LOVE, HOPE AND WORK

How Lina Cavalieri, "Most Beautiful Woman of Europe," Has Won Her Way to Fame and Fortune by Hard Work.

IS AIDED BY HER SISTER'S DEVOTION

Love Affair with Prince Alexander Baratinski the Beginning of Resolve to Give Up Easy Life and Fit Herself for the Trying Roles Written by the Most Famous Masters of Music--Now the Idol of Adoring Paris.

Paris.—That "the most beautiful woman of Europe," may be discontented with her job is shown by the extraordinary case of Lina Cavalieri.

As a music hall star of the first magnitude she was flattered and feted. She had but to show her beautiful person and warble a few ditties to earn heavy money. The world had practically told her that her loveliness was all-sufficient without talent.

Lina Cavalieri tossed aside the brilliant sinecure and plodded the hard road leading to grand opera. When Parisians learned it they shrugged at the unpractical choice and as good as forgot her. Now she has just given them a mighty jolt by coming back as a grand opera star, with a rumored engagement at the Paris opera itself; and furthermore she has just bought a splendid mansion in the Avenue de Messine. But why she grew discontented with being "the most beautiful woman of Europe," and how she threw up the music hall sinecure on the off-chance of succeeding in grand opera remains a secret.

The secret spring of Lina's change of base began with a great hope, continued through a great despair and ended in a great devotion. The hope and the despair were those of worldly love. But the devotion was that of a sister.

Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the lives chosen by the two girls. When their widowed mother died in Rome in 1889 Ada was 15 years of age and Lina 17. As there were no relatives and the property was small, friends put them in a convent school of aristocratic connections, whose side specialty was the education of poor girls of good familiy for governesses and companions.

Has World at Her Feet.

On account of her age, Lina's time in the school was short. Once in the world, it did not take her long to decide against the teaching career. Besides her beautiful person, she had a pretty voice; and even had the voice been less her first appearance on the music hall stage left no doubt as to the kind of success she might expect.

In 1893 Lina Cavalieri was called "the prettiest girl in Vienna." At the famous Ronacher's she had enormous vogue as a beauty and wearer of magnificent toilets. She warbled a few catchy ditties. And they were sufficient.

In 1894 she was drawing all Paris—and the clubs contingent—to the Folies-Bergere. She had discovered the dressmakers and milliners of the Rue de la Paix; and was making the acquaintance of the jewelers. The photographers had sent her lovely face and figure to the four corners of the earth, and she began to be called "the most beautiful woman of Europe."

It was at this time that Lina Cavalieri gave her friendship to Prince Alexander Baratinski, second son of a considerable Russian house and a young man about Paris.

Prince Alexander came to have immense admiration for the talent, the voice, the beauty and the goodness of the girl.

"You must cultivate that voice," he told her. "You are wasting yourself on the music hall stage, which is not worthy of you. Take up opera!" he advised her.

"That is what my sister is always writing me," pouted the fair Lina. Those who knew her at that time declare that, personally, she found herself very well where she was. The climbing of the grand opera ladder would mean unceasing labor—not to speak of risk. The appeals of Ada had not moved her. Was it love that now began to pull her? Watt's touching painting of "Love Leading Life" contains a mighty moral.

On Road to Grand Opera.

Like the camel that is being loaded Lina groaned in spirit. Like the camel, she was slow in getting started. But, still like that reliable creature once started, she kept going. In 1896 the music halls saw no more of Lina Cavalieri; and it became known that she was diligently cultivating her voice under Mme. Mariani-Masi.

Prince Alexander was delighted. At least, he professed himself delighted. Indeed, it was generally thought that the two young people so admirably fitted to each other would certainly marry—a supposition made the less unreasonable by the well-known fact that Prince Alexander's elder brother and head of the family had only a few years previously married a celebrated Russian actress—with whom he was living happily. Lina was simply working to make herself worthy of the alliance. She would not ask Prince Alexander to marry "the most beautiful woman of Europe." He should espouse a grand opera star!

Three years passed in work and love and hope. Then Lina's chance came in 1900, when she was allowed to make her debut at no less a musical center than the Theater Royal of Lisbon as Nedda in "Pagliacci."

Unhappily, the Lisbon public is a hard one. When it pays for grand opera it insists on having something near perfection. The debutante was young, exceedingly lovely, with a sweet voice; but she showed inexperience. Did she not also display nervousness due to emotion over some lovers' misunderstanding? One would prefer to think so—for the judging of Prince Alexander!

The first night the Lisbon public made no sign. The second night it simply chased the whole company from the stage of the Theater Royal.

Alas for work, for hope, for love!

There was riot in front of the curtain and panic and recriminations behind it, and in a row that would not have been out of place in a Latin quarter cafe Lina Cavalieri and Alexander Baratinski spoke their parting words.

We know no more than this. Was it one of love's hateful treasons? Was it desertion in the hour of need? The girl had worked and slaved to please him. The world would have liked to see him stand manfully by her in her hour of failure. That Lina has never accused him proves nothing. She may have been too proud—or she may have been in the wrong. And, note, that Baratinski never defended himself proves nothing. He may have been too chivalrous or he may have had no excuse.

Baratinski fled to his yacht. Simply that.

Cavalieri moved with dignity to the railway station. On her lonely trip from Lisbon to Paris by the Sud Express, accompanied only by a faithful maid, the company disbanded—who knows what bitter thoughts may have been hers? Ah, work that had all gone for nothing! Really, I know of no more pathetic figure than that of the disabused and lonely girl returning to Paris.

A few weeks later in Paris she learned that Prince Alexander had allowed his Paris apartment to be sold out by the sheriff. The young folks never met again. Prince Alexander shortly afterward married the young Princess Yourievski, morganatic daughter of the deceased Czar Alexander II., living with her mother in high Parisian society. And Lina Cavalieri remained "the most beautiful woman of Europe!"

Here the devoted sister intervened with force from her humble employment at Genoa.

Too Beautiful for Governess.

On leaving the Roman convent school three years after her elder sister had quitted it, Ada Cavalieri (to give her the family name adopted and made famous by the other) had to face the same hard proposition that confronted Lina.

She was quite as beautiful as Lina. Indeed—as you shall learn, if you have not already heard it—the sisters look so much alike that photographs of one have been mistaken for the other. Also, she had a voice. Yet she never hesitated. She had been educated for a governess. It was correct and honorable to be a governess. And a governess she would be. Even after she had lost her first three places by a strange and unique fault she never wavered.

Surely, it was a unique fault.

"This young girl is too beautiful to be a governess," wrote her first employer to the superioress of the school as she returned her. "Her conduct has been irreproachable. She is goodness itself, intelligent, patient and with a talent for teaching. Yet I will not keep her. Her presence cannot but prove a danger in a household."

At last a good and generous lady—beautiful enough herself not to be jealous of another's beauty—took the persecuted Signorina Ada as teacher for her two small children. I may not give her name; she was the wife of a foreign consul.

Ada Cavalieri had watched her brilliant sister's triumphs with uneasy wonderment that grew to terror.

Old maids are born—not made. In spite of her dazzling beauty—the same beauty line for line that had made Lina famous—Ada had, from the beginning, all the frigid timidity, the chaste tranquillity and the hard judgments, both for herself and others, of the born old maid.

She had fought with Lina to give up the music hall career. She had never ceased bombarding her with letters of expostulation. Later on she compromised.

Urged Sister Onward.

"If you will not give up the stage, be a real artiste!" was her final appeal. When Lina had begun studying with Mme. Mariani-Masi she began to hope. And when at last Lina was to make her debut in grand opera at Lisbon she was waiting anxiously to learn the result.

When she learned the pitiful result Ada Cavalieri took a great decision. Quitting her place at Genoa she hurried to Paris.

She settled down beside her wounded and reckless sister. Did she try to comfort her? How could the born old maid comfort her? But it is certain that the frigid Ada wrestled with the fiery Lina seven days—and triumphed!

Groaning in spirit like the camel, Lina again renounced the easy life and money of the music halls. Again she took up the burden of grand opera. Love, with great shining eyes, no longer beckoned her. But on and on she bore the burden, with her sister always by her. How she finally succeeded is well known.

In 1901 she was singing the principal part of Mimi in Puccini's "Vie de Boheme" at no less an opera house than the San Carlo of Naples. Next she secured a brilliant engagement for an entire season at the Imperial theater of Warsaw—singing Violetta in "Traviata," Marguerite in "Faust," Mimi in "Vie de Boheme"—and taking fine revenge on the cruel Lisbon public by an overwhelming triumph as Nedda.

Succeeding years confirmed this success, and artistic and social satisfactions of grand opera ceased to cost her anything financially. On the contrary, she had never done so well in the halls. At the Theater of Ravenna, at the Grand Theater of Palermo, at the Opera of St. Petersburg, and notably at the ultra-artistic Casino-Theater at Monte Carlo she has had repeated engagements. In Russia she is all the rage. Her own country of Italy has taken her to its heart.

And she has bought a mansion in the Avenue de Messine for her Paris residence!

During her present summer vacation she will furnish it herself—a work of peaceful satisfaction.

Beautiful Old Maid.

It is a quiet street and rich—the Avenue de Messine. It is a short street of only 34 numbers, running from the statue of William Shakespeare in the little square of the Boulevard Haussmann to the delightful Pare Monceau, surrounded by its palaces.

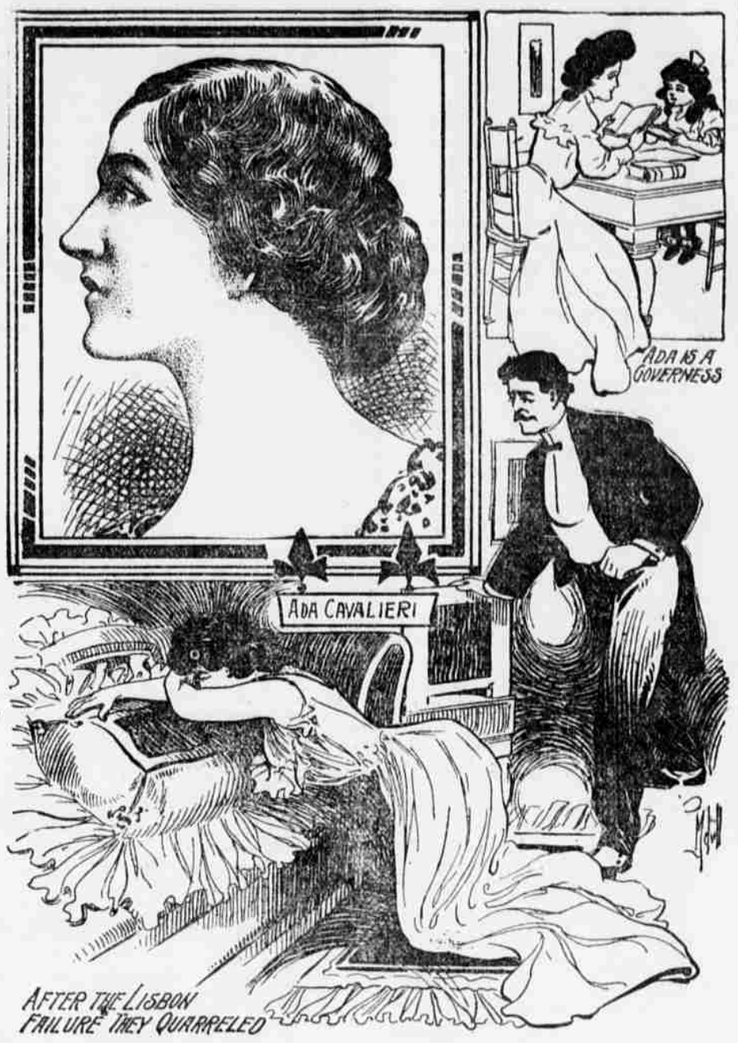
It is a street of the newly rich, perhaps; few great titled families live in it. But those who inhabit it are snug and at peace with the world. Well, among all, there will be none more snug than a most glorious old maid.

You know who it is. There can be but one such—"the most beautiful old maid in the world!"

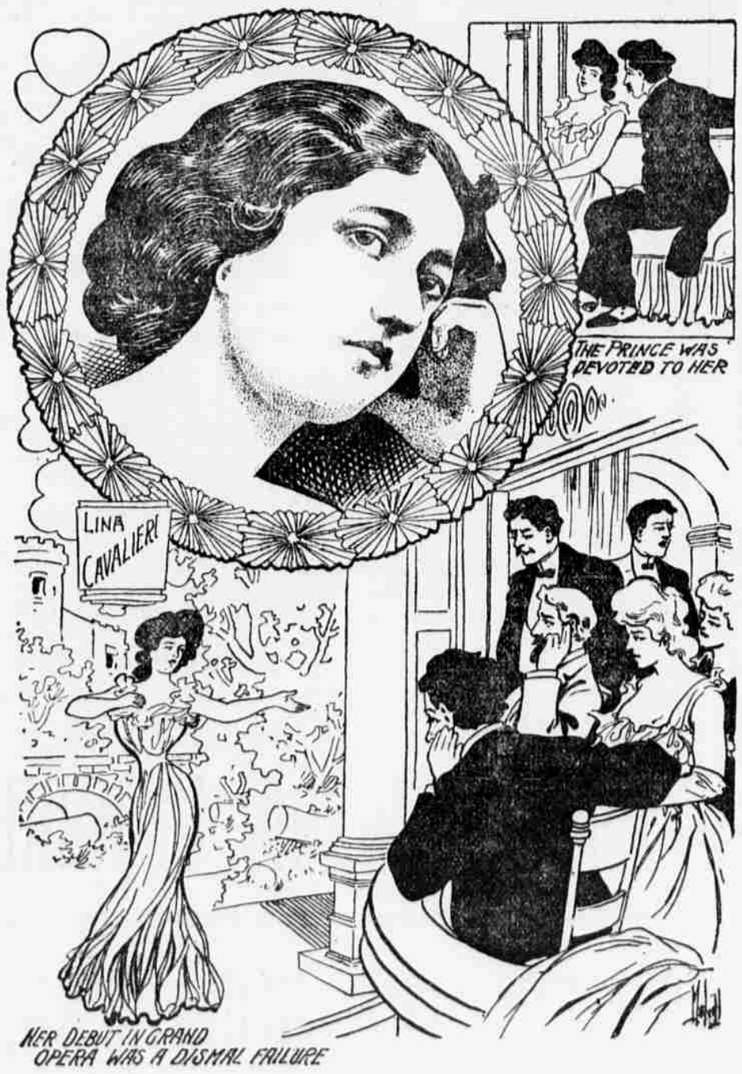
Ada Cavalieri takes charge of Lina's Paris mansion. That she is so like her sister will not strike Parisians—because they will not see her. When she goes out she will dress in sad, plain clothes. And where she goes—to church for the most part—Parisians will not follow.

In her own way she is happy. Is it not strange Here is beauty gone to waste, you will say. Well, judge for yourself. Some time ago the somber sister had a skittish moment. It incited her to prove her equal beauty. How she dressed in one of Lina's gowns and posed to one of the first Paris photographers as her famous sister is a tale that has been more than once told.

For a time the counterfeit presentments circulated in commerce, being practically undistinguishable from photographs of Lina Cavalieri. Nowadays they scarce exist.



AFTER THE LISBON FAILURE THEY QUARRELED



HER DEBUT IN GRAND OPERA WAS A DISMAL FAILURE

Bessie's Mystery

"What on earth can ail my Bessie?" mourned the heart of Jack Adair. It was at a surprise party; he stood staring by the stair. Never had he seen her sweeter than when now anent the room she shot glances barbed with poison, feather-shafted deep with gloom. Hide and seek her dimples dancing, peek-a-boo her darting eyes, shook the spirit of her lover, like a cyclone made of sighs.

"What's the matter, Bessie Owens?" he demanded, daft with pain. "What's the matter, Bessie Owens," had worn to a weird refrain. She had answered with a flutter of her handkerchief of silk, diving into it her features, like a swan dives into milk. Mattered never, never, never what he did or thought or said, if he ever came a-near her, promptly she turned away her head. All the sweet road through the woodland on the way to Host Maroon's, she'd her white face turned to heaven, as if seeking stray balloons. Or she'd stare o'er her left shoulder at the fireflies in the musk, or at blunder-headed beetles bumping daftly through the dusk. She who once had laved her spirit in his spirit's inner deeps, turned her gaze from his soul's windows, taking not the smallest peeps.

"Oh, my cousin, shallow-hearted," quoted he from Locksley Hall. 'Tis a poem Bessie worships; but she shuddered, that was all. "Tell me, tell me, Bessie Owens, look at me and tell me true, has some fatal word been uttered that has poisoned me for you?" Shrugged her shoulders like a Frenchman; but she uttered not a word; and no sign or token told him what the shoulder shrug inferred. Then he tried to be facetious; told the driving horse that Bess was a riddle he would give a bag of oats to guess. "Can you guess her?" then the pony whinnied high a carol gay. "Do you notice," poor Jack murmured, "he has promptly answered 'Neigh!' But the maiden never tittered; like Egyptian Sphynx sat she, while poor Jack in falling cadence whispered: "That's a horse on me."

Then he thought his sudden summons for her company that night, needed explanation, and he sought to set the matter right. "This Maroon surprise was got up very late this afternoon. 'Twas remembered they were wedded on the 21st of June. Was no time for preparation; so I found 'twas up to me, to either go without you, or to drive 'round after tea. Talk to me; for women talk more on this day than any other. 'Tis the longest, Bessie Owen, ask your father, ask your mother."

But she got her from the buggy at the door of the Maroons, silent as the spectral burglar when he "burgles" after spoons. 'Twas the same when driving homeward; sat she with her back askew, while the dark abyss between them yawned the deeper, wider grew. Poor Jack made some futile effort to perk up and prattle gay; 'twas like laughter in a graveyard, 'twas like grinning when we pray. So at last, in feebler spasms, as we've seen green-appled kids succumb to paregoric, straighten out and close their lids, so Jack reached spasmodic silence, and, with eyes suffused with tears, sat and stared at star-led Nighttime, and his horse's wobbling ears.

"Oh, my heart is breaking, Bessie!" said he as he helped her light, to her coiled back hair he said it, coiled so silent, dark and tight. "Look out, Bessie, bacing backwards you've undone your tresses' pins, and a miscue on the fender made you scrape your shapely shins." Haughtily she towered and heightened, like an empress o'er a slave; "shins are plebeian, they are something no true ladies ever have."

Then a shriek hysteric, haunting, scared the owls and bats; she fell, laughing, crying like a spirit half in half in hell. "Jack!" she cried, "avant, don't aid me, keep your distance; tell I must, or my heart will burst and slay me, knowing of your love and trust. Jack Adair, come not anigh me, I'm unfit for your true arms!"

"Another! I will slay him," said Adair, with vague alarms. "Tell me, Bessie, tell me truly, has another won your heart? Though it kills me, then forever, here beneath the trees we part. Trees whose leaves have whispered o'er us, million voiced, about our love, while like echoes of our passion, sobbed the burnished turtle dove."

"Nay, by my soul I swear it, none usurps your image there!" and, with hand on heart she stood there, in the attitude of prayer.

"Then by the great horned spoon that fed Mahomet," said poor Jack, "you've the switchkeys, please to shunt me on the right and proper track. Link the syllables explaining from the tank to the caboose!" and the railroad man stood waiting, staring at the little goose.

"Well, you came just after supper, unexpected, dearest Jack. Keep away, now, or I'll have to switch you on another track. And—and—I'd been eating onions! Oh, I'm glad it's out, it's through!"

"I'd not known it," whispered Jack, then. "I'd been eating onions, too!"—Kansas City Star.

Necessary Preliminary.

"An' now, bruddern an' sistern," said the Rev. Mr. Flatfoot, as the contribution box was started on its rounds, "remembah, dat while it am well t' direct yo' wireless messages to de throne ob grace, dey am a heap mo' less apt t' miscarry if de charges am liberally prepaid."

Rest in Billville.

"Bill," said the man in the ox cart to the Billville postmaster, "ain't you goin' to open the office to-day?"

"No, I ain't; what do you take me fer?"

"The postmaster."

"No, you don't. You take me fer one o' these perpetual motion machines that kin run the government fer you six days out the week, an' no rest on Sunday—that's what you take me fer!"

"Bill," said the other, "I've come five miles and better to git my mail!"

"Well, ef I open up fer you all the res' 'll want their'n, an' I've done notified the postmaster ginrul that it's my week off; 'sides that, thar ain't no mail fer you—'cept a letter from a lumber man sayin' that if you don't pay up he'll sue, an' another from your wife tellin' you to send her money to come home. So go 'long an' enjoy yer honeymoon."—Atlanta Constitution.

"The Romans had small regard for human life in their amusements." "Yes," answered the man of violent prejudices. "It's a matter of great surprise to me that they failed to discover football."—Washington Star.

One-half the world doesn't know how the other half lives, unless it is by not paying their bills.—Puck.

The amount of work a boy puts into baseball would raise a lot of potatoes for him to eat.—N. Y. Press.

It requires the burning of a good deal of money to make a "hot time."