allow them to go by, when Royer's horse was struck by some of the confetti. Royer was no rider; he lost all control of the beast—a rakish grey mare, which he ought never to have attempted to ride; it got the bit in its mouth, and dashed down the Avenue de la Gare, Lucille vainly trying to keep up with it. Suddenly it swerved from a plucky gendarme who rushed at it to stop it, throwing poor Royer over its head. To the horror of the spectators he lay motionless. They picked him up and took him to the nearest pharmacy. Three days he remained unconscious, his loving wife watching over him with the tenderest care. It was of no avail, and he passed away without recognizing her. It threw a gloom over the whole town, as they were both so well known and respected. For many a month Lucille remained disconsolate; but, partly on the advice of her doctor, who told her that work was the best antidote to prevent her brooding over her loss, and partly through want of money—for though her husband had made a good deal, he had never saved—she determined to turn her wonderful talents to account and to go on the stage."

Gartier's sad story gave an additional charm to Lucille. I had been smitten with her beauty, but now her helpless, defenceless state appealed to my better nature. "No wonder she is so cold and distant," I thought.

"Come," I said; "if we are to get a good place it's time we were off."

Tours at that period was the chief seat of the Legislature, and also the headquarters of the army of the Loire, which was then in rather an embryo state. The town was very full of troops, and of course, on an occasion when a concert was to be given for the wounded they patronized it in great numbers.

As soon as Lucille appeared on the stage she was greeted with a perfect roar of applause. She took this as a matter of course, and seemed glad when she was able to commence her song, which was out of Offenbach's "Grande Duchesse." Had any one else treated the audience in the same nonchalant manner it would have resulted differently; but every one knew that the beautiful girl before them had sold her jewels and trinkets for the benefit of the wounded, and that she had been the means of drawing thousands of francs into the fund. All her songs were encored, but she did not trouble to sing them again.

When I got back to the hotel that evening I learned that she occupied a room on the floor above me. During the next fortnight I sometimes met her on the stairs, but I never had the opportunity of speaking to her. I consoled myself, however, with the knowledge that nobody else had, excepting the landlord, who was a respectable, quiet man, with a family. Night after night I used to rack my brain, thinking what excuse I could invent to make the acquaintance of this mysterious siren.

Being an artist, I was accustomed to paint backgrounds for my pictures in the summer and autumn, and then put in the figures when I got back to Paris; so that I had a number of canvasses in my room which only wanted the figures to make them complete. I had recently been reading Prosper Merimee's "Carman," a book much popularized since by Bizet's opera. I was so fascinated by it that I resolved to paint a scene out of it. I had finished the background—the figures only were wanting. I was tossing restlessly about one night, thinking of the beautiful girl up-stairs, when an idea occurred to me. "Why," I said to myself, "should I not give the picture of 'Carmen' to the bazaar that the mayor is getting up for the wounded? Perchance in that case Mlle. Lucille would sit as my model."

No one ever longed for the hours to pass more than I did. I heard the cathedral clock strike three, four, five; then the reveille sounded in the barracks; then the faint glimmer of the dawn gradually lighted the chamber, the cocks commenced crowing in the yard below; then the drums beat as the troops went to morning exercise; then at eight I heard them as they came back again. Still I knew it was no good my getting up, as Mlle. Lucille never rose till nearly midday. I have as much sangfroid as most men, but I confess, as the time approached to put my plan into execution, I began to feel uncommonly nervous; and had I not told Duncan what I was going to do, I should have given it up.

It was with trembling knees that I went up-stairs with my canvas under my arm. I knocked.

"Who's there?" said a soft, musical voice.

"Henry Dalton," I answered, "an artist who lives on the floor below."

All this time Duncan, who had a dry sense of humor, was grinning at the bottom of the stairs. "She'll send you down rather quicker than you go up," had been his comforting remark when I had mentioned the idea to him.

"What do you want?"

"I want to ask you about a picture I am doing for the wounded," I replied.

"You're very artful," said a voice at the bottom of the stairs.

"Entrez."

I entered. Dressed simply in white, with a mauve belt with a rose in it—her beautiful dark hair parted at the side a l'Espagnole—she looked to me more lovely than I had ever seen her. She was seated in an easy-chair with her dejeuner beside her, reading a newspaper.

I explained matters to her. I told her that, although English, I had the greatest regard for the French nation; I admired the gallant way they continued the unequal struggle with their invaders, and I waxed so eloquent on the bravery they had shown that her bright eyes kindled with pleasure, and she fell completely into the trap. She entered readily into the scheme. I gave her the book.

"I'll let you know to-morrow," she said, "at what time I will see you."

Satisfied with this beginning, I descended.

"I was delighted with the book; I was so interested that I read the whole of it at once," she said the next morning. "I am afraid I have got you to come rather early, but I am quite anxious to begin. Look here," she continued, stooping over a large box,—"look at that mantilla, look at that sash; I shall be ready by the time you have got your materials."

I was quite astonished by her enthusiasm; I began to feel rather a hypocrite. However, I thought, "all's fair in love and war," and as Ovid says, "Militiae species amor est;" so I did not let it trouble me.

When I came up she was completely metamorphosed. A more perfect and beautiful "Carmen" it would be impossible to imagine. The mantilla, the white stockings, the short petticoats, the thoroughly Spanish tout ensemble, showed off the fine symmetry of her figure. It was a wet day, and the light in her little room, or rather garret, was so bad that we were obliged to go out on the landing.

In the picture "Carmen" was represented leaning against a tree waiting for the smugglers, who are seen approaching in the distance with their mules.

"There," she said, as she leant against the wall with one hand on her hip, while with the other she lightly played with the dagger half concealed in her sash; "I think this is an easy, natural pose, and I can stand like this for hours."

She was as good as her word; till her dejeuner appeared she hardly moved once. She insisted on my sharing it with her, which, it may easily be imagined, I was not loath to do. When it was finished I went on painting till the darkness obliged me to desist. She did not sit, or in this case stand, so long every day, but I was enabled to finish the picture in about a week. My fair model and I were equally pleased with it.

"You have done this," she said, "to please me. Now, if you like, I will sit to please you." Accordingly she sat as the daughter of an innkeeper in a picture I had nearly finished.

It represented a couple of officers of Hussars waiting for their horses to be brought round; in the meanwhile they were passing the time very agreeably flirting with the innkeeper's daughter, who was seated on the corner of a table in front of the old wayside inn.

"I perfectly understand," said Mlle. Lucille, as I explained it to her; "and that fellow who is chucking me under the chin is under the impression he will get a kiss for his trouble."

"Yes."

"Well," she added naively, "I think you made a mistake in putting her old father looking out of the window!"

SANTA CLAUS SCATTERS HIS PRESENTS.

This little mistake had not occurred to me. "You're right," I said, with a laugh; "but I can easily rub him out."

Being constantly in the company of this singular, wayward, capricious girl, I could not help falling more deeply in love with her from day to day; though up to this time she had been extraordinarily reserved, not to say haughty. But now she was getting far more friendly; she commenced to ask me questions about my native country and my life in Paris. She surprised me one morning by saying, "I am going to sing regularly at the Alcazar; I want money, and they have offered two hundred and fifty francs a week."

The Alcazar was a kind of cafe chantant, and I was rather surprised at her accepting such an engagement. I did not hesitate to tell her that I thought she was wasting her wonderful talents.

"Oh," she laughed, "it's only till the war is over."

"Of course," I answered, with a sigh; "then you will return to Bordeaux and Lyons to be feted from one week's end to the other, and finally marry a millionaire, and forget about the poor devil of an artist who painted you at Tours."

"No, I shan't," she answered; "and as regards marrying a millionaire, you may be sure I shall not marry any one who has not fought for his country, and who has not tried to drive these hateful Prussians out of our fatherland. I tell you this," she added, her bright eyes flashing with excitement, "the man who will win me must fight for me, and he who fights for me must fight for La belle France."

There was such a look of mingled fire and tenderness in her eyes as she said this that I sprang up. "Mademoiselle, no one is more ready to fight or die for you than I am, if there is a chance of my earning your love. If I volunteer to-morrow, and if I ever come back, will you marry me?"

She was seated on the window-sill; she did not withdraw the hand which I had seized, but pouting her pretty lips, she answered gently:—

"Perhaps I might."

"Very well," I returned, "that's enough; I'll go to the barracks and see my friend Lavallette. May I seal the contract with a kiss?"

"Well, if you like, just one," she answered demurely, holding her head down a little.

gal 2 Lucille

"Oh, it's no trouble to give half-a dozen," I answered—and I did.

That very afternoon I saw Lavallette whom I knew very well.

"You want to join the Mobiles? Why, you're English, my friend. I don't understand this at all; there must be some woman at the bottom of it."

"Perhaps there is," I answered.

"In that case a fellow is not responsible for his own actions. However, I will see the commandant about it. I should like to have a few more recruits of your physique."

(To be Continued.)

NOT IN STOCK.

The Strand Magazine says that an English pitman was asked by a friend who was very bow-legged, to buy when next in the town, a pair of stockings for him.

On the following pay-day the pitman entered the shop of a well-known hosier to make the purchase. The shopman was most obliging, but having shown the intending purchaser nearly every pair in stock he at last thought it time to ask for a more minute description of what was required.

I've shown you nearly all we have, said he, and I'm sure our stock is second to none. As we've hitherto given satisfaction to all classes, it is strange that we can't suit you.

Well, said the pitman, what I want is a pair o' bowlegged ones.

REVERSED.

Fuddy. Let's see Annie Boleyn had her head cut off because of her beauty?

Duddy. But they don't decapitate a woman nowadays because she is handsome.

Fuddy. No; it is the fellows who are thrown into her company who lose their heads.

A TERRIBLE PLAGUE.

Cattle Dying by Thousands in South Africa From Rinderpest.

Great Britain is just awaking to a realization that her South African troubles have only begun. It is not so much that the Matabele revolt threatens to break forth again on a larger scale than ever, or that the material for a fresh deadlock on the Transvaal business are believed to be accumulating at both Pretoria and Berlin; the really serious feature is that detailed information about the rinderpest, which is now coming in, reveals an unexpectedly terrible state of affairs. The plague is now leaping sixty miles a day. It cannot, so far as now known, be checked by any human device, and most inevitably kill every head of cattle in South Africa. The attempts made last summer to stop its ravages by a wholesale slaughter of native cattle provoked the rising of the blacks and if they are repeated among the more powerful Basutos, Zulus and Griquas, who live nearer the coast, they will produce a mutiny against which the combined forces of Dutch republics and the British colonies will be powerless to stand. The advice now pressed on the government is to stop killing cattle or otherwise fighting the pest, and instead to use money in taking a census of all the cattle in South Africa and compensating owners, native and white alike, after the epidemic has passed. Unless Dr. Koch, who has been sent out from Germany, and is now nearing Capetown, can find a way of arresting the progress of the plague, this is probably what will be done. In any event this rinderpest will alter the whole character of life in South Africa, for to put an end to dairy farming and most other present forms of agriculture in that country will drive the rural colonists by thousands to the towns where there is nothing for them to do. Cecil Rhodes, it has been announced, intended to sail next week for England to testify before the parliamentary committee in January, but the threatened revival of the Matabele troubles may change his plans.

A VALUABLE INVENTION.

It is Destined to Revolutionize the Moulding Industry.

Orrin Bryant of Buffalo, after two years' labor has invented an instrument destined to revolutionize the moulding history. It was given a successful test before the public the other day. The machine demonstrated that it would not only make moulds, but would make them rapidly and evenly with a finished result superior to hand-made moulds. The invention has been patented in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, Russia and other countries. In the test in less than thirty minutes a hundred and seventy moulds for five-foot radiator loops were moulded, cores set and delivered at the cupola for pouring iron, without a bad mould. Expert mechanics pronounce it a wonder. Its operation, in some respects is similar to that of the type-setting machine. An expert hand moulder can turn out, with the aid of a helper, about twenty-five to thirty moulds in a day of ten hours. The Bryant moulding machine, in the same time, will make 2,000 moulds and in better shape. The castings too, are more uniform, and there is a great saving in labor. The men interested are Buffalo capitalists. The factory will be situated there.

LONDON'S SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Five hundred and seventy-four thousand children daily attend school in London.

PERSONAL POINTERS.

Notes About Some of the Great Folks of the World.

Max O'Rell says he saw very few stupid faces in America.

Zola says he likes the bicycle for the forgetfulness it bestows.

Mary Cowden Clarke spent sixteen years on the "Concordance to Shakspeare."

It is asserted that the Emperor of China has not yet received Li Hung Chang in audience.

Mark Twain is in London, preparing his book descriptive of his recent tour around the world.

D. L. Moody, the evangelist, is to begin a series of revival meetings in Boston on January 1.

Explorer Stanley, although a large powerful man, is a poor speaker, his voice being soft and low.

Albert Edward's Britannia won a little over $8,000 in money prizes last season, without counting cups.

It is said that the Emperor of Russia received over 500 threatening letters prior to his journey to France.

Sir Hope Grant tells of a statue of Queen Victoria which was made in India and had large rings in each nostril.

The granddaughter of the late Baron Hirsch is heir to $100,000,000, which yields about $10,000 a day of income.

Mulhall, the noted statistician, spent over forty years in accumulating the material for his one volumn of statistics.

Mme. Navarro, nee Mary Anderson, is only temporarily occupying the house of Lady Tennyson's sister, at Wimbledon.

Du Maurier used to keep a vase on his mantelpiece for his friends to drop jokes into, which he then used for "Punch."

Mr. J. Murrie, who claims to be the inventor of a successful aerial machine, is a master engineer at Cranston Hill, Glasgow.

Baron von Wissmann, late governor of German East Africa, has been elected president of the Berlin Geographical Society.

Dr. Carl Peters has returned to London, and is at work on his "Rise of the British Empire from the Time of Queen Elizabeth."

Lord Roberts, the British field marshal, will soon publish his reminiscences, which will be particularly interesting to those familiar with India.

A newspaper of Paris recently printed a sensational story to the effect that Emperor William visited Paris incognito, while the czar was being feted by the French.

Nordica will not return to this country in opera this winter, because she asked $1,000 a night, which the managers refused her, although Melba gets $1,500, and Jean de Reszke $1,200.

The young King of Spain has just presented a valuable gold and jeweled chalice to Father Kenelm Vaughan, of London, for use in the new Roman Catholic Westminster cathedral, on the opening day.

Queen Victoria, in return for the gifts brought to her by Li Hung Chang from the Emperor of China, is going to send to that ruler a jeweled portrait of herself, painted by Mrs. Corbould-Ellis.

The Belgian Capt. Lothaire, who lorded it over the Congo region for four years, with power of life and death, has been compelled by a prosaic civil court in Belgium to pay the cost of a wedding trousseau ordered by his jilted sweetheart.

Emilie Ollivier, Napoleon III.'s last minister, is about to publish a novel called "Marie Madeleine," which is believed to be autobiographical. He brings into it Richard Wagner, who was his brother-in-law, Ollivier's first wife having been a daughter of Liszt.

The richest man in Germany's diplomatic service is young Baron von Cramer-Klett, who is an attache of the legation at Rome. He is the son of a manufacturer who died in 1884, and left 81,000,000 marks. Curiously enough, the father feared that he would some day perish of starvation.

Louis Napoleon was of opinion that no man should vote who was not married. Married men, he thought, had a different sentiment toward their country than the unmarried, and a greater stake in its welfare. In his opinion, also, neither priests nor soldiers should be permitted to vote.

FORGETFUL MR. BILLTOPS.

And How Claude's Shoes Finally Got to the Shoemaker's.

"Forgetful?" said Mr. Billtops. "Well, well, well, I should say so! I haven't any memory at all. If I want to remember anything I have to make a memorandum of it and then twist the paper around my key ring, or shut it in my knife, or tie it through the ring of my watch; I can't remember anything at all.

"Mrs. Billtops tried for days to get me to take Claude's shoes to the shoemaker's. He'd worn them through on the soles and put on his best shoes to wear while the others were being fixed. Every day Mrs. Billtops would put the bundle on the table near me as I read the paper, and say:

"'Now, Ezra, don't forget the shoes.'

"And I would look at them and say all right, and then forget all about them and go away without them.

"One morning Mrs. Billtops said to me: 'Ezra, I have put Claude's shoes in your hat.'

"That really did seem like business. It did really seem as though when I came to pick up my hat I would take the bundle out of it and put the hat on my head, and that then, being ready to go, and having the bundle actually in my hands, I would take it along and leave it at the shoemaker's. I laughed to myself as I thought what a tremendously shrewd woman Mrs. Billtops is! But:

"I am as particular as I am forgetful. I never go out in the morning without first brushing my hat. I took the bundle out of my hat and laid it on the table, brushed my hat and—

"Mrs. Billtops looked at me just a little reproachfully that night when I came home, but that was all. Next day she took the shoes to the shoemaker's herself."