

SONG OF A SYREN.

STORY OF ATTEMPTED BRIBERY.

A WOMAN'S WILES FAIL.

A story alleging how a Russian woman tried to lure Senior-Constable M. C. Clinnock and Constable F. W. Lockyer, of the plain clothes branch of the force, as well as Constables W. T. Brooks, A. W. H. Peach, T. Walsh, and S. A. Shergold, to condone allegedly grog selling on the part of her husband, was related in the South Melbourne Court on Tuesday to Messrs. J. Batagwanath, Cr. F. J. Skinner, Messrs. F. G. Farr, C. A. Jago, and J. J. Rogers, Js.P. The syrenic song fell on deaf ears. The court, as it usually is on every Tuesday, because of the attractive programme of cases listed for that day, was crowded with people.

Peter Evanoff, a Russian, 45 years of age, was charged with selling liquor without a licence. Accused, for whom Mr. Ridgeway appeared, pleaded not guilty. Inspector Kennedy conducted the case for the prosecution.

Constable A. W. H. Peach stated: At 10.35 p.m. on Saturday, 21st May, in company with Senior-Constable M. C. Clinnock, Constables F. W. Lockyer, W. T. Brooks, T. Walsh, and S. Sher-

BROOKS, L. WAISH, and S. SHER-
gold, I went to accused's house in
Clarke street. We had a warrant
to search the place for liquor.
Opening the back gate, which
was unlocked, Constable Brooks
and I walked into the yard. In
that enclosure we waited five
minutes. Then we entered the
house. We passed on our left a
small parlor, in which there were
three young men—Russians off a
boat—sitting around a small table
upon which were glasses of beer.
Near the table was an empty beer
bottle, and two full bottles un-
corked and with beer frothing
out of the tops. In another par-
lor a party of three men, two
of whom were locals, were sitting
gambling around a table upon
which was a sum of money. Be-
fore each player stood a glass
containing ale. Beside the table,
on the floor, stood an empty beer
bottle. The third man in this
group had come off a boat. Pass-
ing further into the house, I en-
tered a dining room. In this
apartment I found two bottles of
beer and three glasses. The lat-
ter had just been emptied. Going
into the bedroom, I there saw the
other members of the raiding
party; gathering up 12½ dozen
bottles of ale, and some bottles of
spirits. Mrs. Evanoff, accused's
wife, came to me, saying, "Here
is £5; square this."

"Part of the Play."

Mr. Ridgeway: This is not evi-

Mr. Ridgeway: This is not evidence against accused.

Mr. Baragwanath: It is part of the play.

Mr. Ridgeway objected to the introduction of "extra patter" in the form of evidence irrelevant to the charge against accused.

Witness: I said, "What is the good of £5 " Mrs. Evanoff left the room to return shortly afterwards with a handful of £5 notes. She said, "Take these, but leave the beer." "Go away, woman!" I said. Then she turned to Constables Brooks and Lockyer and proffered them the notes. The other members of the raiding party and I put the ale which we had found in the house in a taxi and brought it to the police station. On the following Monday Constable Brooks and I went to Evanoff's house and told him that his place was a reputed sly grog shop—one of the best in South Melbourne. Constable Brooks asked accused where he was working. "Nowhere for the last two months," Evanoff replied. "Who bought the beer?" accused was asked. "I did; we have a party," he said. "What," remarked Constable Brooks, "are you on the party-giving stunt, too " Accused made no reply. He was brought to the watchhouse, where he said, "I never sold beer." "Did you give it away?" he was asked. He answered, "Yes."

Cross-examined by Mr. Ridge-

Cross-examined by Mr. Ridgeway, witness said: I never saw anyone buy any liquor. These small parlors face the yard, and one passes them before entering the house.

Card Players Surprised.

Constable W. T. Brooks, who was the forerunner of the raiding party, said: I entered the yard leaving the other constables at the back gate. The yard was well lit with lights shining out of the parlors. Evanoff, carrying three bottles of beer, came out of the house and passed into one of the rooms to emerge shortly afterwards jingling money in his pockets. He retired to the house to come out again quickly once more, carrying bottles of beer. He disappeared into one of the small rooms. A man walked into the yard. "What do you want?" I asked. In consequence of what he said, I told him to go away. Emerging from a small room, Evanoff seemed to suspect that something was wrong. Inquiringly, as it were, he came down the yard. I told him to go back into the house, and I followed him. In a dining room I saw three women and two men sitting playing cards around a table up-

on which money was lying. There

on which money was lying. There were glasses within reach of them. As soon as they saw me the members of this group jumped up from the table and fled, but not before one of them grabbed up the money on the table. Turning to Evanoff, I asked him if he understood why the police were there. "Me understand," he said; "you come to me, me fix you." I told him that he was making a mistake. Passing into the bedroom, I saw the other policemen. Evanoff came into the apartment and offered Constable Lockyer £5. Constable Lockyer took the £5 note, but went on with the collecting of other evidence. (Laughter.) In this room we found 12½ dozen of beer, and bottles of wines and spirits. Accused's wife, holding up a handful of £5 notes, said, "You take these, but leave the beer. Me fix you." I said, "We will take the beer." We removed the ale to the watchhouse.

"Take Me."

On the following Monday I went to Evanoff's house with a warrant for his arrest. I said, "Who keeps this house?" He replied, "Wife." "Will I arrest your wife?" I asked him. "No," he replied, "take me; me have to do with beer." He added, "Me no sell beer; me give it away."

Constable Lockyer gave corroborative evidence.

DEFENSIVE EVIDENCE.

The Defence.

Nicholas Rehrick, a Russian, gave evidence for the defence. He said that he and Evanoff were giving a party to some of their friends to celebrate the cashing of his (Rehrick's) war gratuity bond, the negotiations leaving him with £56 cash. That night the guests, for the most part neighbors, came in and went out at their pleasure.

Mr. Baragwanath: At 10.35 p.m.!

Cr. Skinner: Some parties do not begin till the fashionable hour of midnight.

Witness: No liquor was sold. I gave £5 towards buying refreshments.

A man named Kananzoff was called for the defence, too. He sported a Continental military moustache, which portraits of the recent Emperor of Germany have made familiar to everyone. Kananzoff knew very little English, and a compatriot in the court was asked to act as interpreter. Kananzoff gave it out that he was a guest at the party as well as a lodger in Evanoff's house, but he retired from the entertainment early, and was in his room when the police arrived.

Accused was convicted and fined £25, in default three weeks' imprisonment, and ordered to pay £4 costs.

Inspector Kennedy said that the

Inspector Kennedy said that the police would take a lenient view of the attempt by the Evanoffs to bribe the constables. The £5 which accused gave to Constable Lockyer would be returned to Evanoff.

Everybody sympathises with George Maxwell, the member for Fawkner. Plenty of members of the House of "Reps." are mentally blind (or well on the way), but it is a different thing to be physically blind, and that is the fate of G. A. Maxwell, who is one of the sanest and whitest men who ever sat in the House. He is the man who defeated a very fine Labor member in Joe Hannan at the elections in 1917, and he has held the seat ever since. Maxwell is one of the few members who know the value of silence, and at times he has been utterly fed up with the oceans of idle and useless talk which floods the House. Some of his principal supporters met, when he offered to resign, and urged that he should keep the seat, at any rate, until the next election. If sympathy can pull him through, Maxwell will get it all round.

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If you threw a bomb into the House of Representatives on any sitting day last week, except for a few minutes after the House

a few minutes after the House had assembled, only about two persons would have been in danger—Massy Greene (because he has charge of the Tariff Bill, as Minister of Customs) and the Speaker (because he had to be there). You see, the Tariff debate was on, and it always scares nearly every member out of the Chamber. A few months ago members giped at the Prime Minister at every sitting because he wouldn't bring the Tariff discussion on. He threw it on the table and bolted to England, and the average member can't raise the energy to discuss the items. And for shirking like this they are paid £1000 per year.

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Some bloated employer once said that the workers should "hang together." Apparently the workers of Great Britain are beginning to starve together as a result of the coal strike. Funds are exhausted; there is wholesale "black-legging," and enough coal is pouring into the country to meet normal wants. In face of the failure of the American seamen's strike and the outlook for trades unionism in Great Britain, it looks as if the strike weapon is getting a bit too blunt for use.