

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

by GASTON LEROUX
Author of The Mystery of The Yellow Room Etc.
Copyright, 1911, The Bobbs-Merrill Company

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

Apollo's Lyre.

"Then I saw the keyboard of an organ which filled one whole side of the walls. On the desk was a music-book covered with red notes. I asked leave to look at it and read, 'Don Juan Triumphant.' 'Yes,' he said, 'I compose sometimes. I began that work twenty years ago. When I have finished, I shall take it away with me in that coffin and never wake up again.' 'You must work at it as seldom as you can,' I said. He replied, 'I sometimes work at it for fourteen days and nights together during which I live on music only, and then I rest for years at a time. Will you play me something out of your Don Juan Triumphant?' I asked, thinking to please him. 'You must never ask me that,' he said, in gloomy voice. 'I will play you Mozart, if you like, which will only make you weep; but my Don Juan, Christine, burns; and yet he is not struck by fire from Heaven.' Thereupon we returned to the drawing-room. I noticed that there was no mirror in the whole apartment. I was going to remark upon this, but Erik had already sat down to the piano. He said, 'You see, Christine, there is some music that is so terrible that it consumes all those who approach it. Fortunately, you have not come to that music yet, for you would lose all your pretty colors and nobody would know you when you returned to Paris. Let us sing something from the Opera, Christine Daae.' He spoke these last words as though he were flinging an insult at me.

"What did you do?"
"I had no time to think about the meaning he put into his words. We at once began the duet in Othello and already the catastrophe was upon us. I sang Desdemona with a despair, a terror which I had never displayed before. As for him, his voice thundered forth his revengeful soul at every note. Love, jealousy, hatred, burst out around us in harrowing cries. Erik's black mask made me think of the natural mask of the Moor of Venice. He was Othello himself. Suddenly, I felt a need to see beneath the mask. I wanted to know the face of the voice, and with a movement which I was utterly unable to control, swiftly my fingers tore away the mask. Oh, horror, horror, horror!"
Christine stopped, at the thought of the vision that had scared her, while the echoes of the night, which had repeated the name of Erik, now thrice moaned the cry:

"Horror! . . . Horror! . . . Horror!"
Raoul and Christine, clasping each other closely, raised their eyes to the stars that shone in a clear and peaceful sky. Raoul said:

"Strange, Christine, that this calm, soft night should be so full of plaintive sounds. One would think that it was sorrowing with us."

"When you hear the secret, Raoul, your ears, like mine, will be full of lamentations."

She took Raoul's protecting hands in hers and, with a long shiver, continued:

"Yes, if I lived to be a hundred, I should always hear the superhuman cry of grief and rage which he uttered when the terrible sight appeared before my eyes. . . . Raoul, you have seen death's heads, when they have been dried and withered by the centuries, and, perhaps, if you were not the victim of a nightmare, you saw his death's head at Perros. And then you saw Red Death stalking about at the last masked ball. But all those death's heads were motionless and their dumb horror was not death's mask suddenly coming to life in order to express, with the four black holes of its eyes, its nose, and its mouth, the extreme anger, the mighty fury of a demon; and not a ray of light from the sockets, for, as I learned later, you can not see his blazing eyes except in the dark."

"I fell back against the wall and came up to me, grinding his teeth, and, as I fell upon my knees, he hissed mad, incoherent words and curses at me. Leaning over me, he cried, 'Look! You want to see! See! Feast your eyes on that soul on my cursed ugliness! Look at Erik's face! Now you know the face of the voice! You were not content to hear me eh? You wanted to know what I looked like! Oh, you women are so inquisitive! Well, are you satisfied? I'm a good-looking fellow, eh? . . . When a woman has seen me, as you have, she belongs to me. She loves me for ever. I am a kind of Don Juan, you know! And, drawing himself up to his full height, with his hand on his hip, wagging the hideous thing that was his head on his shoulders, he roared 'Look at me! I am Don Juan triumphant!'

"And, when I turned away my head and begged for mercy, he drew it to him, brutally, twisting his dead fingers into my hair."

"Enough! Enough!" cried Raoul. "I will kill him. In Heaven's name, Christine, tell me where the dining-room on the lake is! I must kill him!"
"Oh, be quiet, Raoul, if you want to know!"
"Yes, I want to know how and why you want back; I must know! But, in any case, I will kill him!"
"Oh, Raoul, listen, listen! He dragged me by my hair and then . . . Oh, it is too horrible!"
"Well, what? Out with it!" exclaimed Raoul fiercely. "Out with it!" exclaimed Raoul fiercely. "Out with it, quick!"
"Then he hissed at me. 'Ah, I frighten you, do I? I dare say! . . . Perhaps you think that I have another mask, eh, and that this . . . this . . . my head is a mask? Well, he roared, 'tear it off as you did the other! Come! Come along! I insist! Your hands! Give me your hands!' And he seized my hands and dug them into his awful face. He tore his flesh with my nails, tore his terrible dead flesh with my nails! . . . Know, he shouted, while his throat trobbed and panted like a furnace, 'know that I am built up of death from head to foot and that it is a corpse that loves you and adores you and will never, never leave you! . . . Look, I am not laughing now, I am crying, crying for you, Christine, who have torn off my mask and who therefore can never leave me again! . . . As long as you thought me handsome, you could have come back, I know you would have come back . . . but, now that you know my hideousness, you would run away for good. . . . So I shall keep you here! . . . Why did you want to see me? Oh, mad Christine, who wanted to see me! . . . When my own father never saw me and when my mother, so as not to see me, made me a present of my first mask!"
"He had let me go at last and was dragging himself about on the floor, uttering terrible sobs. And then he crawled away like a snake, went into his room, closed the door and left me alone to my reflections. Present I heard the sound of the organ; and then I began to understand Erik's contemptuous phrase when he spoke about Opera music. What I now heard was utterly different from what I had heard up to then. His Don Juan Triumphant (for I had not a doubt but that he had rushed to his masterpiece to forget the horror of Othello) seemed to me at first one long, awful, magnificent sob. But, little by little, it expressed every emotion, every suffering of which mankind is capable. It intoxicated me; and I opened the door that separated us. Erik rose, as I entered, but dared not turn in my direction. 'Erik,' I cried, 'show me your face without fear! I swear that you are the most unhappy and sublime of men; and, if ever again I shiver when I look at you, it will be because I am thinking of the splendor of your genius.' Then Erik turned round, for he believed me. He had had faith in myself. He fell at my feet, with words of love . . . with words of love in his dead mouth . . . and the music had ceased. . . . He kissed the hem of my dress and did not see that I closed my eyes."

"What more can I tell you, dear? You now know the tragedy. It went on for a fortnight—a fortnight during which I lied to him. My lies were as hideous as the monster who inspired them; but they were the price of my liberty. I burned his mask; and I managed so well that, even when he was not singing, he tried to catch my eye, like a dog sitting by its master. He was my faithful slave and paid me endless little attentions. Gradually, I such confidence that he ventured to take me walking on the banks of the lake and to row me in the boat on its leaden waters; toward the end of my captivity he let me out through the gates that closed the underground passages in the Rue Scribe. Here a carriage awaited us and took us to the Bois. The night when we met you was nearly fatal to me, for he is terribly jealous of you and I had to tell him that you were soon going away. . . . Then, at last, after a fortnight of the horrible captivity, during which I was filled with pity, enthusiasm, despair and horror by turns, he believed me when I said, 'I will come back!'"
"And you went back, Christine," groaned Raoul.
"Yes, dear, and I must tell you that it was not his frightful threats when setting me free that helped me to keep my word, but the harrowing sob which he gave on the threshold of the tomb. . . . That sob attached me to the unfortunate man more than I myself suspected when saying good-by to him. Poor Erik! . . . Poor Erik!"
"Christine," said Raoul, rising, "you tell me that you love me; but you had recovered your liberty hardly a few hours before you returned to Erik! Remember the masked ball!"
"Yes; and do you remember those hours which I passed with you, Raoul . . . to the great danger of both of us?"
"I doubted your love for me, during those hours."

"Do you doubt it still, Raoul?"
"Then know that each of my visits to Erik increased my horror of him; for each of those visits, instead of calming him, as I hoped, made him mad with love! . . . And I am so frightened, so frightened!"
"You are frightened . . . but do you love me? If Erik were good-looking, would you love me, Christine?"
She rose in her turn, put her two trembling arms round the young man's neck and said:
"Oh, my betrothed of a day, if I did not love you, I would not give you my lips! Take them, for the first time and the last!"
He kissed her lips; but the night that surrounded them was rent asunder, they fed as at the approach of a storm and their eyes, filled with dread of Erik, showed them, before they disappeared, high up above them, an immense night-bird that stared at them

with its blazing eyes and seemed to sling to the string of Apollo's lyre.

CHAPTER XIII.
A Master-Stroke of the Trap-Door-Lover.
Raoul and Christine ran, eager to escape from the roof and the blazing eyes that showed only in the dark; and they did not stop before they came to the eighth floor on the way down.

There was no performance at the Opera that night and the passages were empty. Suddenly, a queer-looking form stood before them and blocked the road.
"No, not this way!"
And the form pointed to another passage by which they were to reach the wings. Raoul wanted to stop and ask for an explanation. But the form, which wore a sort of long-coat and a pointed cap, said:
"Quick! Go away quickly!"
Christine was already dragging Raoul, compelling him to start running again.

"But who is he? Who is that man?" he asked.
Christine replied: "It's the Persian."
"What's he doing here?"
"Nobody knows. He is always in the Opera."
"You are making me run away, for the first time in my life. If we really saw Erik, what I ought to have done was to nail him to Apollo's lyre, just as we nail the owls to the walls of our Breton farms; and there would have been no more question of him."

"My dear Raoul, you would first have had to climb up to Apollo's lyre: that is no easy matter."
"The blazing eyes were there!"
"Oh, you are getting like me now, seeing him everywhere! What I took for blazing eyes were probably a couple of stars shining through the strings of the lyre."
And Christine went down another floor, with Raoul following her.
"As you have quite made up your mind to go, Christine, I assure you it would be better to go at once. Why wait for tomorrow? He may have heard us tonight."
"No, no, he is working, I tell you, at his Don Juan Triumphant and not thinking of us."
"You're so sure of that you keep on looking behind you!"
"Come to my dressing-room."
"Hadn't we better meet outside the Opera?"
"Never, till we go away for good! It would bring us bad luck, if I did not keep my word. I promised him to see you only here."

"It's a good thing for me that he allowed you even that. Do you know," said Raoul bitterly, "that it was very plucky of you to let us play at being engaged?"
"Why, my dear, he knows all about it! He said, 'I trust you, Christine. M. de Chagny is in love with you and is going aboard. Before he goes, I want him to be as happy as I am. Are people so unhappy when they love?'"
"Yes, Christine, when they love and are not sure of being loved."
They came to Christine's dressing-room.
"Why do you think that you are safer in this room than on the stage?" asked Raoul. "You heard him through the wall here, therefore he can certainly hear us."
"No. He gave me his word not to be behind the walls of my dressing-room again and I believe Erik's word. This room and my bedroom on the

lake are for me, exclusively, and not to be approached by him."

Clearance Sale of Slightly Used UPRIGHT PIANOS

A Few Upright Pianos Taken in Exchange for New Chickering, Knabe, Ivers & Pond and Pianola Pianos Which We Offer the First Who Come at Bargain Prices, as Follows:

One used Knabe Upright Piano, ebony case, large size \$150

Terms \$10 cash and \$6 per month with interest at 6 per cent

One used Gabler Bros. Upright Piano, full size walnut case, price \$175

Terms \$10 cash and \$6 per month with interest at 6 per cent

One slightly used Lester Upright Piano, full size, walnut case, in fine condition \$250

Terms \$25 cash and \$8 per month with interest at 6 per cent

One New England Upright Piano, ebony case, in fair condition, full size, price \$125

Terms \$10 cash and \$6 per month with interest

One very slightly used Pianola Piano, practically as good as new \$500

reduced from \$700.
These Pianos have been put in good condition and are bargains. We have a few Square Pianos to close out at almost your own price. Write us for full description and prices. We are distributors for the world's best Pianos—Chickering, Knabe, Ivers & Pond, Lawson and the Pianola Pianos.

Parker-Gardner Co.

FURNITURE—CARPETS—DRAPERIES

Grand and Upright Pianos Largest Dealers in the State



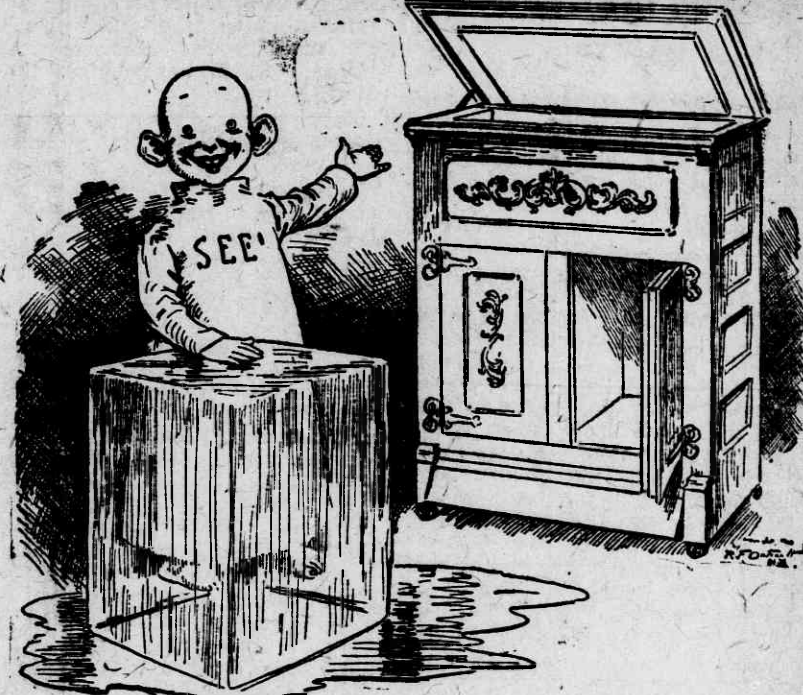
LIGHTS OF ALL KINDS

with fixtures of all shapes and sizes, can be furnished you among our electrical equipments. We install complete systems of electric lighting for private residences, stores, store windows, advertising signs, offices, factories, churches, schools, theatres and public buildings. We do the best and most thorough practical work and charge but reasonably for the service.

WE CARRY AN COMPLETE LINE OF ELECTRIC LIGHT FIXTURES

Globe Electric Company
Church and Fourth Sts. Phone 921

REFRIGERATORS



ALL REFRIGERATORS ARE NOT ALIKE, YOU WANT TO GET THE RIGHT KIND—THE KIND THAT INSURES PROPER AIR CIRCULATION.

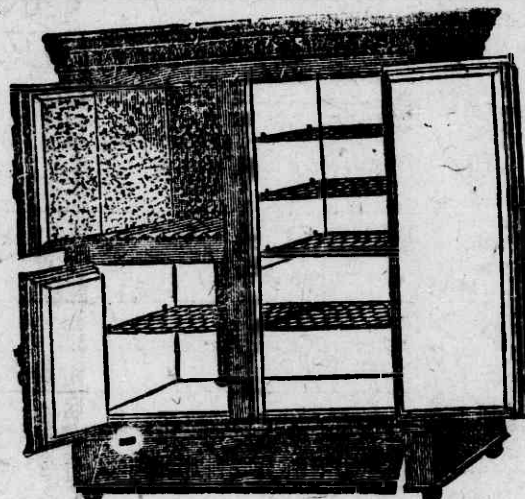
WE SELL THE

North Star Refrigerator

THIS REFRIGERATOR WILL KEEP YOUR FOODS FRESH AND PREVENT VEGETABLE ODORS FROM MAKING YOUR BUTTER AND MILK "TASTE."

WE SELL ONLY THE BEST IN HARDWARE.

Charlotte Hardware Company



THE Pilgrim Stone Lined Refrigerator

is as easily cleaned as a China Plate. It is the par excellence of modern Refrigerators.

See them at our store.

J. N. McCausland & Co.

221 South Tryon Street

Make Sure of Your Business Education

If you wish to qualify for the best place the business world has to offer, you cannot afford to miss this chance to get a liberal discount on your scholarship. Write for the SPECIAL OFFER WE MAKE TO MAY 15, 1911. Handsome illustrated catalog, free.



CHALOTTE, N. C. OR RALEIGH, N. C.

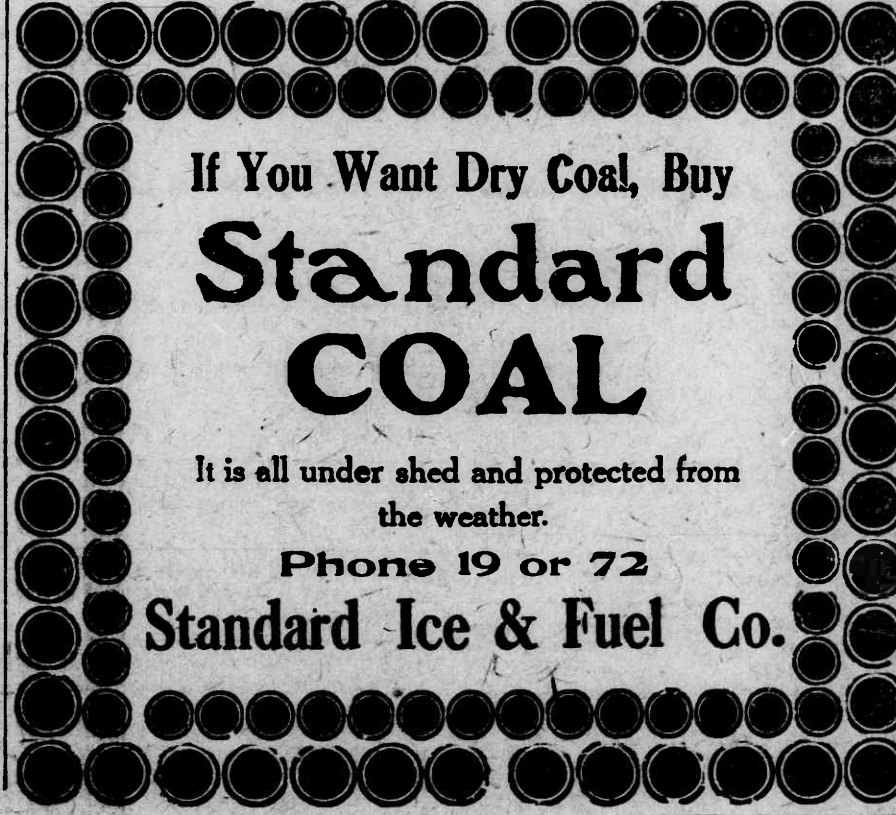
Presbyterian College For Women and Conservatory of Music

CHARLOTTE, N. C.

Faculty of Specialists in every Department. Thorough Work, Christian Influences. City Advantages.

Music, Art, Elo cution Specialties.

For catalogue, Address, REV. J. R. BRIDGES, D. D.



If You Want Dry Coal, Buy Standard COAL

It is all under shed and protected from the weather.

Phone 19 or 72

Standard Ice & Fuel Co.

MONEY you blow in quits working for you, but if you buy your Wood and Coal from Avant you get the most work and satisfaction for your money.

Avant Wood & Coal Co.

PHONE 402