A SIREN'S VICTIMS

By Frances Warner Walker.

CHAPTER IX. (Continued.)

"Why should I care?" she echoed, with flashing eyes and heaving breast. "Why, indeed? What matters it that in another's ear you murmur your false, tender words—that on another's lips falls your passionate caress—that her head sleeps on your heart—and I—I starve and go mad in knowing that to another is given the food which would help me to live? It shall not be, Harvey Barclay!—you hear me?—it shall not be!"

"You refuse me your aid, then?"

He stood with arms still folded across his breast. A cold, cynical smile wreathed his mouth.

Her passionate protest had wakened no response. A lurid light, as of anger, gleamed in her eyes.

She glanced up into his face, and from her own the determination fled. She clasped her hands in supplication upon his sleeve.

"Ask me anything else, Harvey—anything but this," she pleaded.

"Don't be foolish, Helen,' he said, curtly. "Let me begin the farce in my own way."

"What is the sum you need? I might make another appeal to Grace for the amount—might tell another pitiful lie."

"It would be but a straw floating in the current at which the drowning man grasps. I need a fortune! But"—pulling out his watch—"it's time for my appointment."

"With her? Harvey, you shall not go!"

Across his face swept a look of merciless determination.

"You are still obdurate?" he questioned.

"I swear you shall not go to her from me this night!"

Her own face, now, had hardened, and was as implacable as his.

He laughed bitterly, cruelly.

"Perhaps you will ask your husband, Harry Reynolds, to interpose his authority. Do so. Take one step to prevent what I have made up my mind to do, and—does your memory date back five years, ma chere? Well, the story of our first meeting would be somewhat interesting to the gay world gathered about us, do you not think so? Which will make the greater sensation—your story or mine? I leave it for you to decide which shall be told first."

And with these words, more cruel than the thonged lash, he turned and left her standing amid the green plants, the cool shadows, the plashing waters; but she dreamed she stood within the gates of purgatory.

"Helen, Mr. Barclay told me I should find you here, and that you asked him to send me to you," broke in her husband's voice. "What has happened, dear? You look pale. Are you ill?"

She forced herself, by a powerful effort, to smile, and strove to banish from her eyes the look of pain.

"I am quite well," she answered; "but I found the rooms hot. When—when did you leave Grace?"

"Barclay was about to seek her. How attentive he is growing to Grace, Helen! I tried to warn her once about him, but she refused to listen to me kindly. I sometimes fear she is really interested in him, and I cannot authenticate any of the rumors to his discredit. How I wronged you, darling, concerning him! Yet I deeply regret that I overcame my jealousy and allowed him to obtain such familiar footing in our house. I was growing to like him; but, lately, since I have seen his attention to Grace, and learned that these stories are afloat concerning him, my old distrust has returned. What shall I do, Helen? Can you not help me?"

So he, too, appealed to her for help. She could have shrieked aloud in recognition of the strange coincidence in the fearful tension which held her nerves.

"Of what rumors do you speak?" she asked, at last.

Her throat was dry, her mouth parched. Her voice sounded unnatural to her own ears.

"I have not told you of them? No; I remember. They say that he gambles for very high stakes. I fear that he may wish to benefit himself by Grace's fortune. Dear girl! She is worthy of a better fate."

"Why did you not save her, then, by taking herself and her fortune when they were yours for the asking?"

She started at the repressed bitterness of her own tone. It was nearer betrayal than anything that had ever escaped her.

But she had scarcely listened to or heeded aught that he had said. Each moment was fraught to her with absolute torture, for was not Harvey perhaps, at this moment, pressing his suit with the heiress and her rival?

A wave of utter surprise, followed by deep displeasure, swept over the young husband's face. He could scarce believe that he had heard aright.

"Helen!" he exclaimed.

And the simple utterance of her name was at once a question and a demand for explanation.

She laughed and passed her hand over her brow.

"I—I believe I am not well. Take me home, Harry. And find Grace. She must come with us. I cannot leave her alone. You have given me new fears concerning her."

His displeasure vanished; he bent over her in tender solicitude; and now she was all impatience to be gone.

"Leave me here," she insisted, "and find Grace quickly. Tell her that I am ill, and want her."

Swiftly he went through the rooms in obedience to her desire; but for long his search was unavailing; and finally was successful only through an accident, which at the same time proved to him his fears concerning Mr. Barclay had not been groundless.

Pausing before a window recess, where he could obtain a better view of the rooms in his effort to discover Grace, he suddenly heard her voice directly behind him. The curtain served to screen her from his sight.

"It is impossible, Mr. Barclay—quite impossible," he heard her say. "If my manner has, indeed, encouraged you to believe my feeling warmer than a friend, your regret is not more keen than mine. I feel perhaps you are somewhat justified in your reproach, because—may I be frank with you?—I heard some time ago, certain rumors concerning you which pained me. I had no means of ascertaining if they were true; but if they might be, I thought, perhaps, your friendship for all of us might prove a safeguard against the temptations which beset you in the outside world. I never dreamed, believe me, that you could interpret me differently."

"And you will give me no promise—no hope for the future?"

"I can give you none,' she answered. And, conscious that already he had played eavesdropper too long, yet with a great burden lifted from his spirit, Harry moved from the spot.

A minute later, when Mr. Barclay and Grace emerged from their retreat, he again approached, and begged her to go at once to his wife.

* * *

"You are spared the telling of your story and I of mine. I have cast my die and failed. Ruin—utter and complete—stares me in the face. Do you care to see me again before I end my wretched existence?"

These few lines, written in a hurried, trembling hand, reached Helen Reynolds on the afternoon of the following day.

The messenger who had brought the message waited.

"Come at once. I am alone!" she hurriedly wrote in answer; and then she waited in a fever of impatience.

Half an hour had not elapsed before she heard the peal of the bell, and a minute after Harvey Barclay entered the room.

He looked haggard and miserable, indeed. His face was white and drawn. His eyes betokened that he had passed a sleepless night.

"Well, Helen, my girl!" he said, as he crossed the room and took both her hands in one of his for greeting, "we need have no more recriminations and reproaches. I asked the heiress last night to marry me, and she refused. You didn't believe me, perhaps, last night, when I told you it was my only alternative. You didn't reason how desperate my case must be to send me from your side to utter love vows in the ear of any woman, though the fairest on earth. Well, it was a bitter pill, and I'm not sorry, my girl, that you refused to swallow it more gracefully. So I've come to-day to ask you to forgive me for what I said. Dead men tell no tales, and after to-day I can never make any empty threats to you again. You see this, Helen?" and he threw back his coat and showed the shining barrel of a small revolver protruding from its inside pocket. "After to-night it will all be over. You see, I came to ask, not a welcome, but a good-by."

His coat he again had buttoned across his chest, but the great eyes, with their strange, golden pupils, wildly dilated, were fixed on the spot where lay concealed that small, deadly weapon, as though she still could see through the cloth.

"Harvey!" she gasped—"Harvey!" and her cheeks and lips were bloodless.

"It's a shock to you, Helen, I know; yet you must have guessed it was coming to this. I wouldn't have told you; but I thought it would be a greater shock when all was over. And there was another reason, too, my girl. I felt, somehow, it would be easier if I could remember that we both had wiped out last night's words—we have not often quarreled—and that the tears you shed for me—for you will shed a tear—would be less bitter if they fall for the man you knew had loved you better than anything else in his selfish life."

Even as he talked, she knew that he would sacrifice her as relentlessly within the hour as he would have sacrificed her last night, had such sacrifice been the only means to his goal.

But what mattered the knowledge? He was here before her; his face was pale, his eyes heavy, and the spectre of self-destruction was stalking by his side.

And she—she loved him as she had loved naught else on the wide earth, with a love that cast judgment and reason to the winds of heaven, and but steeped itself in the magnetic attraction which ever kindled it anew.

She loved him, and he talked of death. He, in his strong, young manhood, was weary of his young life, and fain would lay the burden down.

"Harvey," she said, again, "for God's sake help me to be calm! help me to think! What matters ruin? What matters poverty? Live, and begin life anew! Things cannot be so desperate as you paint them. You can leave the army. You can leave Washington. You can go amid new scenes and new faces, and I—"

"Will go with me, perhaps you would say, Helen. No, my girl. Things are not less but more black than I told you. Leave the army? Within the week, when facts are known, my name will be dropped from the rolls. Go away? The walls of a prison stare me in the face. Ah! I am not giving up my life for a chimera! Will you believe now that I was desperate last night Will you forgive me my cruel threat to you? We will part in peace, Helen, and sometimes you will give me a kindly thought, my girl."

He watched her closely. Full well he knew the soil on which he sowed, the seed whose harvest he already had anticipated and ordained.

"Is it only money, Harvey?" she asked.

And her voice was deep with its intensity of pain.

"Only money!" he echoed, bitterly. "Yes, only money. Do you dream how much? This time it is not five thousand, nor ten, nor twenty. I deceived you before, Helen. I hoped to retrieve myself with the amount you gave me, but I knew, unless fortune smiled, it could not avert the wreck. I didn't come here to complain. I didn't come here to torture you and myself with impossibilities. It is hopeless, my girl, and we'll bury the 'might have been' in my grave—"

"Hush, Harvey—hush!" she entreated, shudderingly. "Oh, my love, you must not die! How much, Harvey—how much?"

"Fifty thousand dollars!" he answered, slowly. "Not one dollar less will save me."

A gray veil of despair clouded her face.

"Fifty thousand dollars!" she repeated. "It is hopeless, indeed—unless—unless—I might again appeal to Grace."

"She would have to go to her guardian to obtain possession of such an amount. In some way the truth would be revealed. No; say good-bye, dear. Lift up your sweet mouth and let me kiss your lips once more! Heavens! that they should belong to another man! They are not cherry-red, dear, as they always are, but they're not the less precious to me because your fear for me has whitened them. Good-bye, Helen—good-bye, my love!"

He drew her to her feet; he stooped and kissed her lips. He turned to go.

Convulsively she clung to him.

"Stay, Harry—stay!" she pleaded. "Oh, God, show me some way to save him!"

He turned back then and fixed his burning gaze upon her ashen face.

"Your prayer is answered, Helen," he said, as if inspired by a sudden thought. "Heaven has sent me its reply. There is one way. Will you have courage to take it?"

"Courage?" she repeated. "Have I ever lacked courage, dear? Will I, think you, lack it in such a moment as this? Show me the way, Trust me to follow it."

He paused a moment; then he spoke, each word falling, clear and distinct upon the silence:

"Get you husband to sign Grace Hawthorne's name upon a blank slip of paper!"

"Harvey!" she gasped, "you would—"

He interrupted her with a low, harsh laugh, and turned away, as if to go.

"I told you your courage would fail," he said.

"Stay!" she whispered, her hand detaining him. "Do you not see detection would be certain?"

"I can't say, ma belle, that I do. In the first place, I'll make it in the form of a note payable three months from date. In that time I'll be on my feet again, and have the funds to meet it. If not—if the worst comes to the worst—it will only be a confirmation of the story you told her regarding Mr. Reynold's weakness. She'll pay the money and hush the matter up. You heard him ask her once what she would do if he should forge her name. Well, we'll put her to the proof. I don't think she'll fail. Shall we try her, Helen? Quick! The suspense is worse than the certainty of despair!"

"I can't think, Harvey," she answered, almost in a wail. "My brain is turning round and round. The room is growing dark. Give me until to-morrow. To-morrow, at this hour, come to me. I will contrive to be alone. I have had time for thought; time to—to think how I may obtain this—this signature!"

"God bless you, Helen!" he murmured, wringing her hands. "Poor girl! I seem destined to bring you trouble always. Until to-morrow, then, ma belle."

But as he went out from the house, the tenderness had vanished from his handsome face. The hard, cruel light of a pitiless triumph sparkled in his eyes.

"Three months! It will give me three months to act—three months in which to win you yet, Grace Hawthorne; three months in which to induce you to change your mind. I rather think I see my way clear into forcing you to alter that irrevocable decision of yesterday! Poor Helen! She, too, will have to submit to fate!"

And so meditating, he passed on down the street.

CHAPTER X.

Ten minutes had gone by since the noise of the closing of the street door told Helen Reynolds that Harvey Barclay had left the house.

But the marble statue, glowing white at the far end of the room in which she sat, was no more motionless than she. Not an eyelash quivered, not a muscle moved; one could scarce mark the measure of her breathing.

But, suddenly, there was a change. she sprang to her feet, and looked about her like some wild animal who makes discovery that it is caged.

"This is worse than the old life!" she muttered, low—"darker than the old days!"

Up and down the limits of the room she paced, trying to recover her calm.

It was impossible, and at any moment some of the family might return. She must not meet them now; she must be alone—alone to think—alone to realize this terrible new burden cast upon her—the burden which as yet was a shapeless mass in her brain, but when formed, as it must be, must inevitably wear the form of infamy.

With swiftly-flying feet she hurried up the stairs.

A minute later, wrapped in furs, a thick veil over her face, she passed out into the street. Mechanically she directed her steps toward Lafayette Square.

Except a few hurried pedestrians, it was likely, on this cold January afternoon, to be nearly vacant.

It was almost a mile distant from the house, but the walk, the rapid motion, offered her the only relief now possible for her to find.

"He will forge Grace Hawthorne's name, or use Harry's innocent signature as a forgery, and then, when it is discovered, my husband will be believed the guilty one. I cannot—oh, I cannot do it! And if I refuse?"

She closed her eyes and walked on a moment in her voluntary blindness, trying to shut from her vision the picture her imagination painted as that refusal's consequence—the picture of Harvey Barclay's handsome, white-dead face!

Merciful God! What would life be without him? And, after all, within the allotted time, he had promised to make it right—promised to redeem the money, to take up the note. And, if he failed, Grace would never prosecute Harry. The affair never would be known beyond the limits of the little household.

Her agency could not be suspected. They would suppose the signature had been lost, or some one had made use of it to their own ends.

If suspicion attached to Harvey, it would be difficult to obtain proof. Besides, he had not forged the name. And now that she had bidden him hope, could she again relegate him to despair? But how to obtain the signature? Well, she must trust that to her woman's wit.

She had reached the square when she had gained this stage of her soliloquy, and finding it, as he supposed, deserted, she sat down on one of its benches, in a spot as secluded as she could select. Lifting her veil, she let the cold air blow upon her brow.

The short afternoon was fast drawing to a close. Already darkness was gathering. Quiet and motionless, she seemed a part of the falling shadows.

A light wind blew through the bare branches of the trees. She drew her furs more closely about her, but otherwise stirred not.

At last a step sounded at the extreme end of the walk. She could distinguish the figure of a man coming toward her—a man her quick glance declared unknown to her, and so she sat quietly until he should pass by.

He was of medium height, broad-shouldered, thick-set. His dress was seedy and worn, though a diamond flashed in a bright-colored scarf loosely knotted about his throat.

His head was bent, as if in thought, and between his lips he held a cigar. He did not seem even to see the silent figure on the bench.

He had nearly passed her by, when he casually lifted his head, and their eyes met.

A change, awful in its suddenness and character, swept over both faces. both grew ashen, with livid lips. But the woman was pale with the pallor of a hideous fear; the man white, with the white fire of a pitiless triumph.

He stopped abruptly in his walk, and for a full moment their eyes unflinchingly met; then, with a harsh, low laugh, he took a short step forward, and abruptly laid his hand on her shoulder.

"At last, my lady—at last!" were the words with which he broke the silence, which, in reality, had lasted scarce sixty seconds, but which to her, at least had lengthened themselves into an eternity of torture.

She strove to speak, but, though her lips moved, she could articulate no sound. Her heart, which at first had beat in maddest tumult, now stood almost still. She could have counted its measured pulse.

Repulsion, fear, horror, all had robbed her face of its well-nigh unnatural beauty, and left it haggard and aged.

The grasp upon her shoulder tightened until its pressure caused her physical pain. The man's hot breath she felt upon her cheek; the cigar he still held between his now set teeth mingled its fumes with the air until it suffocated, rather than revived her.

"The surprise of seeing me isn't altogether a welcome one—eh, my girl?"

As he spoke for the second time, she shuddered.

"I—I thought you were dead—murdered!" she finally gasped out.

Grace had said, when first she heard the voice of Harry's wife, that it held more music than any voice to which she had ever listened.

Could she have heard it now she would not have recognized it.

It seemed to come from some vault, and ring with the metallic echoes of the sepulchre.

"Oh, God!" breaking the horrid spell which bound her, and burying her face in her hands to hide this terrible flesh-and-blood spectre of her dead past—"oh, God, let me wake and find that this is all a dream!"

"So I find you here!" asserted the man, unheeding her words. "So at last my long search is rewarded! In the moment that I despaired, my end is achieved; and here—here of all places where I least looked for you! Six hours more, and I should have turned my back upon this place, not dreaming in my wildest dreams, that it held you! Six hours only, and you would again have been lost to me, this time, perhaps, forever. How I have tried to track you! How cunning you have been! And now chance—this poor accident of chance—has done for me what all my skill—what all my counter-cunning failed to do. Once more, Helen Windom, we stand face to face!"

He could have stabbed her no more cruelly than by his words. In six hours he would, by his own confession, have left the city. She would have been safe from him forever—safe, and believing him dead.

And but for Harvey she would at this hour—at this moment—have been safely sheltered and protected beneath Edgar Reynolds' roof.

Already her absence might be noted already some anxiety might arise concerning it.

In imagination she saw the room with all its luxurious belongings, where she and Harvey had talked and plotted and schemed. The lights were lit ere now, the curtains drawn, the fire shed its brilliant warmth upon the pretty picture, and she was away from it all, out here in the cold and growing darkness.

How cold it was! She had not felt it before. She must go home—home! Had she a home?

She almost forgot, as her fancy painted the well known picture, that between her and it had risen a sudden barrier—the barrier formed of the fleshless bones of the skeleton of her long-buried past!

"How many years had it been?" went on that pitiless voice in her ear. "Five, I think—five long, long years! Ah, a man must live them through as I have done to know how long they may be! There has not been a town I have not visited, I think. Whenever I've had a stroke of luck, I've used it up on my search. But lately I was growing desperate. My luck deserted me. I've fifty dollars in my pocket, and not a cent besides in the wide world. Sometimes I thought I had a clue to you—sometimes believed I was on your track. But you've eluded me always until now. You'll never elude me again. I'll never lose sight of you again, so help me God! But the man—tell me, is he here with you? If so, you'd better warn him that I'll keep the oath I once swore—to shoot him down at sight!"

Again she shivered, but this time it was not with the cold. Pitiless as had been the speaker's tone before, it grew sterner, more pitiless still, as it rose no whit higher than the utterance of its fearful threat. Gathering up her strength, she made a movement to rise.

"Let me go home," she said—"let me go home! I am cold!"

"Aye, my girl!" he answered. "We will go home together? Will you lead the way?"

(To Be Continued.)

Topsy-Turvy China.

When a Chinaman dines he begins with the dessert and winds up with the rice.

Titles, instead of being hereditary, are conferred upon the parents of distinguished persons.

Before taking a seat, he makes a bow to the empty chair. It is accounted a most heinous offense to speak to any one, even a servant or a common laborer, without having first taken off your spectacles.

The place of honor at social gatherings is not on the right, but on the left.

A shake of the head is the sign of assent; a negative is expressed by a nod.

On visits of ceremony the guest may not drink up the tea that is offered him; if he wishes to intimate that he is not going to stay long, he will set down the cup without touching the contents.

To inquire about the health of the family is considered a piece of impertinence.

Swedish Superstitions.

In Sweden, youth as well as maidens test the potency of love charms by gathering nine kinds of flowers, which they place under their pillows, and the one dreamed of is the favored one.

Young men also look for fernseed at midnight, for its magical power in capturing the hearts of shy or obdurate maidens. Fernseed so procured also avails to make its possessor invisible.

Young girls get the hard root of mugwort, which is called coal, and put it under their pillows, in order to dream of their lovers.

Pluck a rose, hide it, unseen, in paper until a month hence, when, should it be found fresh as when gathered, the future husband of wife will appear.

How China Was Explored.

As far back as 1816 English explorers began their work in Southern China, for in that year Amherst made a journey along the banks of the Pekiang, a northern tributary of the Sikiang, sometimes called the River of Canton; but Macartney had already done valuable work up the same stream in 1793. It was not, however, until the early part of the second half of the century—in the '60s—that systematic exploration of that part of China was undertaken. During that decade the southwestern and southern provinces were regularly quartered out by English explorers.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

How the Chinese Telegraph.

The curious part of the Chinese telegraph system is the fact that, even in the interior, where there are no foreigners, all the telegraph blanks are printed in English. The Chinese language, being idiographic, having a character for each word, it is impossible to transmit it by the ordinary Morse signals. It is, therefore, necessary to telegraph either in a foreign language or by using Arabic numerals. By the latter method a Chinese dictionary is taken and a number given to each word at all likely to be used in a telegraph dispatch.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Who Knows, Indeed?

She wept.

"Oh, you editors are horrid!" she sobbed.

"What is the trouble, madam?" inquired the editor, as he blue-penciled two paragraphs that had come as an inspiration to the young man who was "taking up journalism."

"Why, I—boo—boo—I sent an obituary of my husband, and—boo—boo—and said in it that he had been married for twenty years, and you—oo—oo—oo—hoo—your printers set it up 'worried for twenty years.'"

She went.

But the editor grinned.

Perhaps it was right, all round.

Who knows?—Baltimore American.

Reflections of a Bachelor.

The world will forgive a woman for everything except what she can't help

After all, love is nothing but a game of soltaire between you and yourself.

When a man leaves his heart in the hands of a woman he always finds it again with callous spots on it.

When a girl lends a book to a man to read, she always marks the things in it which she thinks look the deepest.

Tell a man a woman loves him, and the first question he asks is, "Who?" Tell a woman a man loves her, and the first question she asks is, "Which?"—New York Press.

His Assets.

"Yassir," said the colored citizen, with a wave of his hand toward the cabin. "I's done broke. I reckon I's whut dey calls a bankrup'."

"What are your assets?"

"Lemme see. Dar's me an' de three boys an'—"

"You misunderstand. Your assets are what you have hopes of realizing money on."

"Dat's what I's gettin' to. My assets ain' nuffin but fo' votes an' a mule."—Washington Evening Star.

Couldn't Believe It.

"You can't believe all that you see in print," said the skeptical citizen.

"I should say not," answered Mr. Meekton. "Some things are too preposterously absurd! Why, only the other day I saw a piece about a man who made fun of his wife's cooking."—Washington Star.

Seasonable.

"Well, how did you get along with your ride in the automobile?"

"Splendidly! Although I ran over two pedestrians and three wheelmen, and, although I knocked two wagons into the ditch, my motor did not suffer any damage and I did not come in one minute late."—Fliegende Blaetter.

Not Often, of Course.

"Pa, what's an optimist?"

"A man who sometimes hears of people doing things just as he would have done them if he had been there."—Chicago Times Herald.

Better to Be Sure Than Sorry.

"You have your linen suit on a trifle early," Hopkins.

"Yes; but folks are interested in a rummage sale, and when I carry my clothes around with me I know where they are."—Indianapolis Press.

Rare Philippine Jewel.

The rarest corals in the world are to be found in the Philippines. As precious as this jewel is, there is still a rarer one, and that is health. It may be possessed by any one who will use Hostetter's Stomach Bitters for indigestion, dyspepsia, belching, heartburn or sleeplessness. Try it.

Accuracy Demanded.

"Bagsby went up to see the Thousand Islands on a special-rate excursion ticket.'"

"How did he enjoy the trip?"

"He came back threatening to sue the railroad company."

"What for?"

"He couldn't count but 993 islands!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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Impressed on Her Memory.

"Its been four years, now," said the deserted lady, "since he left me and his happy home. I remember it just as well as yesterday, how he stood at the door holding it open until six flies got in the house."—Indianapolis Press.

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Who Is Sherlock Holmes?

When a judge is adjudging he is sometimes very oblivious.

In a case at the law courts yesterday a witness referred to "following up a clew in the manner of Sherlock Holmes."

"Who is Sherlock Holmes?" inquired Mr. Justice Day.

"A person who has been made notorious by Conan Doyle," was the reply.

"Who is he?" continued the judge.

Then counsel came to the rescue. "Sherlock Holmes," he explained, "is the name of a book, my lord."—London Mail.

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Is a constitutional cure. Price, 75c.

The Lady Interfered.

Senator Spooner of Wisconsin is one of the most eloquent men in the upper house, inimitable on the stump and credited with being able to do about as he pleases with his audiences. A friend and admired who has known the senator from boyhood is authority for the following story:

Some years ago, when taking part in a symposium in the northern part of the state Senator Spooner was making an impassioned appeal to his audience in the midst of which the master of ceremonies touched him on the shoulder, and, pointing to the clock, indicated that his time had expired.

Quick as a flash a woman rose from her seat, and, mounting a chair in front of the clock, threw her shawl over its face amid the laughter and cheers of the audience and to the dismay of the master of ceremonies. It is doubtful if Senator Spooner ever received a prettier compliment.—Washington Letter.

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