THE WEDDING

A TALE OF TO-DAY,

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN,

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CHAPPER XIII. -- A THUNDERCLAP. Ar the end of Gillian's recital there was silence for a moment. Then Venables rose, and taking Gillian's fand, kissed it. There was a flash of moisture in his

even, and his voice trembled as he epoke. "What you have told us only confirms my faith in you, my deep affection. Henceforward, God willing, jou shall lead a new life inderd."

"Let us hear Mr Herbert, George," said Gillian. "I have heard your story, Mrs Dartmouth," said the clergyman, " with the deepest interest and compassion. I pity you, yet cannot altogether absolve

"What!" cried Sir George, almost fiercely. "Has

the not suffered enough?" "More than enough," said Mr Herbert, gent'y. "A heavy penalty for a wrong committed in the

thoughtlessness of youth." "What wrong has she committed?" asked Venables.

"The union she has described, a loveless' union, can scarcely be defended. From its nature, perhaps, sprang many of her misfortunes. And let me ask another question. The name you bear is-ah-your husband's?"

"Another error," said Mr Herbert.

"Norsense," cried Venables, "it was a perfectly justiüsble step "

"Deception of any kind is never justifiable. It is -sh-a violation of those spiritual veracities on which society is founded." "Perhaps," said Venables, who relished as little as

may be imagined the application of abstract principles of merality to the conduct of the woman he loved; "perhaps she might have done better to advertise in the public prints that she had come into a fortune, and that Mr (whatever the blackguard's name may be) was humbly requested to return to his disconsolate wife now that she had something more that he might rob her of." "George, George!" said Gillian, in a tone of re-

monstrance. "And the dispensation, sir?"

"On that point, if you have acquainted me with the actual facts. I have little or no doubt. You have never, in the spiritual sense, been a wife at all, and under the circumstances-I say under the circumstances-you may be justified in again marrying." "Bravo!" cried Sic George. "The Church comes round to commonsense after all I'

"The informality, however," continued Mr Herbert, "must be at once set right. Your true name

"My hushand's name," said Gillian, "was O'Mara!" It was the first time for seven years that it had passed her lips. "Then, Mrs O'Mara, I must ask you to correct

this ead mistake at once. When it is done, and not until it is done, I shall have pleasure in performing the marriage ceremony." "I will ask you to reconsider that print, sir," sall Venables. "In the meautime, dear, we will go for

our ride. The horses are waiting." "I hope, Mr Herbert," said Gilliau, "that you will lanch with me when we return." "I have a little correspondence to do," said Mr Herbert, referring to his watch, "and it is a long

step from here to the Vicarage." "Then why not do your writing here?" said (illian, "You will find the materials in my desk there. If you should need anything you have only to ring, and Barbara will attend on you. Shall we

find you here when we return?" "You are extremely good, Mrs-ah-" He beggled over the unfamiliar name and ended by emitting it altogether. "You will find me here, or in the garden."

"An veroir," said Venables, and led his financee from the room. Mr Herbert watched them mount and canter away. "A painful story," he said, sitting at Gillian's desk.

"Well, her troubles should be over now. Venables is a good fellow, and his affection for her is evidently very deep. Hardly such a match as he might have aspired to, or as I could have wished him to make; but— Well, well, I hope they may be happy." He bent himself to his correspondence. The day

was hot, and his walk and the long conference with Gillian and Sir George had tired him, and he nodded over the paper until he dozed. How long he had been unconscious of his surroundings he did not know, but he returned to consciousness to find a voice ringing in his ears, and turned in some confusion

to the direction from which it came. A man was standing just within the door. He was a tall, well built, athletic looking fellow, with a bronzed face, clean shaven, and a mass of dark brown

hair, touched with gray about the ears and at the temples. His dress was shabby, though of originally good materials, and in its out and in his careless mehion of carrying it hinted at the artistic pursuits of its wearer, a hint strengthened by the sketch book he held in his hand. "Ten thousand pardons," he began, as Mr Herbert

rose in surprise at his apparition. "Do I address the owner of the house?" "No," replied Mr Herbert. "It belongs to a

friend of mine—a lady. She is absent for the moment, but will return presently."

"indeed. Thank you. It is a charming old place. I have just made a sketch of it from the outside, and was going to ask permission to see the interior." "An artist, sir ?" asked Mr Herbert.

"An amateur," said the stranger. He spoke with a rather affected accent, and with a self-conscious smile. "You, sir, I perceive, are in holy orders." "I am the Vicar of Cronchford, sir."

The stranger bowed, with a flourish of the broad himmed wideawake he hold in his hand,

"I salute you, sir. If there is one thing in the world I reverence, it is religion. I look upon it as

the mother of art." "It has, I should hope, even greater claims upon

our reverence than that," returned Mr Herbert. obviously pleased, however; "though I would not be understood as underestimating your beautiful occupation. Pray come in. The lady of the house is so old a friend of mine that I may take it upon myself to play cicerone. You are a stranger in the neighbourhood ?" " (voite. In fact, almost a stranger in England.

am just returned after a long sojourn abroad, and am wandering hither and thither at accident, reviving old impressions. There is something in the English atmosphere, in English scenes and institutions, indescribably refreshing. Decay is always beautiful." "Eh?" said Mr Herbert, a blank stare of astonish.

ment succeeding to the smile with which he had listened to the first part of this speech. "Decay is the beauty of our England," continued

the stranger. "Its sleepy conventions, its mouldering habitations, its mildewed churches, its mossgrown religion, delight me inexpressibly." "I trust, my dear sir," said Mr Herbert, whom

the stranger's fluent chatter had rather put at sea, "I trust that you are one of us. I mean I hope that you belong to the church which is the symbol of our civilisation." "I am a Churchman, sir-a fervent Churchman,

That is a very fine bit of black oak, by the way, and, parden me-yes. That delightful bit of colour. Yes, sir, I am a Churchman. To be frank with you-I hope I may be so fortunate as to find your views correspond with my own, my leaning is towards the higher and most symbolic forms of Episcopacy."

"I am delighted to hear it!" It did not occur to the worthy clergyman that he was at least as obviously High Church in his dress and appearance as his interlocutor was obviously artistic.

"Dissent is so radically unlovely, its forms are so bare, so harsh, its teachings void of grace " This was an utterance which chimed in with Mr Herbert's mind.

"The furnishing of this place," said the stranger, is worthy of its exterior. It gives me a keen desire to make the acquaintance of your friend. Such perfect

"Mrs Darkmouth is a lady of good taste," said Mr "A most charming and accomplished person."

"Mrs Dartmouth?" repeated the stranger. "That is her name? A piano? Excuse me." He ran his fingers deltly along the keys. "An exquisite tone. Ah!" He gave a slight shudder and struck a solitary note, listening with corrugated brows. "That F is a semistone flat." "You play?" said Mr Herbert.

"A little," replied the artist, with a deprecatory

"Oh, pray don't call me accomplished. I am simply

"I am forry Mrs Dartmouth is from home. She

would be delighted in this dull place to meet a person so accomplished."

an amateur of the beautiful. I am so constituted that what is beautiful alone gives me pleasure -next, of course, to what is religious. The terms are really interchargeable. Religion, true religion, the religion of which you are an exponent, and I the humblest o devotees, is the soul of beauty. Only religiou interp ets thus the full meaning of the beauties which nake up the sum of life. A sower passing with measured footsteps, posed like a god, from furrow to forrow, with the sunlight sparkling on the seeds as he casts them, making them gleam like golden rainstar, a flower, a dewdrop—life is full of each folicities, which, justified by their beauty, are divine." "You talk, my dear sir, like a poet."

"I hope I have the poet's nature."

"You write?" "A little."

"Bless me, you seem to do everything."

"A little." "And you have travelled?"

"A little. You don't mind me sketching as we talk? The chimneypiece is delightfully quaint."

The conversation was interrupted at this point by the entrance of Doca. She come running in with her heir streaming and her eyes sparkling and her lips parted to communicate some childish confidence to her old friend, when she caught sight of the stranger and paused.

"Ah!" gaid the latter. "A child! I love children. And how very beautiful! Come to me, my resolud. What is your name? It should be a pretty one," "Dora," said the child, looking at him shyly through the tangle of her disordered hair.

He took her bands in his and draw her to him. looking at her with a curious scruting. "C'est bien ca,' he said, under his breath. "Oh," she said, catching sight of the sketchbook

on his knee. "You are drawing. Please go on. am learning to draw. Mamma is teaching me." "A charming little pupil. Would you like me to teach you?"

"I like mamma best." "Charmingly frank, these little people," said the

artist, with a smile.

"Can you paint houses?" asked Dora, "Mamma "Oh, yes, I can paint houses—and little girls, when

they are pretty." "You must be very clever," said the child, solemnly.

"I am considered fairly intelligent," said the stranger, with his own smile. "Your mamma is out, this gentleman tells me."

"Yes, she is riding with Sir George." "Oh, with Sir George. And your papa?"

"I've never had a papa," said Dora, "But I'm going to have one soon." "Really. That will be delightful. How shou'd

you like me in that capacity?" "I should like you pretty well, but I like Sir

George best. Why do you laugh so much?" "You amuse me, my innoceat child." He stroked her hair with a lingering touch, and his face saddened. "Will you give me a kiss, little one?" "Yes," said Dora, shyly. "I like you."

The atranger kissed her, and, rising, walked to the window for a moment, passing a handkerchief across his eyes. "Excuse me," he said to Mr Herbert in an altered

voice as he returned. I had a little child once. She would be of about this little darling's age if she be still alive. And the same name. I am not ashamed of these tears, sir. My little child, my Dora. Where is she?" "My dear sir!" said Mr Herbert.

"I must not afflict you with my sorrow," said the artist, putting away the handkerchief after passing it ngain across his eyes; "but these memories will return again at moments. There !" He bent over the child again. The best of horses' hoofs became audible, nearing the house. "Music is the cure for such sorrow as mine. Do you leve music, my darling?" "Yes," said Dora. "And I like to dance. Sir George plays waltzes for me."

"Come, then." He sat at the piano and dashed into a lively tune with the manner of one trying to banish unpleasant memories. Dora flitted round the room, and was watched with a pleased smile by Mr Herbert. The sound of horses' feet came near and paused on the gravel before the door. The tune changed suddenly from the lively rhythm of the waltz to "Home,

sweet home. "Mamma, mamma!" cried Dora, pirouetting to the door. "Come and see the funny gentleman." Gillian, her face flushed with free air and exercise.

entered the hall, followed by Sir George, and stopped for a moment at sight of the stranger. He, with his fingers still playing the melody, turned half round upon the music stool. "Gillian!" he said softly, smiling.

The poor woman's face changed to a look of stony " Philip!" She spoke the name scarcely louder than a whisper,

CHAPTER XIV .- THE BRIDE OF JACOB'S FLAT. THREE years before the meeting described in our last chapter, a number of men were assembled around

and fell fain'ing into Sir George's arms.

the bar of the only drink-house in Jacob's Flat, a rough mining settlement within a two days' ride of San Francisco. It was Saturday night, and drink of all kinds was

flowing like water. Every one seemed in high spirits. from the burly bearded fellows in red shirts who were lounging against the bar to the little group of gamblers seated at small tables and engaged busily at cards. Though oaths were common, and the general con-

versation scarcely fit for ears polite, everybody present seemed in remarkable good humour, and the merriment had reached its highest when Prairie Bill, a giant of six feet, known to his facetious intimates as "Prairie Oyster" (the name also of an insidious kind of American drink) dashed his fiet upon the counter, lifted up his glass in the air, and exclaimed: "H'yar's Jake's health and fam'ly! Long life to Jake and her!"

The teast was received with acclamation, and drunk with enthusiasm.

"What time, now, do you cal: late they'll be a-coming to Parson's Ford?" asked a little thick-set man with the lingering remains of a strong Cockney

"Wal, ye see," said Bill, reflectively, "the coach passes the Big Creek at arf past three, and it'll take the wagen two hours or more to reach the Ford in this weather. You bet they won't be than afore daylight. I say, boys," he added, raising his voice, "who's a going to ride over?"

"Who's a-going to ride over?" echoed the little man, contemptuously. "Better ask who's a-going to stay? I aint seen a blooming female since the schoolmistress was drowned last year, poor thing, and I'm curious to see what kind of petticoat Jake's married." "Married her up to Frisco, didn't he?" demanded

another voice, that of a new comer. "Put your bottom dollar on that," said Prairie Bill, proudly; "and if you don't believe me, thar's Jake's pardner—ask him to show you her pictur." The partner alluded to, an old man busily engaged

in a game of suchre, looked up and nodded; whereupon he was immediately surrounded by the whole assembled company, clamorously demanding to see the picture in question. Determined, however, not merely to gratify public curiosity, but to do a atroke of business, he expressed his determination not to assent until every man had planked down a five dollar note, explaining at the same time, however, that the amount was not to go into his own pocket, but to constitute part of a home coming present for Jake's wife.

The money was soon collected, some enthusiasts even doubling and trebling the amount demanded from each individual, and then, with much solemnity and amid a hush of expectation, Jake's partner drew out from his bosom a small packet wrapped carefully in brown paper, took off the paper with great deliberation, and exposed to view a somewhat dingy coloured photograph, which he handed to his next neighbour, enjoining him at the same time to handle it very carefully and to limit his possession of it to the space of balf a minute.

Thus the picture was passed round from hand to hand, excited spectators crowding eagerly round each man as he took his turn, and uttering cries of critical admiration. " Purty dear !"

"Taint yaller neither-it's brown!" "She's a smiling! "Jake was allays lucky !"

"She's yaller 'air, like my own sister Eliza!"

"There's gloves on her 'ands, and they'd 'bout fit my thumb !"

l anded it back with these words;

"I reckon she aint more'n eighteen!" "I'd give a million dollars for a wife like that !"

And so on, and so on; till the photograph reached a dirty blear-eyed man far gone in intoxication, who, irstead of adopting the decorous manner of his comranions, uttered a drunken croak and kissed the icture. Dire was the tumult evoked by that act of cutrage. Shreiks and oaths arose, and before he could realise what had occurred, the offender was kicked from group to group and shot out through the open door into the drift without, where he lay like a log. Meantime, Prairie Bill had enatched the photograph away, and striding back to Jake's partner

"Jest you put up that pictur agin, Jim Collier! 'Taint fair to Jake Owen ter make his wife a show like that !" A sentiment which elicited a cheer of approval from

the majority of the company. Jim nodded, and with one respectful glance at the photograph wrapped it up again and concealed it in his bosom. Then striding back to the bar, Prairie Bill demanded a glass of spirits, and drained it off to

the health of "Jake's wife." The excitement awakened by the mere eight of a woman's photograph may be better understood when we explain that every man in Jacob's Flat was a bachelor, and that, beyond one or two wretched squares who hung around the place, women, whether

fair or plain, were almost utterly unknown. Men had been known to ride a hundred miles across country to catch a glimpse of a female passing in the stage crach, and when an emigrant wagon containing members of the softer sex was heralded as about to cross the plains anywhere within reach the rough

fellows of Jacob's Flat would strike work and gallop over to the nearest halting place to await the pasters.by. To those rough fellows a woman or a child was semething far off, mysterious, and consequently

almost sacred. So when the news first went round that Jake Cwen, one of their number, was going to 'Frisco to meet a young Englishwoman who had come out all the way from the old country on purpose to marry him, the excitement was tremendous. Although there was a general opinion in that region that Jacob's Flat was hardly the place to bring a lady to, Jake's "luck" was the universal theme of conversation. And whon, some weeks after Jake's departure, his partner received the photograph, with an intimation that "Mr and Mrs Owen" were speedily returning home, the local excitement rose to fever heat.

For if every white woman was a paragon to the members of this colony of bachelors this particular white woman seemed a positive goddess-with soft, child-like face, gentle eyes, little hands, and the dress of a downright little lady. Jacob's Flat was not a moral place, its inhabitants were violent and often nurderous in their habits, but honesty of a sort was at a premium, and the ethics of society postulated of necessity a certain standard of purity. Had the original of the picture appeared there alone and unfriended, she would have found herself as safe and as respected as a lady in her own drawing-room; for though one or two hopeless desperadoes might have looked upon her with evil eyes, the whole spirit of the community would have been certain to protect her. Offers of marriage, of course, she would have by the hundred, but beyond that necessary homage to female beauty, no citizen would have had the temerity to presume.

At early daybreak the following morning Jacob's Flat was almost deserted, but on the banks of a narrow river fifty miles away Prarie Bill and his comparions sat waiting and expectant. "This bloomin' slow," said Simpson, the cockney.

"It's light enough now to see the pips by. Let's 'ave a flutter, ch boys ?" "Flutter be ---- !" said Prairie Bill, to whom the suggestion was more directly addressed, "let's ride

along and meet the wagon." This suggestion meeting with more favour, the whole cavalcade was soon in motion, riding in loss; order along the faint lines left in toe deep grass by

the last passage of the coach a fortnight before. Simpson, one of the many accredited humorists of the little community, looking about him at his companions under the slowly broadening light, remarked on the unwontedly spruce appearance they presented.

"I begin to think as I'm in Pall Mall. There's Chicago Charley. Look at him! I'm blowed if he hain't washed hisself." "I'll wash you," said the individual thus rendered

remarkable, "in the creek, if I get much more of your chin music." "An' Bil', too," continued Simpson, Ignoring the

threat; "be's combod 'is 'air. cure you've got the partia' straight, old pal?" "Shut your head!" growled Bill; and Simpson obeyed, seeing in the stolidly expectant faces of the p ray that his chearful impertinences were for once

out of place. The party rede in silence save for the musified beat of their horses' hoofs in the grass and the creaking of their saddles, till Simpson began to whistle the Wedding March. The air was perhaps unrecognised, at all events nobody joined in it, and the discomfited humorist stepped midway through it with a forlorn griu, lit his pipe, and rode on as silent as the rest.

"There she comes!" cried the foremost horseman, a long, loose, saturnine Yankee, who had once been a harpoerer on an American whaler. He rose in his stirrups, pointing with a forefinger straight ahead. A dim spick was visible on the horizon beyond the undulating billows of grass. "Come along, boys," cried Bill, clapping spurs to

gallop with a ringing cheer. The dim speck grow every moment in distinctness as they flew towards it, till it grew recognisable to sight less keen than that of the old whaler as the St. Louis express.

his horse, and the whole crowd started at a brisk

"That's Kansas drivin'," he said to Bill, who rode abreast of him. "They'll be aboard of her, I reckon. See his rosette? And the horses have got streamers

These and kindred remarks passed from mouth to mouth as the distance between the galloping crowd of horseman and the approaching coach grew less,

"Let's give 'em a salute," suggested Simpson, and a sudden crackle of revolver shots resounded over the muffled beat of hoover. Kansas waved his long whip, and rote in his seat, lashing his herses to a faster gallop, and the last half mile was covered at racing pace.

The band of horsemen formed about the coach like a breaking wave around a boulder, yelling and whooping like a crowd of fiends, and blazing away with their revolvers. A man's head and shoulders emerged from the window, and in the interior a glimpse was visible of a pale and terrified female face. "Dry up," reared Bill. "Ye pack of howling foolst Ye'll skeer the soul out of her 1"

A sudden silence fell upon the party, broken by a tuneful ringing cheer, led by Simpson with a shrill "Ip ip 'coray!" and a dozen hands were thrust out to seize that of the male traveller.

"I took ye for a gang of prairie ruffiaus," said the latter, with a strong provincial English accent. "Ye frightened the little woman. It's all right, lass," he continued. "It's the boys from the camp come over to give us a welcome, bless their hearts." He sank back in his seat and gently pushed his

bride to the wirdow. She looked out, with the pallor of her recent fear

still on her cheeks—a frank, delicate face, which made the photograph the men had admired on the night before seem a clumsy libel on her living beauty. Every man in the crowd drew a deep breath as she ran her still half-frightened glance along their bror zed and bearded facer. They returned the gaze with aident eyes, sitting like statues about the arrested vehicle, staring at this wonder of womanhead dropped from the skies to share their rough

"God bless you, my beauty, and welcome to the Flat," cried an unmistakably English voice, and amid another cheer the coach started again. The girl's face, which had flushed rosily at the words, paled again at a stray shot of rejoicing from some other ardent spirit, who was immediately knocked out of his saddle by a neighbour and sharply anathematised by his com-Coach and escort moved forward at a moderate pace.

keeping time to a song started by a Spanlard in the van, a gravely joyful measure sung in a rough but melodious voice, which lasted until the halting place of the coach was reached. Here Jake opened the coach door, and, springing to the ground, assisted his wife to descend. The men dismounted from their horses, and formed

a circle about the couple. The girl was quite selfpossessed now, and when Jake took her hand and led her a step forward, smiled brightly in answer to the cheer which greeted her. "These are my friends, Jess, and you must make 'em yours," said Jake. "Good friends they've been

to me, through fair and foul." She put out a little gloved hand to Prairie Bill, who blushed redder than she as he took it, and after wringing it with unnecessary force, dropped it and looked a trifle foolish. There was no man in the crowd who did not envy him, but no other claimed the honour thus bestowed.

"I'm very glad to meet you all," said Jess; "and I'm very thankful for your kindness to Jake—to my huaband." The voice was sweet, and only one or two in the crowd could recognise that its accent was almost as

strong as Jake's. But she might have been far less pretty than she was in face and speech, her feminiuity and her youth were as a strangely potent wine to ensure the worshipping affection of every man in the party. "Talk o' that gal at Dutch Gulch, as Poker Sam married last year!" said Prairie Bill to Simpson.

"Reckon we lay over the Gulch this deal. We've got a lady." Not one among them had any touch of mean eavy

'ope the lady can ride, matey," he continued to Jake "we've bought a nice little 'oss for her-our wedding present. She's a nice little thing, and as quiet as a lamb, ma'am." The others looked on with awe and

with this radiant goddess. "Ride!" cried Jake, proudly, "she can ride nigh

county, Essex." Jess clapped her hands delightedly at sight of the horse, a pretty little beast of mustang strain, gorgrously caparisoned in scarlet Mexican leather.

"I don't know what to say," she cried; "it's loo beautiful. Thank you. Thank you all, over so much." "Give her a lift, Simpson," said Jake, with the air of Jove distributing favours to mortals, and the blushing Cockney stooped to the little foot and lifted the hride to her saddle with another obser. Jess shook hands with Kansas, and thanked him sweetly for the care he had taken of her during the long ride

every journey," said Kansas, with the air of a man who meant it, and Spartan in his sense of duty, waved his bat and drove away with the empty coach, as the cavalcade, headed by the bride and bridegroom, set out at a gentle gallop for Jacob's Flat.

[Begun January 10. Back numbers may be had.]

THE BABY IN A HAMPER.

Considerable interest was excited by the fact that the woman concerned with the child found in a hamper at the Bristol Joint Railway station on Friday last had been taken into custody, and the Bristol police court was well filled on Monday afternoon when the young woman was placed in the dook, despite the fact that the case was not called until an unusually long list of prisoners had been disposed of. The accused is apparently between 25 and 30 years of age, and she was very plainly and quietly dressed in a long black jacket which covered her other garments. She were a large bat, trimmed with white silk ribbon, and this was the only approach to finery of any sort in her costume, She is below the average height and is sparely built, Her demeanour was quiet and subdued, and altogether her appearance is such as would incline the ordinary observer to regard her as the very last person to be the heroine of such a romance as that which led to her being taken into oustody. The baby-the innocent cause of all the trouble—was brought into court by one of the pauper nurses of the Bristol

discovered at the station. The magistrates present were Messrs W. Pethick and O. Hosegood, and the charge against the defendant, who gave her name as Anne Pugh, was that of uplawfully abandoning a female infant child under the age of two years, to wit, of the age of one month,

whereby its life was endangered. William Francis Scott was the first witness called. and he said he was a parcel porter at the Great Western Railway Station at Bristol, living at Totterdown. On Friday last, about 11.50, he saw the defendant on the up platform. She was carrying the hamper produced. The lady said, "I want to send this to London." She had "11.58" marked on the basket. Witness told ber there was no train at that time.

on the hamper. The label was then handed up to the bench. It proved to be an illuminated New Year's card, with the address written on the back. At the top of the card were the words, "Perishable. To be delivered enacte (meaning, probably, "intact"). Passenger

train, 13.2.91," Then followed the name of the

gentleman to whom it was addressed, at "Queen

Gate, South Kennington, London, W." At the foot of

the card, in red ink, was the following:--" 12.5 p.m., 13 Feby, 91. la 4d paid."

hamper ? Supt. Wedmore—Yes, a letter. On the envelope was written:-"Good morning, father!". Within this was the following note:-

Holmes Gore prosecuted on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Oruelty to Children; and the case was watched by Mr J. S. Simpson, clerk to the Bristol Incorporation of the Poor, who was accompanied by Mr W. Bennett, governor of the Incorporation. The prisoner, who was undefended, was accommodated with a neat in the dock, and she was provided with a glass of water at which she occasionally sipped. During the hearing of the evidence for the proseoution she maintained a very quiet demeanour, asking the witnesses no questions and sitting with her head bent, the broad brim of her hat shading her features. When however she was called upon to

gations put by the magistrates and the clerk with considerable spirit and with some asperity of tone. On the case being called, the Clerk (Mr T. Holmes Gore) said that two other charges might have been preferred against the prisoner—one by the guardians of the poor under the Vagrancy Act, that she, being the mother of the child, unlawfully deserted it; and the other under the Act for the prevention of cruelty

to and the protection of children, which would be

very similar to the present charge. Mr H. Holmes Gore explained the facts (as already reported in the BRISTOL MERCURY), and submitting that there was a prima facio case of abandonment, he cited a parallel case, heard in the North of England, in which the child was sent by train and delivered at its destination in less than an hour. In the present case, he said, the infant could not have reached its destination for some hours. The child was addressed to a man named Skelcher, who was known at the place to which the hamper was directed; but nevertheless the prisoner ought to be made to understand that the infant had been exposed to great danger. If it had not been found it was possible it would have died in the course of the journey, and the woman would have been found guilty probably of murder or manslaughter. He asked the bench to deal with her as one who had acted foolishly and wrongly to a certain extent. Of course, she was poor, and probably could not take the child to London herself, and there seemed to have been an effort made to provide for its

consideration. The Clerk-Is it the wish of those who have undertaken the prosecution that the case shall be dealt with in a summary way?

Supt. Wedmore, in answer to the bench, said there was no objection on the part of the police. The Clerk observed that the section which it was proposed to apply to the case enabled the magistrates to runish any person so accused with imprisonment with hard labour not exceeding three calendar months.

Prisoner, in a low tone—I would rather have it settled now, sir. William Scott, parcels clerk in the G.W.R. department at the Joint station, said that on February 13th the prisoner brought him the hamper produced, and it bore the address "G. A. Skelcher, Esq., Queen's gate, South Kensington." On the card were the words "Perishable, to be delivered enacte (meaning possibly intact or in haste); passenger train; 13/2/91; 12.5 pm. train, 1s 4d paid." The hamper weighed 16lb, and prisoner paid the carriage. He placed the hamper on a barrow, and afterwards removed it to the platform as the train was coming in. He put the bamper in the train, and by some means the package was turned on its side, upon which there was a scream, He called Detective Lander, who opened the basket, and finding the infant inside took it to the office. An envelope in the hamper bore the words "Good morning, father," and within it was a note as follows: --"Dear little Eva Blanche has come to her father. Born on the 11th January, 1891. I have no means of keeping her, so I send her to you, who have" (laughter). Afterwards the child was removed to St. Peter's | re

identified it. Mrs Margaret Dowling, of 15, Dean crescent, Bedminster, said the prisoner had been a lodger in her house. The child was born there about a month ago, and she last saw it on the Friday morning. Prisoner nursed it herself, and was a very kind mother. Witness had never seen the hamper before. After she heard of the baby being found, which was reported in the newspapers on Saturday, the prisoner "admitted She knew nothing of the girl's antecedents, beyond her statements that she had come from

lately in Queen equare. In conversation the prisoner gaid the father was a married man. George Arthur Skelcher, a groom, of London, said that if a parcel had been despatched to the address referred to it might have reached him. He recognised

The Clerk-Supposing the parcel had arrived would you have been surprised? Witness-Yes, sir;

about it. Had you any letters from her?-Not for some time. Have you got the last one?-I've got none at all. Are they destroyed?-Yes.

was when I was in Cheltenham. Tell us the subject?—She asked for help, and I have helped her.

It might envoyou a second journey if you say what your intentions are with regard to this matter?—I should be pleased to do the best I can, but I have a

three months. I should be glad to give the best help I can, as I have always done. In answer to further questions, the witness said he

of his companion's luck. "A reg'lar daisy, and no error," said Simpson. "I

respect at Simpson, entering thus easily into converse

on almost anything. Country bred, she is. My

from Frisco. "I wish I had something as pretty to take care of

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE MOTHER BEFORE THE MAGISRATES,

Workhouse, whither the infant was taken after being

In reply to the bench, witness said there was a label

Supt. Wedmore-We have the witness here who opened the hamper, and also the witness who went with the child to St. Peter's Hospital. Mr Pethick — Was there anything else in the

"Dear little Eva Blanche has come to her father. Born on the 11th of January, 1891. I have no means of keeping her, so I send her to you, who have." The case was remanded until Thursday, when Mr H.

stand and state her defence she answered interro-

comfort. He would ask the bench to take this into

Mr Gore-Distinctly so. .

He asked the prisoner if she preferred being tried by a jury,

hospital and thence to the workhouse. The child was brought into court, and witness

Cheltenham, and had been in service in London, and

the writing on the label as that of the prisoner, whom he had known for some months. I should have been surprised; I knew nothing

Can you tell us the contents?—I cannot; the last

In connection with her condition?—Yes,

wife and six children. I have been out of work for