

## MISS KATHLEEN PURCELL.

SOLO HARPIST.

BY K. M. CORDEUX ("Daniel Dormer").

A DAINTY little lady stepping across the lawn in a gown of soft flowered muslin, white and pink. So in memory I can see Miss Kathleen Purcell, the well-known harpist, when first she came to stay with us at our cottage in the country.

And her joy in all things rural was so pretty. The blue wide sky, the trees, the flowers, sunshine and sylvan shade, peace and the song of birds each in turn enchanted her; yet her work claims almost all her time, and she dwells of necessity amidst the noise and bustle of town. An arduous life is hers; frequent long journeys have to be undertaken to fulfil engagements, and her strength and energy are taxed to the utmost to meet all that her success entails. But she loves her life and would not exchange her work, with the numerous and varied interests it brings, for

father was stationed at Clifton, that Kathleen was allowed to begin her studies. Then, being very tiny for her age, she had to stand to be able to reach the larger strings. The lady who first taught her was the eldest sister of W. G. Grace, the distinguished cricketer, and the friendship between teacher and pupil lasted till the death of the former—which, however, happily did not occur until they had shared together some of the delights of that success to which the teacher had contributed so largely, and of which she felt so justly proud.

At the age of fifteen Kathleen had succeeded in passing no fewer than fourteen musical examinations in connection with the Royal Academy of Music and Trinity College; and it was at one of these that Mr. W. Cummings heard



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any other lot. She is greatly touched and impressed by all the kindness and sympathy she receives everywhere, especially from many of the great artists of the day; though no one, knowing her, would be surprised at such kindness shown to one herself so charming and so kind. From the beginning her life has been picturesque.

It was in a Moorish castle in Algiers, lent by the Government to her father, General Purcell, R.A., that Kathleen first saw the light of day. And when she was about five years old her father obtained the command at Dover, so she was taken to live in the beautiful historic castle there.

From babyhood she has been familiar with the harp. Her mother, her grandmother, and her mother's sisters all played upon it, and at Dover her own two eldest sisters began to take lessons.

It was not, however, until a few years later, when her

father was stationed at Clifton, that Kathleen was allowed to begin her studies. Then, being very tiny for her age, she had to stand to be able to reach the larger strings. The lady who first taught her was the eldest sister of W. G. Grace, the distinguished cricketer, and the friendship between teacher and pupil lasted till the death of the former—which, however, happily did not occur until they had shared together some of the delights of that success to which the teacher had contributed so largely, and of which she felt so justly proud.

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her play, and, being greatly struck by her talent, advised her to come to London to study under Mr. John Thomas—the harpist to Queen Victoria, who contributed to this magazine a paper on "How to Play the Harp" some years ago.

After three years spent in serious work, having gained every award available, her first engagement offered itself, at which the harpist met with unqualified success, receiving most kind and valuable encouragement on every hand.

In the profession Miss Purcell is known as "the princess in the *Arabian Nights*," partly on account of her wonderful harp, which came to her in the following romantic way.

Amongst her acquaintances she numbered a very lonely little old lady, who lived apart in the simplest, most quiet manner possible. During a brief holiday Miss Purcell went to stay with this old lady and took with her a little harp she had. After she had played for some time one

day, the hostess, who had been listening very intently, looked up and said, "My dear, I have been looking for a daughter like you all my life, and to-day have found her!" And from that moment the two were very fast friends.

It transpired subsequently that the apparently poor little old lady was the widow of a baronet, and that although she chose to live in such strict retirement and simplicity, she had enough and to spare of this world's goods.

She lived just long enough to see "The Fairy Harpiste," as she called Miss Purcell, in possession of the most beautiful harp ever made; and then she died very suddenly, deeply regretted, for though tiny in body, hers was a large, tender loving soul.

Could you see this "fairy harpiste" playing, and listen to her exquisite melodies, you would not wonder at the title given her. Bending towards her beautiful instrument, her fragile face wrapt and earnest, her delicate hands caressing the strings, she looks truly like a visitant from another world; while the air becomes transported, entering into the spirit of her music, and responds, whispering her *pianissimo* passages ecstatically to those around who listen with breathless silence.

One cannot help hoping that her famous ancestor, Henry Purcell, the great English composer, may now and then gain a glimpse thus of the fairy descendant on whom the mantle of his genius has fallen.

## FOR SELF AND COUNTRY.

BY MARY BRADFORD WHITING.

### CHAPTER III.



UT the relief of death was not to come to Laurence. None of his wounds were mortal, but he was likely to be laid up for some time, and in the crowded state of the hospitals, the doctor advised that he should be sent back to England. Once on ship-board, with healthful sea-breezes around them and good food to eat, most of the sick began to recover, but the gnawing

care at his heart prevented him from reaping the benefit of his surroundings. Silent and sad he lay under the awning on deck and watched the waves rolling past in their monotonous race; before he reached England the Colonel's communication would have been received by his employers and by his wife, and the prospect before him filled him with dull despair. It was no wonder that his heart sank lower with every day that passed.

"I suppose your wife will be at Southampton to meet you," said the man who lay on the next mattress; "mine will, bless her little heart! I don't believe wild horses would prevent her from coming down; she knows how I am wearying for a sight of her!"

Laurence turned over the pages of his book in pretended absorption, but in reality his heart was too full to answer. He, too, was wearying for a sight of his wife, wearying with a bitter longing which seemed as if it would break his heart, but he had no hope that she would be there; never again should he see her eyes raised to his with the light of love in their dark depths, never again should he feel her dear arms about his neck, nor hear her voice in the sweet accents of perfect and unshaken affection.

Southampton was reached at last, and while every soldier who could struggle to his feet, was crowding to the vessel's side to look out for welcoming friends, Laurence lay still on the deck with closed eyes and quivering frame; his conflict was before him and not behind, and with all his heart he wished that he was back in South Africa.

"Laurence, my darling!"

A soft voice sounded in his ear, and in another moment Winnie's arms were round him and her lips were pressed to his.

A terrible pallor gathered on his brow, and he tried to disengage himself from her embrace.

"You do not know! You have not had the letter!" he gasped with trembling lips.

"Yes, dear, I know all," she said. "I will tell you everything when you are stronger."

"Tell me now!" he said; and, seeing his agony, she sat down beside him and told him all.

"And you have promised to repay the money with your own income?" he said. "I cannot let you do it! And

what will you have to live upon, for who knows when I shall be able to work for you again?"

"You must let me do it," she said. "I went down and saw the heads of the firm, and I would take no denial, for I knew that there would be no happiness for us otherwise. I am to pay them £200 a year, keeping £100 for ourselves until you are able to work. I have found someone to take the lease of the house off our hands, and I have engaged two rooms in which I shall be able to manage without a servant. I shall have everything ready by the time you come out of Netley Hospital, and you are not to worry about anything until I have nursed you up and made you strong again."

"Oh, my dearest, what can I say?" he cried, as he covered his face with his hands. "Every word goes to my heart like a knife! I wanted to be rich for your sake, that was how it all began, and now I have dragged you down into poverty and disgrace."

The scalding tears trickled between his fingers as he spoke, but Winnie bent down and kissed them away.

"I do not mind poverty," she said, "and as for disgrace, the real disgrace would have been if you had kept silence about the past and come home as a hero. You have shown that you have true courage, and that is all I shall ever think of."

He stretched out his arms to her, but no words would come to his lips; such love as this had something in it that was not of this world, and he could only receive it with thankfulness and awe.

But one further trial awaited him, and when Laurence had recovered strength enough to go down to the office, he felt his former misery return upon him in all its force.

Silent as he had been upon the subject of his brave deeds, they were not so unknown as he would have had them be, and the head of the firm took him by the hand and uttered cordial words of congratulation.

"You have done well for your country," he said, "and therefore we are willing to give you a fresh start. I wish I could say that the past should be entirely buried, but unfortunately the tale has leaked out in the office, and for the sake of discipline we can only offer you a junior post. But there it is for your acceptance, and I can assure you that we shall trust you as fully as we did before."

"I don't know how to take it," said Laurence that night, as he told his wife what had passed; "I would do anything to escape from going where everyone knows my story. I could have begun a new life better in a new place."

Winnie said nothing; she knew well how hard the trial would be, but she knew also that her husband's new-born courage would not desert him now.

Nor was her confidence misplaced.

"I will go," he said at last, looking at her with the strength of resolution in his face, "it is the only way in which I can show my sorrow for the past. I shall never be able to fight my country's enemies again, but I will fight against self, and learn of you the true courage which endures to the end."