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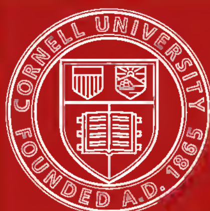

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BOSTON.
LITTLE, BROWN & COMPANY.

THE NOVELS OF CHARLES LEVER.

With an Introduction by Andrew Lang.

LUTTRELL OF ARRAN.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

PAUL GOSSLETT'S CONFESSIONS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIZ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.
1895.

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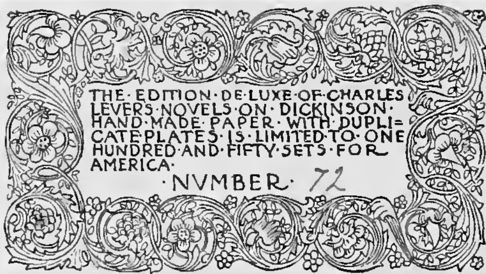

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University Press:
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

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LUTTRELL OF ARRAN.

CHAPTER I.

A WILD LANDSCAPE.

"One half the world knows not how the other half lives," says the adage; and there is a peculiar force in the maxim when applied to certain remote and little-visited districts in these islands, where the people are about as unknown to us as though they inhabited some lonely rock in the South Pacific.

While the great world, not very far off, busies itself with all the appliances of state and science, amusing its leisure by problems which once on a time would have been reserved for the studies of philosophers and sages, these poor creatures drag on an existence rather beneath than above the habits of savage life, — their dwellings, their food, their clothes, such as generations of their fathers possessed; and neither in their culture, their aspirations, nor their ways, advanced beyond what centuries back had seen them.

Of that group of islands off the northwest coast of Ireland called the Arrans, Innishmore is a striking instance of this neglect and desolation. Probably within the wide sweep of the British islands there could not be found a spot more irretrievably given up to poverty and barbarism. Some circular mud-hovels, shaped like beehives, and with a central aperture for the escape of the smoke, are the dwellings of an almost naked, famine-stricken people, whose looks, language, and gestures mark them out for foreigners if they chance to come over to the mainland. Deriving their scanty

subsistence almost entirely from fishing and kelp-burning, they depend for life upon the chances of the seasons, in a spot where storms are all but perpetual, and where a day of comparative calm is a rare event.

Curious enough it is to mark that in this wild ungenial spot civilization had once set foot, and some Christian pilgrims found a resting-place. There is no certain record of whence or how they first came, but the Abbey of St. Finbar dates from an early century, and the strong walls yet attest the size and proportions of the ancient monastery. Something like forty years ago the islanders learned that the owner of the island, of whose existence they then heard for the first time, proposed to come over and live there; and soon afterwards a few workmen arrived, and, in some weeks, converted the old crypt of the Abbey into something habitable, adding two small chambers to it, and building a chimney — a work of art — which, whether meant for defence or some religious object, was during its construction a much-debated question by the people. The intention to resume a sovereignty which had lain so long in abeyance would have been a bold measure in such a spot if it had not been preceded by the assurance that the chief meant to disturb nothing, dispute nothing of vested interests. They were told that he who was coming was a man weary of the world and its ways, who desired simply a spot of earth where he might live in peace, and where, dying, he might leave his bones with the Luttrells, whose graves for generations back thronged the narrow aisle of the church. These facts, and that he had a sickly wife and one child, a boy of a few years old, were all that they knew of him. If the bare idea of a superior was distasteful in a community where common misery had taught brotherhood, the notion was dispelled at sight of the sad sorrow-stricken man who landed on an evening of September, and walked from the boat through the surf beside his wife, as two sailors carried her to shore. He held his little boy's hand, refusing the many offers that were made to carry him, though the foaming water surged at times above the little fellow's waist, and made him plunge with childish glee and laughter; that infant courage and light-heartedness going farther into the hearts of the wild

people than if the father had come to greet them with costly presents!

John Luttrell was not above six-and-thirty, but he looked fifty; his hair was perfectly white, his blue eyes dimmed and circled with dark wrinkles, his shoulders stooped, and his look downcast. Of his wife it could be seen that she had once been handsome, but her wasted figure and incessant cough showed she was in the last stage of consumption. The child was a picture of infantile beauty, and that daring boldness which sits so gracefully on childhood. If he was dressed in the very cheapest and least costly fashion, to the islanders he seemed attired in very splendor, and his jacket of dark crimson cloth and a little feather that he wore in his cap sufficed to win for him the name of the Prince, which he never lost afterward.

It could not be supposed that such an advent would not create a great stir and commotion in the little colony, — the ways, the looks, the demeanor, and the requirements of the new-comers furnishing for weeks, and even months, topics for conversation; but gradually this wore itself out. Molly Ryan, the one sole domestic servant who accompanied the Luttrells, being of an uncommunicative temper, contributed no anecdotic details of indoor life to stimulate interest and keep curiosity alive. All that they knew of Luttrell was to meet him in his walks, and receive the short, not over-courteous nod with which he acknowledged their salutations. Of his wife, they only saw the wasted form that half lay, half sat at a window; so that all their thoughts were centred in the child, — the Prince, — who came familiarly amongst them, uncared for and unheeded by his own, and free to pass his days with the other children as they heaped wood upon the kelp fires, or helped the fishermen to dry their nets upon the shore. In the innocence of their primitive life this familiarity did not trench upon the respect they felt they owed him. They did not regard his presence as anything like condescension, they could not think of it as derogation, but they felt throughout that he was not one of them, and his golden hair and his tiny hands and feet were as unmistakable marks of station as though he wore a coronet or carried a sceptre.

The unbroken melancholy that seemed to mark Luttrell's life, his uncommunicativeness, his want of interest or sympathy in all that went on around him, would have inspired, by themselves, a sense of fear amongst the people; but to these traits were added others that seemed to augment this terror. His days were passed in search of relics and antiquarian objects, of which the Abbey possessed a rich store; and to their simple intelligence these things smacked of magic. To hear the clink of his spade within the walls of the old church by day, and to see the lone light in his chamber, where it was rumored he sat sleepless throughout the night, were always enough to exact a paternoster and a benediction from the peasant, whose whole religious training began and ended with these offices.

Nor was the child destined to escape the influence of this popular impression. He was rarely at home, and, when there, scarcely noticed or spoken to. His poor sick mother would draw him to her heart; and as she pressed his golden locks close to her, her tears would fall fast upon them, but, dreading lest her sorrow should throw a shade over his sunny happiness, she would try to engage him in some out-of-door pursuit again, — send him off to ask if the fishermen had taken a full haul, or when some one's new boat would be ready for launching.

Of the room in which the recluse sat, and wherein he alone ever entered, a chance peep through the ivy-covered casement offered nothing very reassuring. It was a narrow, lofty chamber, with a groined roof and a flagged floor, formed of ancient gravestones, the sculptured sides downwards. Two large stuffed seals sat guardwise on either side of the fireplace, over which, on a bracket, was an enormous human skull, an inscription being attached to it, with the reasons for believing its size to be gigantic rather than the consequences of diseased growth. Strange-shaped bones, and arrow-heads, and stone spears and javelins decorated the walls, with amber ornaments and clasps of metal. A massive font served as a washstand, and a broken stone cross formed a coat-rack. In one corner, enclosed by two planks, stood an humble bed, and opposite the fire was the only chair in the chamber, — a rude contrivance, fashioned from a root of bog-oak, black with centuries of interment.

It was late at night that Luttrell sat here, reading an old volume, whose parchment cover was stained and discolored by time. The window was open, and offered a wide view over the sea, on which a faint moonlight shone out at times, and whose dull surging plash broke with a uniform measure on the shore beneath.

Twice had he laid down his book, and, opening the door, stood to listen for a moment, and then resumed his reading; but it was easy to see that the pages did not engage his attention, nor was he able, as he sought, to find occupation in their contents.

At last there came a gentle tap to the door; he arose and opened it. It was the woman-servant who formed his household, who stood tearful and trembling before him.

"Well?" said he, in some emotion.

"Father Lowrie is come," said she, timidly.

He only nodded, as though to say, "Go on."

"And he 'll give her the rites," continued she; "but he says he hopes that you 'll come over to Belmullet on Sunday, and declare at the altar how it was."

"Declare what?" cried he; and his voice rose to a key of passionate eagerness that was almost a shriek. "Declare what?"

"He means, that you 'll tell the people—"

"Send him here to me," broke in Luttrell, angrily. "I 'm not going to discuss this with you."

"Sure, is n't he giving her the blessed Sacrament!" said she, indignantly.

"Leave me, then,—leave me in peace," said he, as he turned away and leaned his head on the chimney-piece; and then, without raising it, added, "and tell the priest to come to me before he goes away."

The woman had not gone many minutes, when a heavy step approached the door, and a strong knock was heard. "Come in!" cried Luttrell; and there entered a short, slightly made man, middle-aged and active-looking, with bright black eyes, and a tall, straight forehead, to whom Luttrell motioned the only chair as he came forward.

"It 's all over, sir. She 's in glory!" said he, reverently.

"Without pain?" asked Luttrell.

"A parting pang, — no more. She was calm to the last. Indeed, her last words were to repeat what she had pressed so often upon me."

"I know — I know!" broke in Luttrell, impatiently. "I never denied it."

"True, sir; but you never acknowledged it," said the priest, hardily. "When you had the courage to make a peasant girl your wife, you ought to have had the courage to declare it also."

"To have taken her to the court, I hope — to have presented her to royalty — to have paraded my shame and my folly before the world whose best kindness was that it forgot me! Look here, sir; my wife was brought up a Catholic; I never interfered with her convictions. If I never spoke to her on the subject of her faith, it was no small concession from a man who felt on the matter as I did. I sent for you to administer to her the rites of her Church, but not to lecture me on my duties or my obligations. What I ought to do, and when, I have not to learn from a Roman Catholic priest."

"And yet, sir, it is a Catholic priest will force you to do it. There was no stain on your wife's fame, and there shall be none upon her memory."

"What is the amount of my debt to you, Father Lowrie?" asked Luttrell, calmly and even courteously.

"Nothing, sir; not a farthing. Her father was a good friend to me and mine before ruin overtook him. It was n't for money I came here to-night."

"Then you leave me your debtor, sir, and against my will."

"But you need n't be, Mr. Luttrell," said the priest, with eagerness. "She that has just gone, begged and prayed me with her last breath to look after her little boy, and to see and watch that he was not brought up in darkness."

"I understand you. You were to bring him into your own fold. If you hope for success for such a scheme, take a likelier moment, father; this is not your time. Leave me now, I pray you. I have much to attend to."

"May I hope to have an early opportunity to see and talk with you, Mr. Luttrell?"

"You shall hear from me, sir, on the matter, and early," said Luttrell. "Your own good feeling will show this is not the moment to press me."

Abashed by the manner in which these last words were spoken, the father bowed low and withdrew.

"Well?" cried the servant-woman, as he passed out, "will he do it, your Reverence?"

"Not to-day, anyhow, Molly," said he, with a sigh.

How Luttrell sorrowed for the loss of his wife was not known. It was believed that he never passed the threshold of the door where she lay, — never went to take one farewell look of her. He sat moodily in his room, going out at times to give certain orders about the funeral, which was to take place on the third day. A messenger had been despatched to his wife's relatives, who lived about seventy miles off, down the coast of Mayo, and to invite them to attend. Of her immediate family none remained. Her father was in banishment, the commutation of a sentence of death. Of her two brothers, one had died on the scaffold, and another had escaped to America, whither her three sisters had followed him; so that except her uncle, Peter Hogan, and his family, and a half-brother of her mother's, a certain Joe Rafter, who kept a shop at Lahinch, there were few to follow her to the grave as mourners.

Peter had four sons and several daughters, three of them married. They were of the class of small farmers, very little above the condition of the cottier; but they were, as a family, a determined, resolute, hard-headed race, not a little dreaded in the neighborhood where they lived, and well known to be knit together by ties that made an injury to any one of them a feud that the whole family would avenge.

For years and years Luttrell had not seen or even heard of them. He had a vague recollection of having seen Peter Hogan at his marriage, and once or twice afterwards, but preserved no recollection of him. Nothing short of an absolute necessity — for as such he felt it — would have induced him to send for them now; but he knew well how rigid were popular prejudices, and how impossible it would have been for him to live amongst a people whose most

cherished feelings he would have outraged, had he omitted the accustomed honors to the dead.

He told his servant Molly to do all that was needful on the occasion, — to provide for those melancholy festivities which the lower Irish adhere to with a devotion that at once blends their religious ardor with their intensely strong imaginative power.

"There is but one thing I will not bear," said he. "They must not come in upon me. I will see them when they come, and take leave of them when they go; but they are not to expect me to take any part in their proceedings. Into this room I will suffer none to enter."

"And Master Harry," said the woman, wiping her eyes with her apron, — "what's to be done with him? 'T is two days that he's there, and he won't leave the corpse."

"It's a child's sorrow, and will soon wear itself out."

"Ay, but it's killing him!" said she, tenderly, — "it's killing him in the mean while."

"He belongs to a tough race," said he, with a bitter smile, "that neither sorrow nor shame ever killed. Leave the boy alone, and he'll come to himself the sooner."

The peasant woman felt almost sick in her horror at such a sentiment, and she moved towards the door to pass out.

"Have you thought of everything, Molly?" asked he, more mildly.

"I think so, sir. There's to be twenty-eight at the wake, — twenty-nine, if Mr. Rafter comes; but we don't expect him, — and Father Lowrie would make thirty; but we've plenty for them all."

"And when will this — this feasting — take place?"

"The night before the funeral, by coorse," said the woman.

"And they will all leave this the next morning, Molly?"

"Indeed I suppose they will, sir," said she, no less offended at the doubt than at the inhospitable meanness of the question.

"So be it, then!" said he, with a sigh. "I have nothing more to say."

"You know, sir," said she, with a great effort at courage, "that they'll expect your Honor will go in for a minute

or two, — to drink their healths, and say a few words to them?"

He shook his head in dissent, but said nothing.

"The Hogans is as proud a stock as any in Mayo, sir," said she, eagerly; "and if they thought it was any disrespect to her that was gone — "

"Hold your tongue, woman," cried he, impatiently. "She was my wife, and *I* know better what becomes her memory than these ignorant peasants. Let there be no more of this;" and he closed the door after her as she went out, and turned the key in it, in token that he would not brook more disturbance.

CHAPTER II.

A YACHTING-PARTY.

In a beautiful little bay on the northeast of Innishmore, landlocked on all sides but the entrance, a handsome schooner yacht dropped her anchor just as the sun was setting. Amidst the desolate grandeur of those wild cliffs, against which the sea surged and plashed till the very rocks were smooth worn, that graceful little craft, with her tall and taper spars and all her trim adjuncts, seemed a strange vision. It was the contrast of civilization with barbarism; they were the two poles of what are most separated in life, — wealth and poverty.

The owner was a baronet, a certain Sir Gervais Vyner, — one of those spoiled children of Fortune which England alone rears; for while in other lands high birth and large fortune confer their distinctive advantages, they do not tend, as they do with us, to great social eminence, and even political influence. Vyner had got almost every prize in this world's lottery, — all, indeed, but one; his only child was a daughter, and this was the drop that sufficed to turn to bitterness much of that cupful of enjoyment Fate had offered to his lips. He had seen a good deal of life, — done a little of everything, — on the turf, in the hunting-field, on the floor of the House he had what was called "held his own." He was, in fact, one of those accomplished, well-mannered, well-looking people who, so long as not pushed by any inordinate ambition into a position of undue importance, invariably get full credit for all the abilities they possess, and, what is better still, attract no ill-will for the possessing them. As well as having done everything, he had been everywhere, — up the Mediterranean, up the Baltic, into the Black Sea, up the St. Lawrence, — everywhere but to Ireland;

and now, in a dull autumn, when too late for a distant tour, he had induced his friend Grenfell to accompany him in a short cruise, with a distinct pledge that they were not to visit Dublin, or any other of those cognate cities of which Irishmen are vain, but which to Mr. George Grenfell represented all that was an outrage on good taste, and an insult to civilization. Mr. Grenfell, in one word, entertained for Ireland and the Irish sentiments that would n't have been thought very complimentary if applied to Feejee islanders, with certain hopeless forebodings as to the future that even Feejee itself might have resented as unfair.

Nobody knew why these two men were friends, but they were so. They seemed utterly unsuited in every way. Vyner loved travel, incident, adventure, strange lands, and strange people; he liked the very emergencies, the roughings of the road. Grenfell was a Londoner, who only tolerated, and not very patiently, whatever was beyond an easy drive of Hyde Park Corner. Vyner was a man of good birth, and had high connections on every side, — advantages of which he no more dreamed of being vain than of the air he breathed. Mr. Grenfell was a nobody, with the additional disparagement of being a nobody that every one knew. Grenfell's Italian warehouse, Grenfell's potted meats, his pickled salmon, his caviare, his shrimps, his olives, and his patent macaroni, being European in celebrity, and, though the means by which his father made an enormous fortune, were miseries which poisoned life, rising spectre-like before him on every dinner-table and staring at him in great capitals in every supplement of the "Times." He would have changed his name, but he knew well that it would have availed him nothing. The disguise would only have invited discovery, and the very mention of him exacted the explanation, "No more a Seymour nor a Villiers than you are; the fellow is old Grenfell's son; 'Grenfell's Game Sauce,' and the rest of it." A chance resemblance to a fashionable Earl suggested another expedient, and Mr. George Grenfell got it about — how, it is not easy to say — that the noble Lord had greatly admired his mother, and paid her marked attention at Scarborough. Whatever pleasure Mr. George Grenfell felt in this theory is not easy to explain; nor have

we to explain what we simply narrate as a fact, without the slightest pretension to account for.

Such were the two men who travelled together; and the yacht also contained Vyner's daughter, Ada, a little girl of eight, and her governess, Mademoiselle Heinzleman, a Hanoverian lady, who claimed a descent from the Hohenzollerns, and had pride enough for a Hapsburg. If Vyner and Grenfell were not very much alike in tastes, temperament, and condition, Grenfell and the German governess were positively antipathies; nor was their war a secret or a smouldering fire, but a blaze, to which each brought fuel every day, aiding the combustion by every appliance of skill and ingenuity.

Vyner loved his daughter passionately, — not even the disappointment that she had not been a boy threw any cloud over his affection, — and he took her with him when and wherever he could; and, indeed, the pleasure of having her for a companion now made this little home tour one of the most charming of all his excursions, and in her childish delight at new scenes and new people he renewed all his own memories of early travel.

"Here you are, sir," said Mr. Crab, late a sailing-master in the Royal Navy, but now in command of the "Meteor," — "here you are;" and he pointed with his finger to a little bay on the outspread chart that covered the cabin table. "This is about it! It may be either of these two; each of them looks north, — north by east, — and each has this large mountain to the south'ard and west'ard."

"'The north islands of Arran,'" read out Vyner, slowly, from a little MS. note-book. "'Innishmore, the largest of them, has several good anchorages, especially on the eastern side, few inhabitants, and all miserably poor. There is the ruin of an Abbey, and a holy well of great reputed antiquity, and a strange relic of ancient superstition called the Judgment-stone, on which he who lays his hand while denouncing a wrong done him by another, brings down divine vengeance on either his enemy or himself, according as his allegation is just or unjust. There is something similar to be found in the Brehon laws —'"

"For mercy's sake, don't give us more of that tiresome

little book, which, from the day we sailed, has never contributed one single hint as to where we could find anything to eat, or even water fit to drink," said Grenfell. "Do you mean to go on shore in this barbarous place?"

"Of course I do. Crab intends us to pass two days here; we have sprung our foretopmast, and must look to it."

"Blessed invention a yacht! As a means of locomotion, there 's not a cripple but could beat it; and as a place to live in, to eat, sleep, wash, and exercise, there 's not a cell in Brixton is not a palace in comparison."

"Mademoiselle wish to say good-night, Sare Vyner," said the governess, a tall, fair-haired lady, with very light eyes, thick lips, and an immense lower jaw, a type, but not a flattering type, of German physiognomy.

"Let her come, by all means;" and in an instant the door burst open, with the spring of a young fawn the little girl was fast locked in her father's arms.

"Oh, is it not very soon to go to bed, papa dearest?" cried she; "and it would be so nice to wait a little and see the moon shining on these big rocks here."

"What does Mademoiselle Heinzleman say?" asked Vyner, smiling at the eager face of the child.

The lady appealed to made no other reply than by the production of a great silver watch with an enormous dial.

"That is a real curiosity," cried Grenfell. "Is it permissible to ask a nearer view of that remarkable clock, Miss Heinzleman?"

"Freilich!" said she, not suspecting the slightest trace of raillery in the request. "It was made at Würtzburg, by Jacob Schmelling, year time 1736."

"And intended, probably, for the Town-hall?"

"No, saar," replied she, detecting the covert sneer; "intended for him whose arms it bear, — Gottfried von Heinzleman, Burgomeister of Würtzburg, a German noble, who neither made sausages nor sold Swiss cheeses."

"Good-night! good-night! my own darling!" said Vyner, kissing his child affectionately. "You shall have a late evening to-morrow, and a walk in the moonlight too;" and after a hearty embrace from the little girl, and a respectful courtesy from the governess, returned with a not less respect-

ful deference on his own part, Vyner closed the door after them, and resumed his seat.

"What cursed tempers those Germans have," said Gren- fell, trying to seem careless and easy; "even that good-natured joke about her watch she must take amiss."

"Don't forget, George," said Vyner, good-humoredly, "that in any little passage of arms between you, you have the strong position and hers is the weak one."

"I wish *she* would have the kindness to remember that fact; but she is an aggressive old damsel, and never looks so satisfied as when she imagines she has said an impertinence."

"She is an excellent governess, and Ada is very fond of her."

"So much the worse for Ada."

"What do you mean by that?" cried Vyner, with an energy that surprised the other.

"Simply this: that by a man who professes to believe that objects of beauty are almost as essential to be presented to the eyes of childhood as maxims of morality, such a choice in a companion for his daughter is inexplicable. The woman is ugly, her voice discordant and jarring, her carriage and bearing atrocious, — and will you tell me that all these will fail to make their impression when associated with every tone and every incident of childhood?"

"You are not in your happiest mood to-night, George. Was the claret bad?"

"I drank none of it. I took some of that Moselle cup, and it was tolerably good. By the way, when and how are we to get some ice? Carter says we have very little left."

"Perhaps there may be glaciers in the wild region beside us. Ireland and Iceland have only a consonant between them. What if we go ashore and have a look at the place?"

A careless shrug of assent was the answer; and soon afterwards the trim yawl, manned by four stout fellows, skimmed across the smooth bay, and landed Vyner and his friend on a little rocky promontory that formed a natural pier.

It was complete desolation on every side of them: the mountain which rose from the sea was brown and blue with moss and heather, but not a human habitation, not an

animal marked its side; a few sea-birds skimmed fearlessly across the water, or stood perched on peaks of rock close to the travellers, and a large seal heavily plunged into the depth as they landed; save these, not a sign of anything living could be seen.

"There is something very depressing in this solitude," said Grenfell; "I detest these places where a man is thrown back upon himself."

"Do you know, then, that at this very moment I was speculating on buying a patch of land here to build a cottage; a cabin of three or four rooms, where one might house himself if ever he came this way?"

"But why should he come this way? What on earth should turn any man's steps twice in this direction?"

"Come, come, George! You 'll not deny that all this is very fine: that great mountain rising abruptly from the sea, with narrow belt of yellow beach below it; those wild fantastic rocks, with their drooping seaweed; those solemn caves, wherein the rumbling sea rushes to issue forth again in some distant cleft, are all objects of grandeur and beauty, and, for myself, I feel as if I could linger for days amongst them, unwearied."

"What was that?" cried Grenfell, as they now gained a crest of the ridge, and could see a wild irregular valley that lay beneath, the shades of evening deepening into very blackness the lower portions of the landscape. "Was that thunder or the roar of the sea? There it is again!"

They listened for a few moments, and again there came, borne on the faint land-breeze, a sound that swelled from a feeble wail to a wild sustained cry, rising and falling till it died away just as it had begun. It was indescribably touching, and conveyed a sense of deep sorrow, almost of despair. It might have been the last cry of a sinking crew as the waves closed above them; and so, indeed, did it seem to Vyner as he said, —

"If there had been a storm at sea, I 'd have sworn that sound came from a shipwreck."

"I suppose it is only some other pleasant adjunct of the charming spot you would select for a villa," said Grenfell; "perhaps the seals or the grampuses are musical."

"Listen to that!" cried Vyner, laying a hand on his arm; "and see! yonder — far away to the left — there is a light!"

"Well, if there be inhabitants here, I'm not astonished that they cry over it."

"Let us find out what it can mean, George."

"Have you any arms about you? I have left my revolver behind, and have nothing but this sword-cane."

"I have not as much, and feel pretty sure we shall not need it. Every traveller in Ireland, even in the remotest tracts, bears witness to the kindness which is extended to the stranger."

"They who come back from the Rocky Mountains are invariably in love with the Sioux Indians. The testimony that one wants is from the fellows who have been scalped."

"What an intense prejudice you have against all that is Irish!"

"Say, if you like, that I have a prejudice against all mock cordiality, mock frankness, mock hospitality, and mock intrepidity."

"Stay, George! you can't impugn their courage."

"I don't want to impugn anything beyond the inordinate pretensions to be something better, braver, more amiable, and more gifted than all the rest of the world. I say, Vyner, I have had quite enough of this sort of walking; my feet are cut to pieces with these sharp stones, and every second step is into a puddle. Do you mean to go on?"

"Certainly; I am determined to see what that light means."

"Then I turn back. I'll send the boat in again, and tell them to hoist a lantern, which, if the natives have not done for you in the mean while, you'll see on the beach."

"Come along; don't be lazy."

"It's not laziness. I could walk a Parisian Boulevard for these three hours; what I object to is the certainty of a cold and the casualty of a sprained ankle. A pleasant journey to you;" and as he spoke, he turned abruptly round, and began to retrace his steps.

Vyner looked after him; he called after him, too, for a

moment, but, as the other never heeded, he lighted a fresh cigar and continued his way.

The light, which seemed to tremble and flicker at first, shone steadily and brightly as he drew nearer, and at length he hit upon a sort of pathway which greatly assisted his advance. The way, too, led gradually downwards, showing that the glen or valley was far deeper than he at first supposed it. As he went on, the moon, a faint crescent, came out, and showed him the gable of an old ruin rising above some stunted trees, through whose foliage, at times, he fancied he saw the glitter of a light. These lay in a little cleft that opened to the sea, and on the shore, drawn up, were two boats, on whose sides the cold moonlight shone clearly.

"So, there are people who live here!" thought he; "perhaps Grenfell was right. It might have been as well to have come armed!" He hesitated to go on. Stories of wreckers, tales of wild and lawless men in remote untravelled lands, rose to his mind, and he half doubted if it were prudent to proceed farther. Half ashamed of his fears, half dreading the bantering he was sure to meet from Grenfell, he went forward. The path led to a small river where stepping-stones were placed; and crossing this, the foot track became broader, and evidently had been more travelled. The night was now perfectly still and calm, the moonlight touched the mountain towards its peak, but all beneath was in sombre blackness, more especially near the old church, whose ruined gable his eyes, as they grew familiarized with the darkness, could clearly distinguish. Not a sound of that strange unearthly dirge that he first heard was audible; all was silent; so silent, indeed, that he was startled by the sharp crackling of the tall reeds which grew close to the path, and which he occasionally broke as he pressed forward. The path stopped abruptly at a stone stile, over which he clambered, and found himself in a little enclosure planted with potatoes, beyond which was a dense copse of thorns and hazel, so tangled that the path became very tortuous and winding. On issuing from this, he found himself in front of a strong glare of light, which issued from a circular window of the gable several feet above his

head, at the same time that he heard a sort of low monotonous moaning sound, broken at intervals by a swell of chorus, which he at length detected was the response of people engaged in prayer. Creeping stealthily around through dockweeds and nettles, he at last found a narrow loopholed window to which his hands could just reach, and to which, after a brief effort, he succeeded in lifting himself. The scene on which he now looked never faded from his memory. In the long narrow aisle of the old Abbey a company of men and women sat two deep round the walls, the space in the centre being occupied by a coffin placed on trestles; rude torches of bog-pine stuck in the walls threw a red and lurid glare over the faces, and lit up their expressions with a vivid distinctness. At the head of the coffin sat an old gray-headed man of stern and formidable look, and an air of savage determination, which even grief had not softened; and close beside him, on a low stool, sat a child, who, overcome by sleep, as it seemed, had laid his head on the old man's knee, and slept profoundly. From this old man proceeded the low muttering words which the others answered by a sort of chant, the only interruption to which was when any one of the surrounders would rise from his place to deposit some small piece of money on a plate which stood on the coffin, and was meant to contain the offerings for the priest. If the language they spoke in was strange and unintelligible to Vyner's ears, it did not the less convey, as the sound of Irish unfailingly does to all unaccustomed ears, a something terribly energetic and passionate, — every accent was striking, and every tone full of power; but far more still was he struck by the faces on every side. He had but seen the Irish of St. Giles's; the physiognomy he alone knew was that blended one of sycophancy and dissipation that a degraded and demoralized class wear. He had never before seen that fierce vigor and concentrated earnestness which mark the native face. Still less had he any idea what its expression could become when heightened by religious fervor. There were fine features, noble foreheads wide and spacious, calm brows, and deeply set eyes, in many around, but in all were the lower jaw and mouth coarse and depraved-looking. There was no lack of

power, it is true, but it was a power that could easily adapt itself to violence and cruelty; and when they spoke, so overmastering seemed this impulse of their nature, that the eyes lost the gentleness they had worn, and flashed with an angry and vindictive brilliancy.

Drink was served round at intervals, and freely partaken of; and from the gestures and vehemence of the old man, Vyner conjectured that something like toasts were responded to. At moments, too, the prayers for the dead would seem to be forgotten, and brief snatches of conversation would occur, and even joke and laughter were heard; when suddenly, as though to recall them to the solemn rites of the hour, a voice, always a woman's, would burst in with a cry, at first faint, but gradually rising till it became a wild yell, at one particular cadence of which — just as one has seen a spaniel howl at a certain note — the rest would seem unable to control themselves, and break in with a rush of sound that made the old walls ring again. Dreadful as it had seemed before, it was far more fearful now, as he stood close by, and could mark, besides, the highly wrought expressions of the terribly passionate faces around.

So fascinated was he by the scene — so completely had its terrible reality impressed him — that Vyner could not leave the spot; and he gazed till he knew, and for many a long year after could remember, every face that was there. More than once was he disposed to venture in amongst them, and ask, as a stranger, the privilege of joining the solemnity, but fear withheld him; and as the first pinkish streak of dawn appeared, he crept cautiously down and alighted on the grass.

By the gray half-light he could now see objects around him, and perceive that the Abbey was a small structure with little architectural pretensions, though from the character of the masonry of very great age. At one end, where a square tower of evidently later date stood, something like an attempt at a dwelling-house existed, — at least, two windows of unequal size appeared, and a low doorway, the timbers of which had once formed part of a ship. Passing round the angle of this humble home, he saw a faint streak of light issue from an open casement, over which a wild

honeysuckle had grown, attaching itself to the iron bars that guarded the window, and almost succeeded in shutting out the day. Curious for a glance within this strange dwelling-place, Vyner stole near and peeped in. A tiny oil-lamp on a table was the only light, but it threw its glare on the face of a man asleep in a deep armchair, — a pale, careworn, melancholy face it was, with a mass of white hair unkempt hanging partly across it. Vyner passed his hands across his eyes, as though to satisfy himself that he was awake. He looked again; he even parted the twigs of the honeysuckle to give him more space, and as he gazed, the sleeper turned slightly, so that the full features came to view.

"Good God! It is Luttrell!" muttered Vyner, as he quietly stole away and set out for the beach.

Anxious at his long absence, two of his crew had come in search of him, and in their company he returned to the shore and went on board.

CHAPTER III.

AN OLD STORY.

It was late in the day when Vyner awoke and got up. Late as it was, he found Grenfell at breakfast. Seated under an awning on the deck, before a table spread with every luxury, that much-to-be-pitied individual was, if not watering his bread with tears, sipping his chocolate with chagrin. "He had no newspaper!" — no broad sheet of gossip, with debates, divorces, bankruptcies, and defalcations; no moral lessons administered to foreign kings and kaisers, to show them how the press of England had its eye on them, and would not fail to expose their shortcomings to that great nation, which, in the succeeding leader, was the text for a grand pæan over increased revenue and augmented exports.

Grenfell had a very natural taste for this sort of reading. It supplied to him, as to many others, a sort of patent patriotism, which, like his father's potted meats, could be carried to any climate, and be always fresh.

"Is not this a glorious day, George?" said Vyner, as he came on deck. "There is something positively exhilarating in the fresh and heath-scented air of that great mountain."

"I'd rather follow a watering-cart down Piccadilly if I was on the look-out for a sensation. How long are we to be moored in this dreary spot?"

"Not very long. Don't be impatient, and listen while I recount to you my adventure of last night."

"Let me fill my pipe, then. Carter, fetch me my meerschaum. Now for it," said he, as he disposed his legs on an additional chair. "I only hope the story has no beautiful traits of Irish peasant life, for I own to no very gen-

erous dispositions with regard to these interesting people, when I see the place they live in."

Not in the slightest degree moved by the other's irritability, Vyner began a narrative of his ramble, with all the power that a recent impression could impart of the scene of the wake, and pictured graphically enough the passion-wrought faces and wild looks of the mourners.

"I was coming away at last," said he, "when, on turning an angle of the old church, I found myself directly in front of a little window, from which a light issued. I crept close and peeped in, and there, asleep in a large armchair, was a man I once knew well, — as well or even better than I know you, — a man I had chummed with at Christ Church, and lived for years with on terms of close affection. If it were not that his features were such as never can be forgotten, I might surely have failed to recognize him; for though my own contemporary, he looked fully fifty."

"Who was he?" abruptly broke in Grenfell.

"You shall hear. Luttrell!"

"Luttrell! Luttrell! You don't mean the fellow who was to have married your sister-in-law?"

"The same; the first man of his day at Christ Church, the great prizeman and medallist, 'the double first,' and what many thought more of, the best-looking fellow in Oxford."

"I forget the story. He wanted to marry some one, and she would n't have him. What was it?"

"He wanted to marry my wife," said Vyner, rather nettled at the cool carelessness of the other. "She was, however, engaged to me, and she said, 'I have a sister so very like me that we are constantly taken for each other; come here next week and you 'll meet her.' They met, liked each other, and were contracted to be married. I want to be very brief, so I shall skip over all but the principal points."

"Do so," said the other, dryly.

"Everything went well for a time. All inquiries as to his fortune, position, connections, and so forth, were found satisfactory by the Courtenays, when some busybody whispered to Georgina that there was an ugly story about him in Ireland, and suggested that she should ask under what cir-

cumstances he had quitted the Irish University and come over to take his degree at Oxford. Luttrell was considerably agitated when the question was put to him, though they were alone at the time; and, after a brief pause with himself, he said, 'I 'd rather you had not asked me about this, but I meant to have told you of it myself, one day.

The thing is very simple, and not very serious. The only thing, however, I exact is, that the confession is to and for yourself alone. You have a right to know the fact; I have a right that it be kept a secret.'

"She gave the pledge he required, and he went on to say that there existed in Ireland a secret society known by the name of the United Irishmen, whose designs were, time and

place suiting, to throw off their allegiance to England, and declare for Irish independence. This association was so far formidable that it embraced men of all classes and conditions, and men of all religious professions, the majority being Presbyterians. He was one of these, and a very foremost one; drawn into the league, in reality, rather by the warm enthusiasm of a generous nature than by any mature consideration of the object or its consequences. In some contest for a prize at college, a gold medal in science, I believe, Luttrell's closest competitor was the son of the Provost of the University; but, after a three days' conflict, Luttrell presented himself at the Hall to receive his laurels; but what was his astonishment to hear, as he entered, that he would be first required to subscribe a declaration that he was not a member of any secret or treasonable society.

"'If you mean,' cried he, to the Proctor, who recited the terms of the declaration,—'if you mean me to say that I am not a United Irishman, I will not do so. Give your gold medal to that gentleman yonder,' added he, pointing to the son of the Provost: 'his father's loyalty deserves every testimony you can confer on it.' He left the Hall, took his name off the books, and quitted Ireland the next day. It was gravely debated whether an expulsion should not be passed upon him; but, in consideration of his great collegiate distinction and his youth, the extreme rigor was spared him, and he was suffered to leave uncensured.

"Either the confession was not what she had expected, or that she fancied it might cover something far more serious beneath it, but Georgina was not satisfied with the story. She again and again reverted to it. Not a day that they walked out alone that she would not turn the conversation on this theme, which, by frequent discussion, Luttrell came at length to talk of without any of the reserve he at first maintained. Indeed, some of this was in a measure forced upon him, for she questioned him closely as to the details of the association, how far it involved him, and to what extent he was yet bound by its obligations.

"It was in a sort of defence of himself, one day, that he so far forgot prudence as to declare that the society numbered amongst its members many men not only high in

station, but actually regarded as strong adherents of the English party. He told how this, that, and the other, who were seen at every levee of the Castle, and not unfrequently quoted as guests of the Viceroy's table, were brothers of this league; and he, indeed, mentioned names of distinction and eminence.

"In her eagerness to confute all her father's opinions on this matter, — for she had told him the whole story from the first, — Georgina hastened off to enumerate the great men who were engaged in this treason. Two were in Parliament, one was a Law Adviser of the Crown, another was a Commissioner of Customs, and generally regarded as an active partisan of the Government. I remember these, but there were many others of equal note. Mr. Courtenay, who, besides being a ministerial supporter, had once been private secretary to Lord Castlereagh, divulged the whole to the Home Secretary. Investigations were instituted, and, although United Irishism had lost its sting after Emmett's failure, all who had once belonged to it were marked men, and black-listed in consequence.

"I have been told that the consternation which the disclosure created in Ireland was terrific. Men resigned their commissions of the peace, pretended ill-health, went abroad; lawyers and physicians of eminence were ashamed to show their faces; and a well-known editor of a violently 'English' newspaper disposed of his journal and went to America. 'Who is the traitor?' was now the universal demand; and, indeed, in the patriotic papers the question stood forth every morning in great capitals.

"'Who was the traitor?' none could positively assert; but the controversy was carried on without any squeamish delicacy, and if the papers did not fix on the man, they very freely discussed the probability or improbability of this or that one.

"'Why not Luttrell?' said one writer in a famous print. 'His father betrayed us before.' This was an allusion to his having voted for the Union. 'Why not Luttrell?' They entered, thereupon, into some curious family details, to show how these Luttrells had never been 'true blue' to any cause. That, with good abilities and fair prospects,

they were not successful men, just because they could n't be honest to their party, or even to themselves. They were always half-way between two opinions, 'and,' as the writer said, 'far more eager to have two roads open to them than to travel either of them.' Whether excited by a theme which had engrossed much of public attention, or incited by some personal animosity, this editor devoted a portion of each day's paper to Luttrell. The result was a hostile message. They met and exchanged shots, when the newspaper writer at once declared, 'If Mr. Luttrell will now disown any connection with this act of betrayal, I am ready to beg his pardon for all that I have said of him.' Luttrell for a moment made no reply, and then said, 'Take your pistol, sir; I have no explanations to make you.' At the next fire, Luttrell fell wounded. He was upwards of two months laid in his bed. I saw him frequently during that time; and though we talked every day of the Courtenays, I had not the courage to tell him that they were determined the match should be broken off; Georgina herself — how, I cannot well say, nor ever clearly understood — being brought to believe that Luttrell had done what would forever exclude him from the society of his equals. I cannot dwell on a period so full of miserable recollections. I never passed so many hours of torture as when sitting by that poor fellow's bedside. I listened to all his bright projects for a future which in my heart I knew was closed to him forever. As his convalescence advanced, my task grew more difficult. He used to ask every day when he would be permitted to write to her; he wondered, too, why she had not sent him a few lines, or some token, — as a book, or a flower. He questioned and cross-questioned me about her daily life; how she felt his misfortune; had she received a correct account of the incident of the duel; what her family thought and said; and, last of all, why Mr. Courtenay himself had only called once or twice, and never asked to come up and see him.

"My own marriage was to take place early in May. It was now April; and at one time there had been some talk of the two sisters being married on the same day. It was late in the month; I am not clear about the date, but I remem-

ber it was on a Sunday morning. I was sitting with him, and he lay propped up on the sofa, to enable him to take his breakfast with me. 'I was thinking all last night, Vyner,' said he, — 'and nothing but a sick man's selfishness could have prevented my thinking it long ago, — how you must hate *me*.'

"'Hate *you*, and why?'

"'Because but for me and my misfortune you'd have been married by the sixth or seventh, and now, who knows how long you must wait?'

"I saw at once that the double marriage was running in his mind, and though my own was fixed for the following Thursday or Friday, I had not nerve to say so; nor was my embarrassment the less that Mr. Courtenay had charged me with the task of telling Luttrell that all should be considered as at an end, and every day used to question me if I had yet done so.

"'Now or never,' thought I, as Luttrell said this; but when I turned and saw his wasted cheek, still pink with hectic, and his glassy, feverish eye, I shrunk again from the attempt.

"'Why did you look at me so pitifully, Vyner?' said he, eagerly: 'has the doctor told you that I shall not rub through?'

"'Nothing of the kind, man; he says he'll have you down at Hastings before a fortnight is over.'

"'What was it, then? Do I look very fearfully?'

"'Not even that. You are pulled down, of course. No man looks the better for eight or ten weeks on a sick-bed.'

"'Then it is something else,' said he, thoughtfully; and I made no answer.

"'Well,' said he, with a deep sigh, 'I have had my forebodings of — I don't know what — but of something that was over me all this time back; and when I lay awake at night, wondering in what shape this disaster would come, I have ever consoled myself by saying, "Well, Vyner certainly does not know it; Vyner has no suspicion of it. If now, however, I were to be wrong in this; if, in reality, Vyner *did* know that a calamity impended me; and if' — here he fixed his bright staring eyes with their wide pupils full upon

me — 'if Vyner knew something, and only forbore to break it to me because he saw me a poor sickly wasted creature, whose courage he doubted, all I can say is, he does not know the stuff the Luttrells are made of.'

"I tried to answer this, but all I could do was to take his hand and press it between my own. 'Out with it, like a good fellow,' cried he, with an effort to seem gay, — 'out with it, and you'll see whether I am too vain of my pluck!'

"I turned partly away — at least so far that I could not see his face nor he mine — and I told him everything. I cannot remember how I began or ended. I cannot tell what miserable attempts I made to excuse or to palliate, nor what poor ingenuity I practised to make him believe that all was for the best. I only know that I would have given worlds that he should have interrupted me or questioned me; but he never spoke a word, and when I had concluded he sat there still in silence.

"'You are a man of honor, Vyner,' said he, in a low but unshaken voice that thrilled through my heart. 'Tell me one thing. On your word as a gentleman, has — has — she, —' I saw that he was going to say the name, but stopped himself. 'Has she been coerced in this affair?'

"'I believe not, I sincerely believe not. In discussing the matter before her, she has gradually come to see, or at least to suppose — '

"'There, there, that will do!' cried he, aloud, and with a full tone that resembled his voice in health. 'Let us talk of it no more. I take it you'll go abroad after your wedding?'

"I muttered out some stupid commonplace, I talked away at random for some minutes, and at last I said good-bye. When I came back the next morning, he was gone. He had been carried on board of a steam-vessel for some port in the South of Ireland, and left not a line nor a message behind him. From that hour until last night I never set eyes on him."

"You have heard of him, I suppose?" asked Grenfell.

"Vaguely and at long intervals. He would seem to have mixed himself up with the lowest political party in Ireland,

— men who represent, in a certain shape, the revolutionary section in France, — and though the very haughtiest aristocrat I think I ever knew, and at one time the most fastidious 'fine gentleman,' there were stories of his having uttered the most violent denunciations of rank, and inveighed in all the set terms of the old French Convention against the distinctions of class. Last of all, I heard that he had married a peasant girl, the daughter of one of his cottier tenants, and that, lost to all sense of his former condition, he had become a confirmed drunkard."

"The moral of all which is that your accomplished sister-in-law had a most fortunate escape."

"I'm not so sure of that. I think Luttrell was a man to have made a great figure in the world. He swept college of its prizes, he could do anything he tried, and, unlike many other clever men, he had great powers of application. He had, too, high ability as a public speaker, and in an age like ours, where oratory does so much, he might have had a most brilliant career in Parliament."

"There is nothing more delusive than arguing from a fellow's school or collegiate successes to his triumphs in after life. The first are purely intellectual struggles; but the real battle of life is fought out by tact, and temper, and courage, and readiness, and fifty other things, that have no distinct bearing on mind. Your man there would have failed just as egregiously amongst gentlemen as he has done amongst the 'canaille' that he descended to. He had failure written on his passport when he started in life."

"I don't believe it; I can't believe it."

"Your sister-in-law, I think, never married."

"No. She has refused some excellent offers, and has declared she never will marry."

"How like a woman all that! She first mars a man's fortune, and, by way of reparation, she destroys her own. That is such feminine logic!"

"Is that a dog they have got in the bow of the launch, yonder?" said Vyner, directing the captain's attention to one of the boats of the yacht that was now pulling briskly out from the land.

"Well, sir, as well as I can make out, it's a child," said

he, as he drew the telescope from the slings and began to adjust it.

"Yes, sir, it's a native they have caught, and a wild-looking specimen too;" and he handed the glass to Vyner.

"Poor little fellow! He seems dressed in rabbit-skins. Where is Ada? She must see him."

CHAPTER IV.

ON BOARD.

"IT was not an easy matter to get him to come, sir," said the sailor in a whisper to Vyner, as he assisted the boy to get on the deck.

"Where did you find him?"

"Sitting all alone on that rocky point yonder, sir; he seemed to have been crying, and we suspect he has run away from home."

Vyner now turned to look at the child, who all this while stood calm and composed, amazed, it is true, by all he saw around him, yet never suffering his curiosity to surprise him into a word of astonishment. In age, from ten to twelve, he was slightly though strongly built, and carried himself erect as a soldier. The dress which Vyner at first thought was entirely made of skins was only, in reality, trimmed with these, being an attempt to make the clothes he had long worn sufficiently large for him. His cap alone was of true island make, and was a conical contrivance of undressed sealskin, which really had as savage a look as need be.

"Do you live on this island, my little fellow?" asked Vyner, with a kindly accent.

"Yes," said he, calmly, as he looked up full into his face.

"And have you always lived here?"

"So long as I remember."

"Where do you live?"

"On the other side of the mountain, — at St. Finbar's Abbey."

"May I ask your name?"

"My name," said the boy, proudly, "is Harry Grenville Luttrell."

"Are you a Luttrell?" cried Vyner, as he laid his hand affectionately on the boy's shoulder; but the little fellow seemed not to like the familiarity, and stepped back to escape it.

"Are you the son of John Hamilton Luttrell?"

"Yes. What is your name?"

"Mine," said the other, repressing a smile, — "mine is Gervaise Vyner."

"And do you own this ship?"

"Yes."

"And why have you come here?"

"Partly by chance, partly through curiosity."

"And when will you go away?"

"Something will depend on the weather, — something on whether we like the place and find it agreeable to us; but why do you ask? Do you wish we should go away?"

"The people do! I do not care!"

It is not easy to give an idea of the haughty dignity with which he spoke the last words. They were like the declaration of one who felt himself so secure in station that he could treat the accidents of the day as mere trifles.

"But why should the people wish it? We are not very likely to molest or injure them."

"That much you may leave to themselves," said the boy, insolently. "They 'll not let you do it."

"You seem very proud of your island, my little man. Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"No, none."

"None belonging to you but father and mother?"

"I have no mother now," said he, with an effort to utter the words unmoved; but the struggle was too much, and he had to turn away his head as he tried to suppress the sobbing that overcame him.

"I am very, very sorry to have pained you, my boy," said Vyner, with kindness. "Come down with me here, and see a little daughter of mine, who is nearly your own age."

"I don't want to see her. I want to go ashore."

"So you shall, my boy; but you will eat something with us first, and see the strange place we live in Come along;" and he took his hand to lead him forward.

"I could swim to the land if I liked," said the boy, as he gazed down at the blue water.

"But you 'll not have to swim, Harry."

"Why do you call me Harry? I never knew *you*."

"I have a better claim than you suspect. At least, I used to call your father John long ago."

"Don't do it any more, then," said he, defiantly.

"And why?"

"He would n't bear it, — that is the why! Stand clear, there!" cried he to one of the sailors on the gangway. "I 'm off!" and he prepared himself for a run ere he jumped overboard; but just at this moment Ada tripped up the cabin ladder and stood before him. The long yellow ringlets fell on her shoulders and her neck, and her lustrous blue eyes were wide in astonishment at the figure in front of her. As for the boy, he gazed at her as at something of unearthly beauty. It was to his eyes that Queen of the Fairies who might have soared on a light cloud or tripped daintily on the crest of the wide sea waves.

"Here is a playfellow for you, Ada," said her father, as he led her towards him.

"It is Robinson Crusoe, papa," said she, in a whisper.

The boy's quick ear had, however, caught the words, and he said quickly, "I wish I was Robinson!" The speech seemed to strike some chord in the little girl's heart, for she went freely towards him at once, and said, "Oh, was n't it nice to live in that pretty island, and have everything one's own?"

"This island here is mine!" said the boy, proudly.

"Yes, Ada," said Vyner, "what he says is quite correct; his father owns the whole of these islands. But come along into the cabin, Harry; I want you to see our home, though it is a very narrow one."

With the gravity of a North American Indian, and with a self-possession that never broke down under every trial to which curiosity exposed it, the boy looked at all around him. If Aladdin himself was not more wonder-struck at the splendors of the cave, he never for a moment betrayed his amazement. He ate and drank, too, with the same air of composure, and bore himself throughout with a quiet

dignity that was remarkable. Ada displayed before him her prettiest toys, her games, and her picture-books, and was half piqued at the little evidences of astonishment they created. No suspicion crossed her mind how the color that came and went and came again, how the hurried breathing, how the clammy fingers that trembled as they touched an object, were signs of emotion far deeper and more intense than all that a cry of wonderment could evidence.

"I suppose," said she, at last, when impatience mastered her, "you have got such masses of these yourself that you don't care for them?"

"I — I have nothing — nothing but a crossbow to shoot the sea-gulls, and a hatchet; and the hatchet is too heavy for me."

"But what can you do with a hatchet?" asked she, smiling.

"Split logs, and cut a way through the thicket like fellows on an uninhabited island; or sometimes I think I'm fighting a bear. I'd like to fight a young bear! — would n't you?"

"I suspect not. Girls do not fight bears."

"Ah, I forgot!" said he, blushing deeply; and, ashamed of his blunder, he bent his head over a picture.

Meanwhile Vyner and Grenfell were walking the deck and conversing in a low tone.

"It would be a mistake, Vyner, a great mistake, take my word for it," said the other. "To the man who assumes the incognito, all attempt at recognition is offensive. Besides, what is it to lead to? You can't imagine he 'll want to talk over the past, and for such a man there is no speculation in the future."

"But the idea of being on the very island with him, knowing that he was within a mile of me, and that I never went to see him! It sounds very heartless, and I feel it would be so."

"I have nothing to say when you put the question on the ground of a sentiment. I can only discuss it as a matter of expediency, or the reverse. You don't charge a man with the opinions you find in an anonymous book, because,

even supposing they are his, he has not thought proper to avow them; well, you owe exactly the same deference to him who lives under an incognito, or retires to some secluded, unfrequented spot. His object is to escape notice; under what plea do you drag him forth into the broad noonday?"

"I am certain my wife would n't forgive me if I left without even an effort to see him."

"As to that, I can say nothing. I never was married, and I do not pretend to know what are the 'cases of conscience' discussed connubially."

"You see, Grenfell," said the other, confidentially, "we all feel, as we have a right to feel, that we have done this man a great wrong. There has not been one single calamity of his life, from the day we broke with him, that is not traceable to us. His unfortunate line in politics, his low political associates, the depraved life some assert that he lives, and, worse than all, his wretched marriage with a poor uneducated peasant girl."

"And do you fancy that a morning call from you is the reparation for all this?"

"Come, come, that is not the fair way to put it. Luttrell and I were once great friends. I was, I well know, very much his inferior in knowledge and power, but in worldliness and tact I was more than his match, and he gave way to me on every question of this sort. It may be — I 'd like to think it might prove the case — that this old sentiment has not died out of his heart; that, as he used to say long ago, and people laughed when he said it, 'Let us hear what Vyner says.' Now, if this were so, I might even yet do something, if not for him, for that fine boy there."

"Leave that fine boy alone, Vyner, that 's my advice to you. I never saw a fellow of his years with such an overweening self-confidence. There is, I don't deny it, a certain 'gentleman' element in him, but it is dashed with something which I neither understand, nor could venture to say what it may lead to; but I repeat, leave him alone."

Vyner shook his head dissentingly, but did not speak.

"Besides, let us be practical. What could you do for him? You 'd not adopt him, I take it?" Vyner was silent,

and he continued: "Well, then, you 'd cut off the one tie he has in life, and not substitute another. Besides, don't you remember what old Scott said at the Huxleigh steeple-chase: 'I never back the half-bred 'uns, no matter how well they look in training.'"

"What a stickler for blood you have become!" said Vyner, laughing; and it was only as he saw the crimson flush in the other's cheek that he bethought him how the remark might have offended.

"Take your own line, then," said Grenfell, angrily; "it does n't signify to me, personally, a brass farthing! Our dinner company with old Crab and the German Frau can scarcely but be improved, even though it be by the admixture of a little rebellion through it."

"For all that, you 'd like Luttrell immensely if you met him."

"I like none but men of the world, — men who know the people, the places, and the things one is daily connected with; who can take up the game of society where it left off last night, and have not to read themselves up in daily life the way fellows read their history out of the 'Annual Register.'"

"Well, I 'll write him a note," said Vyner, following out his own thoughts; "I 'll tell him, in a few words, how I chanced to come here, and I 'll ask if he will receive me, or, better still, if he 'll come and dine with us to-morrow."

"I know the answer you 'll get as well as if I had written it."

"Well, what will it be?"

"See you hanged first!"

"What is all this going on below? Are you quarrelling, children?" cried Vyner, as a great uproar burst forth from the cabin.

"Oh, no, papa; but Robinson is so droll; he put baby-doll into a boat and had her shipwrecked, and saved by the little negro; and now they are going to be married. Just come and see it all."

"Tell me, Harry," said Vyner, "what would papa say if I were to write him a note and say that I have detained you here to dinner, and would n't let you go?"

"He 'd say I could have jumped overboard," said the

boy, reddening at what he thought was an imputation on his personal prowess.

"I don't exactly mean by force, my dear boy; I intended to say, by persuasion."

Either the view now submitted to him was not very clear, or that it was combined with other elements, but he made no reply.

"I will put it in this wise: I'll say I have made Harry's acquaintance this morning by a lucky accident, and I hope you will not be displeased if he should stay and dine with us. I have a little girl of his own age who is delighted to have his company, and I feel certain you will not deprive her of so agreeable a playfellow."

"Papa will not know," said the boy, moodily.

"Not know what, my little man?"

"Papa will not care," said he; and a slight tremor shook his voice.

"Not care for what?"

"I mean," said he, resolutely, "that I often go away at daybreak and never come back till late at night, and papa does not mind it, — he never asks for me."

As he spoke, Ada drew nigh her father, and clasped his hand in her own, while her tearful eyes turned alternately from her father to the child; the sense of her own happy lot, loved and cherished as she was, blending with a deep pity for one so desolate and friendless.

"That 's the way boys are made independent and bold-hearted," said Vyner, hastily. "Men like their sons to be trained up in the free habits they enjoyed themselves. So, then, my note is not necessary; you can remain without it?"

"Would you like it?" said he, turning to Ada.

"Oh, how much!" cried she, eagerly.

"Then I'll stay!" As he spoke, he leaned back in his chair, and, who knows with what thoughts, sighed faintly, while two heavy tears rolled slowly down his cheeks. Vyner saw it, but turned away and went on deck.

"I can gather from what that boy has just said," said he to Grenfell, "that his father is almost indifferent about him; he never knows of his coming or going, nor ever looks for him at meal-times."

"I should be surprised if it were otherwise," said Grenfell. "Demoralization never works by halves. When a man begins to go down hill, he never takes any other road. What could remain of your great scholar and double-first man after years of association with brutal companionship, and a peasant for a wife! How could it be possible for him to retain any one of the habits of his own class amidst the daily frictions of that vulgar existence!"

"I begin to fear as much myself," said Vyner, sorrowfully. As he spoke, he felt Ada's hand in his own; she drew him to one side, and whispered, "Harry is crying, papa. He says he must go home, but he won't tell me why."

"Perhaps I can guess, darling. Let me speak with him alone." Vyner went down into the cabin by himself; but whatever passed between him and the boy, the result, so far as persuading him to stay, was not successful, and young Luttrell came on deck along with him.

"Man a boat, there," said Vyner, "and take this young gentleman ashore. I will write one line to your father, Harry."

The two children stood hand in hand while Vyner wrote. They wore, each of them, a look of sorrow at parting; but the boy's face had a flush of shame as well as sorrow. They never uttered a word, however.

Vyner's note was in these words: —

"My dear Luttrell, — Will you allow an old friend to see you, when he calls himself

"Affectionately yours,

"Gervais Vyner?"

He did not show this note to Grenfell, but handed it to the boy at once.

"He won't take the books, papa," whispered Ada, "nor anything else I offered him."

"He 'll know us all better later on, dearest. Do not embarrass him now by attention; he is ashamed to refuse, and does not care to accept. If papa will let you come out to breakfast with us to-morrow, Harry, we shall be glad to see you; and remember, I look to you to show me where we are to catch the lobsters."

"I'll tell you that now," said the boy. "You see that great rock yonder. Well, a little more inland, where the water is about four fathoms, and perfectly clear, that's the spot."

When the boat was announced as ready, the boy took his leave of each in turn, shaking hands with Vyner and Ada and the governess; and then, advancing towards Grenfell, he stopped, and simply said good-bye.

"Good-day, sir," said Grenfell, stiffly, for he was one of those men whose egotism even a child could wound. "Is that boy like his father?" asked he, as Harry passed over the side.

"Wonderfully like, since his face took that expression of seriousness."

"Then it is not a good face."

"Not a good face?"

"Mind, I did n't say not a handsome face, for it is strikingly regular and well proportioned, but the expression is furtive and secret."

"Nothing of the kind. Luttrell was as frank a fellow as ever breathed. I think, after what I told you, you can see that it was trustfulness proved his ruin."

"Is n't he what your countrymen would call a 'Wunderkind,' Mademoiselle?" asked Grenfell of the governess.

"No, saar, he is a much-to-be-pitied, and not the less-for-that-very dignified youth."

"How Homeric it makes language to think in German! There he is, Ada, waving a rag of some sort in farewell to you."

Ada kissed her hand several times to him, and then hastened below into the cabin.

"I have asked Luttrell's leave to call on him," said Vyner.

"I thought you would," was the dry reply.

"I only wrote one line, and made my request in the name of our old friendship."

"Well, of course, you are the best judge of your own duties; only, for my own part, I beg, if I ever should turn hermit, that you'll not think yourself bound to have me shaved and trimmed for the honor of dining some one day at your table."

"Upon my word, I think it would be a pity to take you out of your cave, or whatever you call it," said the governess, with a spiteful laugh.

"There, don't fight any more till teatime," said Vyner, laughingly. "Who 'll come on shore with me? 'm for a ramble over that purple mountain yonder."

"I have the music-lesson."

"And I have the remainder of that article in the 'Quarterly,'" said Grenfell, "which proves incontestably the utter hopelessness of Ireland. The writer knows the people well, and describes their faults of character perfectly."

A low faint sob caught Vyner's ear, and, on hurrying below, he found Ada seated at the table, with her head leaning on her arms.

"What 's the matter, Ada, darling?" asked he, gently.

"Oh, papa, it was for his mother he was crying; for though she seldom spoke to him or noticed him, he used to see her at the window, and now he 'll never see her more."

"We must try and comfort him, Ada; the poor boy has a very dreary lot in life."

"He says he is happy, papa! and that he only hopes he 'll never have to leave this lonely island all his life."

"Did he speak of his father at all?"

"No, papa; only to say that he 'd never remember whether he was at home or abroad, and that it was so pleasant not to have any one who cared what became of one."

"And you, — did you agree with him?"

"Oh, no, no!" cried she, as her eyes swam in tears. "I could have told him how much better it was to be loved."

Vyner turned away to hide his own emotion, and then, with an affected carelessness, said, "Get over this music-lesson now, and whenever you are free, tell Mr. Crab to hoist a bit of white bunting to the peak, and I 'll come back to fetch you for a walk with me."

"Is Mr. Grenfell going, papa?"

"No, darling; but why do you ask?"

"Because — because — I 'd rather go with you alone. It is always so much nicer and happier."

"How is it that Grenfell, with all his smartness, can never hit it off with any one, young or old, rich or poor?"

thought Vyner, as he walked the deck, deep in thought. "He reads everything, has a smattering of all subjects, with a good memory and a glib tongue, and yet I believe I am the only man about town who could tolerate him." If this were a reflection that had more than once occurred to his mind, it usually ended by impressing the conviction that he, Vyner, must have rare qualities of head and heart, not merely to endure, but actually to almost like, a companionship for which none other would have had taste or temper but himself. Now, however, — not easy is it to say why, — a doubt flashed across him that his doubting, distrustful, scoffing nature might prove in the end an evil, just as a certain malaria, not strong enough to give fever, will ultimately impregnate the blood and undermine the constitution.

"I don't think he has done me any mischief as yet," said he to himself, with a smile; "but shall I always be able to say as much?"

"You must read this paper; positively, you must," cried Grenfell from the sofa, where he lay under a luxurious awning. "This fellow writes well; he shows that the Irish never had any civilization, nor, except where it crept in through English influence, has there ever been a vestige of such in the island."

"I don't see I shall be anything the better for believing him!"

"It may save you from that blessed purchase of an Irish property that brought you down to all this savagery. It may rescue you from the regret of having a gentleman shot because he was intrepid enough to collect your rents. That surely is something."

"But I have determined on the purchase of Derryvaragh," said Vyner, "if it only be what descriptions make it."

"To live here, I hope — to turn Carib — cross yourself when you meet a priest, and wear a landlord's scalp at your waist-belt."

"Nay, nay! I hope for better things, and that the English influences you spoke of so feelingly will not entirely desert me in my banishment."

"Don't imagine that any one will come over here to see you, Vyner, if you mean that."

"Not even the trusty Grenfell?" said he, with a half-smile.

"Not if you were to give me the fee-simple of the barbarous tract you covet."

"I'll not believe it, George. I'll back your friendship against all the bogs that ever engulfed an oak forest. But what is that yonder? Is it a boat? It seems only a few feet long."

"It is one of those naval constructions of your charming islanders; and coming this way, too."

"The fellow has got a letter, sir; he has stuck it in his hatband," said Mr. Crab.

"An answer from Luttrell," muttered Vyner. "I wonder will he receive me?"

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE SPOIL WAS DIVIDED.

THE letter, which was handed on board by a very wild-looking native, was written on coarse paper, and sealed with the commonest wax. It was brief, and ran thus: —

"DEAR SIR, — I cannot imagine that such a meeting as you propose would be agreeable to either of us; certainly the impression my memory retains of you, forbids me to believe that you would like to see me as I am, and where I am. If your desire be, however, prompted by any kind thought of serving me, let me frankly tell you that I am as much beyond the reach of such kindness as any man can be who lives and breathes in this weary world. Leave me, therefore, to myself, and forget me.

"I am grateful for your attentions to my boy, but you will understand why I cannot permit him to revisit you. I am, faithfully yours,

"JOHN H. LUTTRELL."

"Well, did I guess aright?" cried Grenfell, as Vyner stood reading the letter over for the third time; "is his answer what I predicted?"

"Very nearly so," said the other, as he handed him the letter to read.

"It is even stronger than I looked for; and he begins 'Dear Sir.'"

"Yes, and I addressed him 'My dear Luttrell'!"

"Well; all the good sense of the correspondence is on his side; he sees naturally enough the worse than uselessness of a meeting. How could it be other than painful?"

"Still I am very sorry that he should refuse me."

"Of course you are; it is just the way a fellow in all the vigor of health walks down the ward of an hospital, and, as

he glances at the hollow cheeks and sunken eyes on either side, fancies how philanthropic and good he is to come there and look at them. You wanted to go and stare at this poor devil out of that sentimental egotism. I'm certain you never suspected it, but there is the secret of your motive, stripped of its fine illusions."

"How ill you think of every one, and with what pleasure you think it?"

"Not a bit. I never suffer myself to be cheated; but it does not amuse me in the least to unmask the knavery."

"Now, having read me so truthfully, will you interpret Luttrell a little?"

"His note does not want a comment. The man has no wish to have his poverty and degraded condition spied out. He feels something too low for friendship, and too high for pity; and he shrinks, and very naturally shrinks, from a scene in which every look he gave, every word he uttered, every sigh that he could but half smother, would be recalled to amuse your wife, and your sister-in-law, when you reached home again."

"He never imputed anything of the kind to me," said Vyner, angrily.

"And why not? Are we in our gossiping moments intent upon anything but being agreeable, not very mindful of private confidences or indiscreet avowals? We are only bent upon being good recounters, sensation novelists, always flattering ourselves the while as to the purity of our motives and the generosity of our judgments, when we throw into the narrative such words as the 'poor fellow,' the 'dear creature.' We forget the while that the description of the prisoner never affects the body of the indictment."

"I declare you are downright intolerable, Grenfell, and if the world were only half as bad as you'd make it, I'd say Luttrell was the wisest fellow going to have taken his leave of it."

"I'd rather sit the comedy out than go home and fret over its vapidness."

"Well, Mr. Crab," said Vyner, turning suddenly to where his captain was waiting to speak with him, "what news of our spar?"

"Nothing very good, sir. There 's not a bit of timber on the island would serve our purpose."

"I suppose we must shift as well as we can till we make the mainland!"

"This fellow here in the boat, sir," said a sailor, touching his cap as he came aft, "says that his master has three or four larch-trees about the length we want."

"No, no, Crab," whispered Vyner; "I don't think we can do anything in that quarter."

"Would he sell us one of them, my man?" cried Crab, to the peasant.

"He 'd give it to you," said the man, half doggedly.

"Yes, but we 'd rather make a deal for it. Look here, my good fellow; do you go back and fetch us the longest and stoutest of those poles, and here 's a guinea for your own trouble. Do you understand me?"

The man eyed the coin curiously, but made no motion to touch it. It was a metal he had never seen before, nor had he the faintest clew to its value.

"Would you rather have these, then?" said Crab, taking a handful of silver from his pocket and offering it to him.

The man drew the back of his hand across his eyes, as if the sight had dazzled him, and muttered something in Irish.

"Come, say you 'll do it," said Crab, encouragingly.

"Is there any answer for my master, to his letter, I mean?" said the man, looking at Vyner.

"No, I think not; wait a moment. No, none," said Vyner, after a moment of struggle; and the words were not well uttered, when the fellow pushed off his boat, and struck out with all his vigor for the shore.

"What a suspicious creature your savage is! That man evidently believed you meant to bribe him to some deep treachery against his master," said Grenfell.

"Do let the poor peasant escape," cried Vyner, laughingly, while he hastened below to avoid any further display of the other's malevolence, calling out to Mr. Crab to follow him. "Let us get under weigh with the land breeze this evening," said he.

"There's a strong current sets in here, sir. I'd as soon have daylight for it, if it's the same to you."

"Be it so. To-morrow morning, then, Crab;" and so saying, he took up a book, and tried to interest himself with it.

The peasant meanwhile gained the land, and made the best of his way homeward.

"Tell the master there's no answer, Molly," said he, as she stood wiping the perspiration from her face with her apron at the door of a long low-roofed building, into which all the assembled guests were congregated.

"Indeed, and I won't, Tim Hennesy," said she, tartly. "'T is enough is on my bones to-day, not to be thinking of letters and writings. Go in and help Dan Neven with that long trunk there, and then bring a hatchet and a hammer."

The man obeyed without a word; and, having assisted to deposit a heavy deal box like a sea-chest in the place assigned it, perceived that several others of various sizes and shapes lay around; all of which formed objects of intense curiosity to the visitors, if one were to judge from the close scrutiny they underwent, as well as the frequent tapping by knuckles and sticks, to assist the explorer to a guess at what was contained within.

A word or two will explain the scene. When Molly Ryan came to inform her master that the relatives of his late wife intended to sail by the evening's tide, and wished to pay their respects to him personally, before departure, he excused himself on some pretext of illness; but to cover his want of courtesy, he directed her to tell them that they were free to take, each of them, some memorial of her that was gone, and ordered Molly to have all the boxes that contained her effects conveyed into the long storehouse.

"Let them take what they like, Molly," said he, abruptly, as though not wishing to discuss the matter at more length.

"And as much as they like?" asked she.

"Yes, as much as they like," said he, motioning that he would be left in peace and undisturbed.

Loud and full were the utterances of praise that this munificence evoked. "Was n't he the real gentleman?"

"Was n't it the heart's blood of a good stock?" "Was n't it like one of the 'ould race,' that could think of an act at once so graceful and liberal?" "After all, it was n't proud he was. It was just a way he had; and 'poor Shusy, that was gone,' was the lucky woman to have been his wife." "To be sure, it was a solitary kind of life she led, and without friends or companions; but she had the best of everything." Such were the first commentaries. Later on, gratitude cooled down to a quiet rationalism, and they agreed that he was only giving away what was of no use to him. "He 'll surely not marry again, and what could he do with cloaks and shawls and gowns, that would only be moth-eaten if he kept them."

"These two here is linen," said Molly, with an air of decision, "and I suppose you don't want to see them."

A murmur of disapproval ran through the meeting. They wanted to see everything. His honor's munificence was not limited. It included all that was once hers; and a very animated discussion ensued as to what constituted personal properties.

"Maybe you 'd like the crockery too," said Molly, indignantly, for she began to feel ashamed of the covetousness.

"We 'll see everything," said old Peter Hogan, "and we 'll begin with this." So saying, he inserted a chisel beneath one of the pine planks, and soon displayed to the company a large chest full of house linen. The articles were neither costly or remarkable, but they seemed both to the beholders; and sheets and napkins and pillow-cases and table-cloths were all scrutinized closely, and unanimously declared to be perfection.

The crockery and glass were next examined, and even more enthusiastically approved of. Some curious china and some specimens of old Venetian glass, family relics that even connoisseurship might have valued, really amazed them, and many an epithet in Irish went round as a cup or a goblet was passed from hand to hand to be admired.

The clothes were the last to be examined, and with all their heightened expectations the reality surpassed what they looked for. Hats and shawls and silk gowns, scarfs and bonnets and ribbons, soon covered every box and bench

around, and covetous eyes sparkled as each longed for some special prize in this vast lottery. "I remember the day she wore that brown silk at chapel," said one. "That's the blue tabinet she had on at the christening." "There's the elegant shawl she had on at the fair at Ennis." "But look at this, — is n't this a real beauty?" cried one, who drew forth a bright dress of yellow satin, which seemed never to have been worn.

"Don't you think you could pick and choose something to plaze ye now?" said Molly, who was in reality not a little frightened by all this enthusiasm.

"It is true for you, Molly Ryan," said Peter. "There's something for everybody; and since the company trusts it to me to make the division, this is what I do. The crockery and glass for Mr. Rafter, the linen for myself, and the clothes to be divided among the women when we get home."

"So that you'll take everything," cried Molly.

"With the blessin' of Providence 't is what I mean," said he; and a full chorus of approving voices closed the speech.

"The master said you were to choose what plazed you —"

"And it's what we're doing. We are plazed with everything, and why would n't we? Was n't she that's gone our own blood, and did n't she own them? The pillow she lay on and the cup she dhrunk out of is more to us than their weight in goold."

Another and fuller murmur approved these sentiments.

"And who is to have this?" cried one of the women, as she drew forth from a small pasteboard box an amber necklace and cross, the one solitary trinket that belonged to her that was gone. If not in itself an object of much value, it was priceless to the eyes that now gazed on it, and each would gladly have relinquished her share to possess it.

"Maybe you'd have the dacency to leave that for his honor," said Molly, reprovingly.

Less, perhaps, in accordance with the sentiment than in jealous dread lest another should obtain it, each seemed to concur with this recommendation.

"There's something in what Molly says," said old Peter, with the air of a judge delivering a charge. "If his honor houlds to a thing of the kind, it would be hard to refuse to

him; but if he does n't, or if it would only be more grief to be reminding him of what 's gone — Let me finish what I have to say, Molly," added he, with some irritation, as a sneering laugh from her interrupted his speech.

"There 's an old pair of shoes of hers in the room within. I 'll go for them, and then you 'll have everything," said she; and she darted an angry glance around and left the spot.

"I 'll wear this, — this is for me!" cried a little girl, taking the amber necklace from the case aud putting it on. And a buzz of astonishment at the audacity ran around

She was about eleven years of age, but her dark blue eyes and long lashes made her seem older. It was one of those beautiful faces which appear to suggest that with years the delicate loveliness must be lost, so perfect the accordance between the expression and the feature. She had a mass of golden-brown hair, which fell in long curls over a neck of perfect whiteness; but even these traits were less striking than the air of gracefulness that really implied a condition far above that of her rank in life; and, as she stood in the midst to be admired, there was a haughty consciousness of her claim for admiration that was as triumphant in that assembly as ever was the proud assertion of beauty in a court.

"It becomes you well, Kitty O'Hara, and you shall have it, too," cried old Hogan, who was her grandfather, and whose pride in her took the shape of the boldest aspirations for her future. "Ain't I right?" cried he, appealing to those around him. "Look at her, and say if she is n't a picture!"

With a full burst of assent all broke in at this appeal, and still she stood there unabashed, almost unmoved, indeed, by the admiring looks and enthusiastic words around her.

"Is n't that the making of a lady, ay, and as elegant a lady as ever stepped?" cried the old man, as his eyes ran over with proud emotion. "And as sure as my name is Peter Hogan, it's diamonds will be round the same neck yet! Yes, my darling, yer ould grandfather won't be to the fore to see it, but there's some here that will. Mark the words I'm saying now; lay them up in your hearts, and see if I'm not telling the truth. There she stands before you that 'll raise her family and make a name for them far and wide."

While he delivered this boastful speech, the girl turned her eyes from him, a slight flush deepened the color of her cheek, and a scarcely perceptible eagerness showed itself on the parted lips; but her attitude was unchanged, and a slight nod of the head, in token of assent, was the only notice she took of his words.

"Yes, come in, my dear," cried Hogan, at this moment, — "come in, Master Harry; there's none here but your own kith and kin, and here's a nice little wife, or a sweetheart, for you." As he said this, he drew from the doorway, where he lingered, the boy, who now came forward with a shame-faced and reluctant look. "There they stand," said the old man, as he placed them side by side, "and I defy the world to show me a purtier couple."

The boy turned a long and steady look at the girl, — something for the beauty, and something, too, doubtless, there was for the ornaments that heightened it, — and she bore the scrutiny without a shadow of constraint; but there was even more; for, as he continued to stare at her, she smiled superciliously, and said at last, with a faint smile, "I hope I'm not so ugly that I frighten you!"

There was just that pertness in the speech that stood for wit with the company, and they laughed loud and heartily at what they fancied to be a repartee.

"Did ye ever see a purtier, — did ye ever see as purty?" cried old Hogan.

"Yes, I did, this very evening, on board of that schooner there. There 's one ten times as handsome, and she is a lady too."

Insolent as were the words, the look and manner with which he gave them were far more so. It was like the speech of a proud noble to his vassals, who actually derived a sense of pleasure in the measure of outrage he could dare to mete out to them. The boy turned his haughty stare around at each in turn, as though to say, "Who is there to gainsay me?" and then left the place.

"Is n't that a worthy twig of the ould tree?" cried old Hogan, passionately. "The world has n't done with the Luttrells yet! But I know well who puts these thoughts in the child's head. It 's Molly Ryan, and no other. Taching him, as she calls it, to remember he 's a gentleman."

The company endorsed all the indignation of the speaker, but, soon recalled to more practical thoughts, proceeded to nail down the trunks and boxes, and prepared to carry them down to the seaboard.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE SEA-SHORE AT NIGHT.

TOWARDS the evening of the same day a light breeze from the westward sprang up, and Mr. Crab argued that there was little use in waiting any longer to refit, and proposed to sail with the tide. By keeping along close to shore he learned that the ebb would take him well out to sea before midnight. Vyner, therefore, gave orders that the yacht should lie-to after she rounded the extreme promontory of the island, and send in a boat there to take him off, thus giving him one last ramble over a spot it was scarcely possible he would ever revisit.

He landed early in the evening, and amused himself strolling at will along the desolate shore. There were objects enough on every hand to excite interest, whether the visitor had been man of science or man of taste. Strange sea-plants and shells abounded; lichens of colors the most novel and varied; rocks, whose layers defied all theories of stratification, and were convoluted and enclosed one within another inextricably; caves, whose stalactites glittered with the gorgeous tints of Bohemian glass. The very cries of the sea-fowl had a wild unearthly shriek in them that seemed to suit the solitude, and their fearlessness showed how little they knew of molestation.

"How peaceful at first, how dreary at last, must be life in such a spot!" thought Vyner; who, like all men, would pronounce upon the problem as it addressed itself to *him*. He could understand the repose of coming suddenly there out of the din and turmoil of the world, and he could picture to his mind how the soft teaching of that first sentiment would darken into the impenetrable blackness of unbroken gloom. As he thus mused, he was sorry that he had written

that note to Luttrell. He had no right to obtrude himself upon one who, in withdrawing from the world, declared that he desired to be unknown. He was half angry with himself for a step which now appeared so unjustifiable. "After all," thought he, "the man who makes this his home should not fear to have his door forced; he ought to be able to sleep with his latch ajar, and never dread an intruder." Again and again he wished that he had gone his way without even letting Luttrell know that he had been his neighbor.

As he mused he rambled onward now, from some rocky point, obtaining a view of the jagged coast-line, broken into innumerable bays, some small enough to be mere fissures, now turning his glance inward, where a succession of valleys, brown and purple in the evening light, darkened and deepened beneath him. He could, besides, in the far distance, make out the copse of trees that sheltered the Abbey, and at last detect the twinkle of a light through the foliage, and then, turning seaward, he could descry the light and airy spars of his little vessel as she slowly crept along, a light from a stern window showing where he, too, for the nonce, owned a home, on the blue waters of the Atlantic. What a difference between these two homes! what blissful thoughts and budding hopes and present enjoyments in the one, what unbroken gloom in the other! "I was wrong to have written, but I wish he had not repulsed me," said he; and still there lingered in his heart a half hope that, if he were to present himself boldly before Luttrell, he would not reject him. The dread of Grenfell was too great to make him risk defeat; that scoffing, sneering spirit, who, on the mere fact of thinking ill of every one, took credit for detecting all individual shortcoming, would be so unforgiving if he had to come and own that he had been twice repulsed!

"No," thought he, "I 'll accept my defeat as it is, and try to think no more of it;" and then he endeavored to think of the scene and the objects around him. From the spur of the mountain, a long, low, shingly promontory stretched into the sea, at the extremity of which were some rocks, forming an arm of a large bay that swept boldly inwards; and this was the spot which, on the map, he had pointed out as a suitable place for the yacht to lie-to and wait for him.

He now saw, however, that in following out the spit of land, he had diverged largely from the way, and must retrace his steps for above a mile ere he could reach the strand, and at the same time, in the half-fading twilight, he could make out the schooner, under easy sail, heading still farther to the southward.

Crab had evidently mistaken the headland, and was making for one still more distant. What was to be done? In coming down to the coast-line he had subjected himself to following out all the jagged and irregular course of the shore, and yet to venture inland without a guide would have been the extreme of rashness. There was nothing for it but to make a signal, if perchance it could be seen; the "Meteor" was not more than a mile off, and the project seemed not hopeless. He tied his handkerchief to his cane, and hastened on towards one of the rocks before him; as he drew nigher, he saw something which at last he made out to be the figure of a man, seated with his head supported between his hands, and gazing steadfastly seaward. Vyner mounted the rock and waved his signal several times, but in vain; the dark background of the mountain probably obscured the flag, and prevented its being observed.

"I want to signal the schooner yonder, my good man," cried he to a poor-looking creature who sat crouched down close to the water's edge; "could you get me some dry leaves or chips together to make a fire?" The other looked up with a startled air, for he had thought himself alone, and then, rising to his feet, they stood face to face. "My dear old friend!" cried Vyner, "have we met at last? How glad I am to see you again!"

"Not this way; surely not this way," muttered Luttrell, in a faint and broken voice.

"To be sure I am, Luttrell. I'll call the chance that led me here one of the happiest of my life if it brings you back to any of your old feeling for me."

"You got my note?" asked the other, in a hoarse voice.

"Yes; and it was no part of my intention to molest you, Luttrell. This meeting is, I assure you, the merest accident."

"Let me go, then, Vyner; the shame is killing me; I

would n't that you had seen me thus, — in these rags, in all this misery. These are not the memories I wanted you to carry away with you; but what would you have? I came here to live like the others."

"My dear old friend, I wanted to talk of long ago with you; it is not to reproach you I 've come. Take my word for it, I feel too acutely all the wrong you have suffered from mine. I know too well at whose door your heaviest injuries lie."

"If I had attempted to be more or better than my neighbors, I could n't have lived here," cried he, eagerly reverting to his self-defence.

"But why live here, Luttrell? It is not at your age, or with your abilities, a man retires from the game of life."

"I have played all my cards, Gervais," said he, with a wild laugh, "and never scored a point with them."

"How many a fellow has had a long run of ill-luck, to be repaid by as great a share of fortune after."

"Ay, but I 'll not try it! I don't ask, I don't wish it. If I were to win now I have nothing to do with my winnings."

"Think of your boy, — your fine boy, Luttrell!"

"Ah, Robinson!" cried he, laughing; and Vyner blushed deeply as he fancied how the child had repeated the nickname. "There is only one way he could want such assistance; and if he but live here, he 'll never need it."

"Live here! but you cannot mean that he should?"

"Why not? What need is there that he should know of all those fine prizes that his father strove for and never won, any more than of fine food, or fine clothes, or fine equipages?"

Vyner shook his head in dissent, and the other went on with increased energy, —

"My own mistake was to have borne the thing so long; I might have come here before my health was broken, my hand unsteady, my foot weak, and my nerves shattered. I 'd have gone out to see you, Vyner," said he, suddenly; "but Harry told me you were not alone; you had a friend. Who is he?"

"Grenfell; you remember a Grenfell at Christ Church?"

"Only Cox and Grenfell's son, the potted-shrimp man; of course it 's not he?"

"Yes, it is, and a very clever fellow too."

"There 's what I could n't do, Vyner; there you beat me," cried he, aloud; "with the peasant, with the mountaineer, with the fisherman, yes, I can live in daily, hourly companionship. I can eat as coarse food, wear as coarse clothes, lie down on as mean a bed, talk as penuriously, and think as humbly, but I could n't endure the continual refinement of your fellow of new-made wealth, nor the pretensions of one who feels that by money he is to be any one's equal."

"How your old pride of family stirs you still, Luttrell."

"Not so; it is not for myself I am pleading. I am not come of a stock so distinguished that I can arrogate to myself the defence of my order. The first of my name who came over here was a Dutch pedler; some generations of thrift and industry made us gentlemen. For time does for family what it does for wine, and just merely by age your poor light Medoc mellows into very drinkable claret. But how have you made me rattle on in my old guise! See, they are signalling to you yonder; that lantern at the peak has been run up now."

"I must manage to let them know I 'm here; how to make a fire is the question."

"There 's abundance of broken wood along here. The fishermen's boats fare ill along this coast; we 'll soon gather enough for your purpose."

As they strayed about collecting the fragments of broken timber, Vyner pondered over the absence of all move on Luttrell's part to invite him to his home. Indeed, in his alacrity to make the signal, he only showed his eagerness to aid his departure. He wondered, too, how much external change and how little real alteration had taken place in Luttrell. His old conversational turn was there, though he seemed half ashamed when he found he had fallen into it.

"I told you we should not be long making a respectable pile," said Luttrell. "The wreck furnishing the bonfire is the law of nature. If my eyes do not deceive me, they have lowered a boat;" as he spoke, he knelt down to kindle the

wood, by using his hat to fan the flame, which, after smouldering for a moment, sprang up into a clear tongue of fire. "There, Vyner, they see it; they have thrice lowered the light from the peak."

"The boat can come in here safely?"

"There's water for a large ship in this bay. Great facilities exist in these Islands of Arran; and if trade were ever to turn its steps hither, I'd direct my attention to wrecking to-morrow. The man who has so successfully achieved his own ruin ought to be able to assist others."

A shout from the beach was now replied to by Vyner, and the stout rowers pulled in vigorously to the shore.

"I have not shocked you, Vyner," said Luttrell, "by asking you to see what would have shocked you, — the place I live in. If you were one of those men to whom mere curiosity affords some pleasure, I'd have shelved my pride, or my shame, or whatever be the name of it, and said, 'Come and look at my den; see to what poor conclusions a life of blunders leads;' but you are made of other stuff, and would find no happiness in my humiliation."

"Will you not come on board with me, Luttrell, and let us have one long summer's night gossip together?"

"I'd scarce refuse if you had been alone; I can't face your distinguished friend."

"You are unjust, quite unjust to him; besides, knowing our old ties, he'll leave us to ourselves, and we shall have our talk unmolested. Is there not in the past something to build on for the future — Well, for Harry?"

"I think not. It is not necessary to plot out the life of one bred and trained as he is. Let the world treat him as it may, he'll scarcely meet any hardships he has not had a foretaste of."

"But what do you intend by him?"

"If he likes idleness, the elegant leisure of my own life, for instance," said he, with a mocking laugh, "he'll have about the amount of fortune such a mode of living requires. If he be ambitious, or prefer a course of activity, he can go on board some of these American traders, or sail with a fishing lugger. Frankly, Vyner, it's a matter I have not given much thought to. There is but one part of it, indeed,

on which I can declare I have made up my mind. He is to have no protectors, no patrons. We are a hard race to deal with, and we often seem ungrateful when we are merely self-willed."

"How I wish you 'd let me talk all these things over with you," said Vyner, in a friendly tone; "not to say that I want your advice on my own account."

"Advice, and from me!"

"Even so, Luttrell. I have a project about purchasing some property on the coast here. Not a very profitable investment, perhaps, but certainly cheap, and at some long future to become possibly remunerative."

"Derryvaragh, I suppose?"

"Yes, that 's the name."

"The most picturesque spot in the island; finer than the boasted Killarney itself, and far and away beyond Windermere and the Scotch Lakes. I know it well. I have walked the mountains grouse-shooting, and fished every mile of the river; but what would you do with it when you called it yours? You dare not assert one single right of property; the people who live there, and whose fathers have lived there for centuries, have never acknowledged lord or master. You 'll stock it with sheep, and send an agent. They 'll eat your mutton, and shoot your agent. You 'll appeal to the law, and you might as well threaten a New Zealander with a bill in Chancery. Leave such speculations alone; there are no fortunes to be made here, not even fame for having reformed us. All the privilege your purchase will confer will be to feed us in times of famine, and be shot at when prices rise and the nights grow longer."

"Why, you are more discouraging than Grenfell!"

"I don't know about Grenfell, but I know that Ireland is not to be bettered by men like you. It is out of our own rough energies must come the cure for our own coarse maladies. Go back and build model cottages in Norfolk, give prizes to your oldest farm-laborer, or the mother of the largest family. Here 's your yawl; good-bye."

"Do step in and come on board with me, Luttrell, if only for an hour or two."

"No, I cannot. I 'd not stand your friend's impertinences

about Ireland, besides, and I 'd be led into rudeness, which I 'd not forgive myself. Lady Vyner is not with you?"

"No, she 's in Wales, at Llantlannoch, where I wish you 'd let me tell her you were coming to see her."

"Who knows!"

"My dear Luttrell, is this a promise?"

"No, not exactly."

"Will you write to me?"

"I think not."

"May I write to you?"

"I 'd rather you would not. You cannot suspect, Vyner, how painful even these few minutes we have passed together will render the life I go back to; do not add to that bitterness by what would become a ceaseless sorrow."

"But Harry. Let Harry come to us; there is an excellent school at Wrexham."

"There 's a school on that promontory yonder, where the master, besides reading and writing, instructs in net-mending, sail-making, caulking, and fish-salting. Your Wrexham fellow could n't compete with that. Good-bye."

With a hurried shake of the hand, and as though nervously irritable at being stared at by the sailors, Luttrell moved away; and Vyner gazed after him for a moment, and stepped into the boat.

"Mr. Crab says, sir, that the weather looks dirty outside," said the coxswain; but Vyner did not heed the remark, and sat deeply buried in his own thoughts.

CHAPTER VII.

A COTTAGE IN WALES.

If we wanted a contrast to the wild desolation of Arran, it would be in the lovely valley of North Wales, where Vyner's cottage stood. It was a purchase he had made purely from its picturesque beauty; a spot chanced upon in a summer's ramble, and bought at once with that zest which leads a rich man to secure the gem that has captivated his fancy. It stood on a little rocky platform that projected from a mountain, and looked downwards and upwards, through one of those charming valleys which now widen into luxuriance, and now contract again till they resume the features of a deep ravine. A river of some size foamed and tumbled over a rocky bed beneath, and occasionally deepened into some waveless pool, over which the red-berried ash-trees drooped gracefully, and the dark copper beeches threw their bronzed shadows. Deep woods clothed the mountain in front, and over them all rose the rugged summit of Cader Idris, with its amphitheatre of rock half lost in the clouds.

If, as regards loveliness of position, tranquillity, and beauty in all its details, the cottage of Dinasllyn could scarcely be surpassed, there was one detracting element which certainly impaired its charm, the "Quid amarum," amid all its excellence. It was a show place. It had been the scene of some romantic attachment, some half-remembered Abelard and Heloïse, whose pictures yet survived, and of whom there were traditions of rustic benches where they used to sit, of trees whereon their initials were carved, of cedars that they had planted. Vyner and his wife did not at first know, nor estimate, to what a heritage they had succeeded, nor in the least suspect what an inflic-

tion mere purposeless curiosity, united to plenty of leisure, may become.

The old gardener whom they had taken on with the cottage was not at all disposed to surrender that perquisite of black-mail he had for years long levied from visitors, nor, perhaps, did he fancy to abdicate those functions of "Cicerone" which elevated him in the eyes of his fellows. If his love-story was not as affecting as Paul and Virginia, it had its realisms that compensated for some pathos. He could show the dairy where Chloe made the butter, and the kitchen-garden where Daphnis hoed his cabbages. There were the steps cut in the solid rock that led down to her bath in the river; "here the bower she loved so well; here the tree she planted."

To be obliged to devote a day of every week, or even certain hours of a day, to the invasion of a set of strangers, induced by *ennui*, by curiosity, or, as it may be, by mere imitation, to wander about your house and stroll through your garden, free to lounge in your easy-chair, or dispose themselves on your sofas, criticising your pictures, your prints, your books, and your music, hazarding speculations as to your tastes and dispositions from the titles of the volumes on your table and the names of your newspapers, — to feel that, as the clock strikes a certain hour on a certain morning, all the cherished privacy which constitutes what we call home is fled, and that your hall is a public street, and your drawing-room a piazza, so that you are driven to hide yourself in your own house, at the peril of being classified among the curiosities, and perhaps sent off to press with the other details, satisfactory or the reverse, of the visitor's experience, — these are no slight evils. They are a heavy tax on all the benefits of possession, and we have our doubts if even Naboth's vineyard would be enviable, if linked with the condition of showing the grounds and displaying the grapes to vulgar visitors.

When the Vyners purchased the cottage they had been told of the custom, just as you are told of a certain pathway across the lawn, which was a mere usurpation, a thing "without a shadow of legality," that you have only to close to-morrow, but of whose actual torments when you do come

to suppress, no one has ever given the measure. They heard that the former owner usually set an hour or two apart on a Wednesday or a Thursday to gratify tourist curiosity; in fact, the celebrity of the spot had been ingeniously introduced as an element of value, — just as the shade of Pope might be catalogued amongst the merits of Twickenham, and the memory of Rousseau figure in the inventory of a certain cottage near Geneva!

Vyner was himself one of those easy, happy natures which submit without sacrifice to what affords pleasure to others. His wife saw no hardship in yielding to a moderate amount of this infliction; the more, since they only came to the cottage for about six or eight weeks of every year. It was Georgina Courtenay who resisted the custom as a most "unwarrantable intrusion, a practical impertinence," as she called it, which "reduced a family either to the condition of the cracked china on the mantelpiece, or the fussy housekeeper who exhibited it." Georgina was not a very tolerant nature; with what she disagreed she made no compromise and, like most such people, she found that life gave her sufficient occasion for conflict.

Vyner's absence from home presented an admirable opportunity "to suppress this nuisance," as she phrased it, and she accordingly had a notice appended to the gate — a copy of which was also duly forwarded to the village inn — stating that, during the sojourn of the family at Dinasllyn, the cottage and grounds were not open for the inspection of strangers. The morning of the famous ordinance was not more anxious to the household of Charles the Tenth, than was that of the edict to the family at the cottage. What was to follow that great *coup d'état* was the question. Would each of the vested interests — gardener, gate-keeper, housekeeper, and butler — submit to see their long-established perquisites suddenly effaced and extinguished? Would the village folk be content to lose the profits of strangers, who each year flocked down in increasing hordes? Would the tourists themselves, who had carried their romantic sympathies hundreds of miles by land or sea, agree to put up with a glance at the cottage chimneys by telescope, or a peep through the iron gate at the trim avenue, whose abrupt

turning shut out all further inspection? If no splashed and booted aides-de-camp rode in to tell with trembling accents that popular sentiment had taken the menacing form of a silent and brooding anger, at least there were voices to declare that at "The Goat" the visitors were highly indignant, and that one of the strangers at the "Watkin's Arms" had despatched a copy of the manifesto, with a commentary, to the "Times." Indeed, it was in the public room of this latter establishment that public indignation found its chief exponent. Visitors from far-off lands, a traveller from Ireland, a gentleman from the United States, a German naturalist, with a green tin box and a pair of brown spectacles, were loud in declaring their sentiments, which amounted to this: that the possessors of any spot remarkable for its historic associations, of a much-prized marble or world-famed picture, were mere trustees for the public, who had an unimpeachable right to see, gaze on, and admire to their heart's content; these being privileges which in no wise detracted from the positive value of the object so worshipped, since there is no record of any garden whose perfume could be exhausted by smelling, nor any picture whose beauties mere sight could have absorbed. These observations, we are careful to record, were embodied in a very formal-looking document, signed by about twenty names, and only awaited the selection of a suitable envoy to be transmitted to the cottage.

It is but a fair tribute to American courage to own that, where so many held back, reluctant and timid, the Yankee declared his readiness to go forward. He protested that he would rather like it. "It was just his grit," and that he was "main tired of sittin' there like a wounded skunk, with his head out of a hole." Whether from some lurking jealousy of the stranger, or some ungenerous disbelief in his address, the company did not accept his offer, or at least show such eagerness in the acceptance as they might, but broke up into twos and threes, discussing the event. While these deliberations went forward, a one-horse chaise drew up to the door, and a writing-desk and a small carpet-bag were deposited within it by the landlord, who, by a significant look towards his other guests, seemed to say, "Here's your opportunity! This is your man!"

"Who is he? Where is he going?" asked one, calling him aside.

"He 's Mr. M'Kinlay, from London, the family law-agent, going over to the cottage."

He had but finished this speech, when a middle-aged man, with a high complexion, and short gray hair, without whiskers, appeared, conning over his bill as he came forward.

"You can scarce call it supper, Mr. Pugh," said he, in an accent unmistakably Scotch, — "the bit of fish, and the leg of a cold turkey, — except that it was eaten at eleven at night. It was just a snack."

"It 's only two-and-six, sir," said the other, humbly.

"Only! I 'd like to know what you 'd make it, man. That 's the price of a right good meal up in town, and not served on a coarse tablecloth, nor over a sanded floor; and what 's this 1s. 10d.? What 's that?"

"Ale, sir. Your servant drank it very freely."

"If it only disagreed with him as it did with me, I 'll make no objection to his excess. Are these gentlemen waiting to speak to me, for I don't think I have the honor — "

"Yes, sir," said a short, apoplectic-looking man, with a bald head. "We are strangers, — strangers casually thrown into acquaintance at this hotel. We have come here from motives of pleasure or health or indolence, one common object having its attraction for us all, — the far-famed cottage of Dinasllyn. We have learned, however, to our infinite disappointment, that by a whim, a mere caprice — for it is impossible it could be more — of the persons who are the present occupants, the travellers, the tourists I will call them, are to be excluded in future, and all access refused to a spot which has its claims on the sympathies not alone of the Englishman, for I see at my side a learned professor from Jena, and a distinguished citizen of New York — "

"Kansas, stranger, Little Rock," said the Yankee, interrupting, and then advancing to the front. "Here 's how it is, sir. Your friends up yonder ain't content to have God's gifts all their own, but they won't even let a man look at them. That ain't nature, and it ain't sense. We have

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drawn up our notions in a brief message. Are you a-mindin' of me, stranger?"

This question was not completely uncalled for, since for some few seconds Mr. M'Kinlay had turned to the landlord, and was occupied in the payment of his bill.

"Seventeen shillings and fourpence, leaving eightpence for Thomas, Mr. Pugh; and remember that your driver is now fully paid, unless I should stay to dinner."

"Are you a-mindin' of *me*, sir?" said the Yankee, with an energy that actually made the other start, and sent a deeper crimson to his cheeks.

"I must say, sir, — I will say, that, having no acquaintance with you, having never seen you till now — "

"All your loss, stranger, that 's a fact! You 're not the first man that regretted he did not know the length of *my* boot before he put his foot on my corns. You 'll have to take them papers, — do you mind? — you 'll have to take them papers, and give them to your friends up yonder!"

"I 'm neither a postman nor your messenger, sir," said M'Kinlay, getting into the chaise.

"You 'll have to take them papers," and he laid them on the seat of the carriage as he spoke, "that 's how it is! and as sure as my name is Dodge! — Herodotus Manning Dodge! — you 'd better give an account of 'em when you drive out of that gate up there, for I 'll wait for you, if it was till next fall!"

"That 's mighty plain talking, anyhow," broke in a voice, with a very distinctive accent, "and a man need n't be much of a gentleman to understand it."

"Even a brief visit," cried out the first speaker.

"Just to see the cedars, or Clorinda's grotto," lisped out a female voice.

But Mr. M'Kinlay did not wait for more; but, by an admonitory poke of his umbrella, set his driver off at full speed, and was soon well out of both eye and ear shot.

To say that Mr. M'Kinlay drove away in a towering passion — that he was excessively angry and indignant — would be the truth, but still not the whole truth, for he was also terribly frightened. There was in the tall Yankee's look, language, and gesture a something that smacked of the

bush and the hickory-tree — a vague foreshadowing of Lynch law or no law — that overpowered him. Such a man, within a reasonable distance of Scotland Yard, for instance, might not have proved so terrible; but here he was in the heart of the Welsh mountains, in the very spot of all others where there was every facility for a deed of violence. "He might throw me over that cliff, or pitch me into that quarry hole," muttered he; and the landscape at the moment offered both the illustrations to aid his fancy.

It was, then, in a tremor of mingled anger and terror that he drove up to the gate, and in no patient mood was it that he sat outside the padlocked portal till a messenger went up to the house with his card to obtain leave for his admission. The order was speedily given, and he passed in.

The brief interval of traversing the space between the gate-lodge and the cottage was passed by Mr. M'Kinlay in arranging his cravat, brushing the dust from his coat, and so far as might be, smoothing down any asperities that should have betrayed themselves in his features; for, though neither a young man nor a man of the world of fashion, he had his pretensions, the most cherished one of all which was a design upon the hand of Miss Georgina Courtenay. Had Miss Courtenay been in the full blaze of her beauty, as she was some eight or nine years before, Mr. M'Kinlay would never have dared to lift his eyes to her; had she even continued to live in town and mingle in that society where she had always lived and moved, he would not have dreamed of such a presumption. But Mr. M'Kinlay knew the world. He had seen an exiled Grand-Duke in a hansom cab, and had actually met a deposed prince on a Margate steamer. In the changeful fortunes of life, the "price current" was the only test of anything. Railroads and mines and telegraphic companies rose and fell with the fluctuations of the market, and marriageable ladies might come one day to figure in the share list! Miss Georgina, however ungallant the confession, represented a security at a discount. She had gone down year by year, and at last ceased to be quoted. And yet "it was a very good thing." She had, none knew it better, — very few so well, — she had eighteen thousand

pounds, besides expectations, — the latter very reasonable, and promising in their way. Her connections were admirable; high enough to give him a very considerable lift socially, and yet not so elevated as to make his rise that of a mere "parvenu." Professionally, the advantage would be great, and lead to much parliamentary business, the carrying of local bills, and a deal of very profitable employment. He flattered himself that in most other respects there was much the world would deem suitable. He was twelve — well, if you like, fourteen — years her senior; but then neither was very young, and when a woman had reached we shall not say what of the thirties, her marrying was not subjected to the criticisms applied to the blushing bride of eighteen or twenty. Lastly, he was well off, had a capital business, a good house in a good street, was "well placed" amongst men of his class, and altogether favorably regarded by his betters. "She might do worse," muttered he, at the end of his rumination, as he descended from the chaise, with an amount of activity in his movements that showed he had detected the flounce of a muslin dress at the drawing-room window.

"All well, I hope, Rickards?" said he to the stout butler, who bowed his welcome in most gracious guise.

"Quite well, Mr. M'Kinlay; and, indeed, you look the sam sir."

"Nothing the matter with me, Rickards, that a little rest won't remedy. Over-work, over-work is my malady!"

Mr. Rickards sighed responsively; he had heard men speak of the affection, and the symptoms they mentioned were quite appalling. "Her Ladyship's not down yet, but Miss Georgina is in the drawing-room," added he, with great significance of manner. "Step this way, sir."

Miss Courtenay was busily engaged searching for a letter in her writing-desk, when the butler announced, in his most emphatic manner, Mr. M'Kinlay; but she only turned her head round, and, with a weak smile, said, "Oh, Mr. M'Kinlay! I trust they did not keep you waiting on the road. You know we have been obliged to have the gate locked."

"I heard so. Indeed, I have heard of little else since my

arrival, Miss Courtenay," said he, not altogether mastering the anger he felt at his cool reception. "I hope Lady Vyner is well."

"Yes, as well as she ever is. What a provoking thing it is to mislay a letter; but I suppose it is an oversight you have never committed. You have everything in order, docketed, pigeon-holed, and what not."

"Pardon me, I am the most careless of men. All about me is a chaos of confusion."

"Indeed!" said she, with a faint, very faint show of interest, as though quite unexpectedly aware of some favorable trait in his character. "Who would have thought it! It is a letter from my niece's governess I have lost, and with it all clew to her address."

"I can, perhaps, supply that," said Mr. M'Kinlay; "at least, if it be the town she stopped at while the yacht is being repaired."

"Exactly so. What's the name of it?"

"Here it is," said he, producing a small clasped note-book from which, after a brief search, he read, "Mademoiselle Heinzleman's address will meanwhile be 'Carrick's Royal Hotel, Westport, Ireland.'"

"What a blessing is red tapery, after all!" said she, in a sort of soliloquy. "If there were not these routine people, what would become of us?"

"I am charmed that even my blemishes should have rendered you a service," said he, with a tingling cheek.

"I don't think my sister knows you are here," said she, ignoring all his remarks.

"I suspect Rickards must have told her," said he, half stiffly.

"Just as likely not; he is getting so stupid, — *so* old."

This was a very cruel speech to be so emphasized, for Rickards was only one year Mr. M'Kinlay's senior.

"He looks active, alert, and I'd not guess him above forty-six or seven."

"I don't care for the number of his years, but he is old enough to be fussy and officious, and he has that atrocious activity which displays itself with certain middle-aged people by a quick short step, abrupt speech, and a grin when

they don't hear you. Oh, don't you hate that deaf-man's smile?"

Mr. M'Kinlay would fain have smiled, too, but he feared the category it would sentence him to.

"I'm afraid you expected to find my brother here, but he's away; he is cruising somewhere along the coast of Ireland."

"I was aware of that. Indeed, I am on my way to join him, and only diverged at Crewe to come over here, that I might bring him the latest advices from home."

"And are you going yachting?" said she, with a sort of surprise that sent the blood to M'Kinlay's face, and even his forehead.

"No, Miss Courtenay, I trust not, for I detest the sea; but Sir Gervais wants my advice about this Irish estate he is so full of."

"Oh, don't let him buy anything in Ireland! I entreat of you, Mr. M'Kinlay, not to sanction this. None of us would ever go there, not even to look at it."

"I imagine the mischief is done."

"What do you mean by being done?"

"That the purchase is already made, the agreement ratified, and everything completed but the actual payment."

"Well, then, don't pay; compromise, contest, make difficulties. You legal people need n't be told how to raise obstacles. At all events, do anything rather than have an Irish property."

"I wish I had one."

"Well, I wish you had; that is, if you are so bent upon it. But I must go and tell my sister this distressing news. I don't know how she'll bear it! By the way," added she, as she reached the door, "I shall find you here when I come back, — you are not going away?"

"Certainly not without seeing Lady Vyner, if she will accord me that honor," said he, stiffly.

"Of course she'll see you," cried she, and left the room.

Left alone with his reflections, Mr. M'Kinlay had not the pleasantest company. Had he mistaken all the relations between Miss Courtenay and himself, or was she changed to him, — totally changed? Was it thus that they met at

last? He knew that she always had a certain flippant manner, and that she was eminently what the French call *inconséquent;* but she was more, far more, now. The allusion to Rickard's age was a direct impertinence, and the question as to his yachting taste was a palpable sneer at the habits of his daily life.

"The case does not look well, — certainly not well," murmured he, as he walked the room with his hands behind his back. "Many would throw up the brief, and say, 'Take a nonsuit.' Yes, most men would; but I'll do nothing rashly!" And with this wise resolve he took up a book, and began to read; but still the hours rolled on, and no one came. By the clock over the mantelpiece it was now four. Could it possibly be that it was two hours and a half since — since she had left him?

CHAPTER VIII.

AN OLD BACHELOR'S HOUSE.

It is quite true Georgina forgot all about Mr. M'Kinlay. The gardener had met her on her way, and presented her with a bouquet of Japanese roses, — the real purple roses it was supposed never could be reared out of a Tycoon's garden; and so she hastened up to her sister's room, as totally oblivious of the man of law as though he had been hundreds of miles away. They talked pleasantly of flowers, — flowers for the china vase, and flowers for the hair; they laughed at the incongruous blunders of the people who wore "wrong colors," and that "drab bonnet" they had seen last Sunday in church. They next discussed dress, and the impossibility of wearing anything "decent" on the dusty roads; and lastly, they ordered the ponies and the phaeton and drove out.

How charmingly pleasant are these lives of little cares and of little duties, — where conscience has no burden that would be too weighty for the strength of childhood; where no torturing anxieties invade, no tormenting ambitions pursue; where the morning's stroll through the garden is the very type of existence, a ramble amidst fragrance and fruit and flowers, with no other call upon exertion than to enjoy! And what a teachable faculty is that same one of enjoyment! How it develops itself under good training and favorable opportunities!

These sisters had a very pleasant life, and they knew it,— that is, they no more overlooked the stones in their path than their neighbors; but they thoroughly understood that Fate had accorded them a very smooth road, and one right easy to travel. They chatted gayly as they drove along the side of a bright eddying river, through a glen of some miles

in extent. The day was one of those mellow ones of August, tempered with a slight breeze, that gently moved the cloud-shadows on the mountains, adding at each change some new effect of light and color. "Let us go and call on Sir Within," said Lady Vyner; "it would be a glorious day to see the old castle, and the mountain behind it." Her sister agreed at once; for though the drive was full eight miles, the road was beautiful all the way, and at its end was a grand old keep, Dalradern Castle, with a charming old bachelor for its owner, than whom none better understood how to do the honors of his house.

While the sisters push their smart ponies to a brisk trot, we shall take the opportunity to say a word of Sir Within Wardle. He was the last of a great Welsh family of large fortune and ancient name, but who had lived all his life away from England. He had been in diplomacy since his boyhood; he had joined an embassy in the Low Countries at the age of sixteen; and lived long enough to see the whole map of Europe new colored.

It had been the dream of his existence to "come home," — to return to the temperate climate and genial air of England, — to get back where the trees were really trees, and where grass was veritably green, and where people told the truth, and tradesmen were honest. Well, he did get back, but it was not to find everything as he had pictured it. The temperate climate rained a good deal. The genial air had a marked tendency to give bronchitis. The grass was unquestionably green, but so were they who walked in it, for wet feet were invariable. As to truthfulness in his own class, he had nothing to complain of; but he thought servants were pretty much as elsewhere, and as to his tradespeople, there was little to choose between Fleet Street and the "Graben," and Piccadilly was not a whit above the Rue de la Paix!

In fact, there were many things as he had hoped, and not a few that disappointed him. People, generally, were what he deemed more narrow-minded; they sat more in judgment over their neighbors than he liked; they were more inquisitive and less charitable. In his world, where he had passed fifty-odd years, the charming people were admitted to be

charming, though certain delinquencies chargeable to them might have disparaged their claims to character. It was not held to the disadvantage of Beauty that discretion should not have united itself to loveliness, and Wit was just as highly appreciated as though its possessor had not been more than lucky with the dice-box. Sir Within, be it remarked, wanted none of these immunities on his own behalf. He had never been what is called a man of gallantry, never gambled. His great passion was a splendid house, and grand receptions. He liked great people, crowned heads, and after them coroneted ones. He revered grand-dukes and serene-highnesses; and it was not by any means improbable that in his homage to the great lay the secret of that tolerance, on the score of morals, that marked him; for, be it said with respect, kings and kaisers have a habit of showing the world that they soar in a sphere above common proprieties, and can afford to do in ethics what they can do with the Bourse, — go in for a rise or fall, as the whim seizes them.

To "come back" with tastes like these was a mistake, but to attempt to justify them was infinitely worse. Sir Within began to lecture his country neighbors on their hard-heartedness and ungenerosity. He enumerated scores of people who had taken little scampers into vice, and come back to live more gorgeously on virtue. What anecdotes he had of ministers who had cheated at cards! Great men, excellent men in all other respects, unimpeachable in all their public acts, and pillars of the State they pertained to. He told of a society whose very laxity saved all friction, and which went on smoothly, — for it always went downwards. The consequence may be anticipated. His neighbors — at least, their wives — voted him an old monster of vice, corrupted by half a century of foreign iniquities. They refused his invitations, and neglected his advances. His presents of fruit — such fruit, too! — were declined, and his society strictly avoided.

The Vyners, who only came to the neighborhood for a few weeks in the year, scarcely knew anything of local feelings, and only heard that he never went out, and saw little company at home, — facts which, when they came to be

acquainted with him, struck them as strange, for he was eminently one made for society, and seemed to feel the raciest enjoyment in it. He had all that peculiar go and eagerness in him which pertains to men who talk well, and feel that they have this power.

Perhaps my reader may have met such a character, — not that they exist as a class; but if he has done so, he will acknowledge that it is a very charming form of selfishness, and gifted with marvellous powers of pleasing. At all events, Lady Vyner and her sister delighted in him, — most ungrateful had they been if they had not; for never was courtesy more polished, never homage more devoted or more respectful. Royalty could not have been received by him with a greater deference, and now, as they drove up to the massive entrance of the castle, and the sharp clatter of the ponies' feet awoke the echoes of the solemn courtyard, Sir Within was promptly at his post to help them to descend; and as the wind blew his long white hair backwards, he stooped to kiss their hands with all the reverence of a courtier.

"Do you know, dear ladies," said he, "that I had a vision of this visit? It was revealed to me — I cannot say how — that you would come over here to-day, and I told Bernais to prepare the orangery; 'for,' said I, 'Bernais, I will offer *ces dames* no luncheon, but will insist on their taking an early dinner.'"

"What a tempting proposal!" said Lady Vyner, looking at Georgina, whose fiat was always needed to every project.

"I vote for being tempted," said Georgina, gayly; "but what do I see there, — something new?"

"No, something old, but restored. Don't you remember the last day you were here saying that the silence of this old court wanted the pleasant plash of a fountain? and so I got these disabled nymphs and hamadryads remounted, and set them to blow their conchs and spout the cataracts as of yore."

"How beautiful it all is!"

"Curious enough, the figures are really good. Some worthy ancestor of mine had purchased this group at Urbino

from some ruined Italian mansion; and, as a work of art, it is almost equal to a Luca della Robbia. The mistake is the era. It is not suited to this old dungeon. Here we are in the tenth century, and this group is cinque-cento. Let me send it to the cottage. It would be perfect in your garden."

"Not for worlds. I could n't think of it!"

"Don't think of it, but say 'Yes.' Remember that in villa ornamentation nothing comes amiss; there are no incongruities."

"It is impossible, Sir Within, —quite impossible."

"Don't imagine we have come here as brigands," said Miss Courtenay, smiling.

"When you carry away my heart, what matters what is left me!" said he, sighing.

Miss Courtenay looked down; it was a bashful look, but not a displeased one, and, somehow, more conscious than the compliment of so old a gentleman might seem to warrant.

"And so Sir Gervais likes Ireland?" said he, as he introduced them into the drawing-room.

"So much so, that I fear he has made a purchase of some property there."

"That is only a mistake when one feels that he must live on the spot he owns. Some witty Frenchman says: 'I used to fancy that I owned my furniture, but I found that it owned me. I was the bondsman of an old arm-chair, and the actual slave of a chest of drawers!' You laugh, ladies, but just see whether this old house or I be the master here."

"Well, it's not a very severe bondage, after all," said Georgina, smiling.

"How pleasantly one discusses another's captivity! By the way, when are you all to come and pay me this long-promised visit? Remember, the longer you defer payment, the larger grows the debt; your week is now a month."

"When Sir Gervais comes home, we shall be delighted."

"Why not be here when he arrives? How much pleasanter he 'd find the house where your presence had imparted that charm that comes of female influence! You cannot guess how this old room, that I thought so dreary awhile

ago, looks positively beautiful now. Yes, Bernais, bring it in." This was said to the servant, who, after appearing at the door, made a hasty retreat. "It is the *menu* of our dinner, ladies, and my cook, M. Piquard, wishes to acquit himself with distinction. See, here is a query. 'Is the pheasant to be "aux huitres," or "aux pointes d'asperges"?' Decide."

"I should say with the asparagus," said Miss Courtenay.

"And your judgment is correct; the other is a mere compromise to a supposed English taste. A summer day's dinner is to the full banquet of midwinter what a light 'aquarelle' is to an oil picture. You want grace, delicacy; you require elegance, transparency, softness, not depth, nor force, nor strong effect."

"What Sybarites you must deem us!" said Lady Vyner, laughing.

"I am repeating for you to-day a little dinner I once gave the Duchesse de Sagance. She was much admired at the time by the Archduke Charles of Austria; but forgive me if I am talking of forbidden themes."

"Oh, go on, Sir Within! We must implicitly bow to your discretion."

"Ah, if you do that, I'm ruined. You silence me at once!"

"You surely would n't have us say, 'Be indiscreet'?"

"No; but I'd have you say, 'Talk to us as if we were all at Vienna, at Milan, or at Naples.'"

"Neither my sister nor myself 'pose' for prudery, Sir Within; but the world says that you are — what shall I call it? — too — too — do help me to the word."

"How can I, when it is to my own blame? Who ever called on a prisoner to fill up his own indictment?"

"What the world means is, perhaps," broke in Georgina, "that Sir Within occasionally forgets his geography, and fancies at the foot of Snowdon that he is close to Vesuvius."

"I apprehend you," said he, smiling; "but confess that dress is not more a question of climate than conversation; both one and the other are lighter in the South of Europe, and what is of more moment, with perfect safety, too; mark that, Mesdames, with perfect safety."

"It may be all very well for you, who are acclimatized, to say so," said Lady Vyner; "but bear in mind that we only passed one winter at Rome."

"And did you not like it? What a furious cataract of all manner of sensations is a first winter at Rome! Grandeur and littleness, sublimity and absurdity, — the splendid St. Peter's and the slipshod priesthood, — and, more ridiculous than all, our cockney population wandering over the Coliseum and Quirinal, not fully certain that they are getting the real article for their money, or whether Nero and Tiberius are not dear at the price paid for them. I often wish it were right for an ex-Envoy to give his note-book, or some extracts from it, to the world. Impressions of the B. S. — the British Subject, I mean — by a late Foreign Minister."

"Very amusing, doubtless; but very spiteful," said Miss Courtenay.

"Here comes Bernais to announce dinner, and rescue you from my tartness;" and, giving an arm to each of the ladies, he led them forward.

Valued reader, is it amongst the number of your experiences to have "assisted" at a dinner — usually a Russian one — where, without having found anything pre-eminently good to eat, you are given to understand they all cost fabulous sums — that the fricassee you scarcely tasted was brought from the frontier of China, and the fish, that seemed flavorless, came by estafette from the Caspian? Such, in a certain way, was Sir Within's conversation; it sparkled with great people, — kings glittered, and queens bespangled it; it was evidently a dear article to have acquired, but, beyond that, it possessed little value. Yet, "for all that and all that," his guests liked it. To be sure, it was admirably aided; his "little dinner," as he modestly styled it, was a banquet, not in ponderous detail, or duration, but in the perfect selection and the exquisite delicacy of all that composed it.

And did he not relish the success he achieved, — the double success of his cook and of himself! If there be a time when egotism is less odious than at others, it is when a host expatiates on the pains he has taken to feed you. The little selfish vaingloriousness of the moment is so readily pardoned,

while the truffle is on your fork, or the ruby claret half-way to your lips.

It was towards the close of the dinner that Sir Within, adroitly turning the topic from the meats to the guests, was discussing, with some knowledge of the subject, the people who made the pleasantest dinner company, and showing how an accomplished host makes the light talkers do duty at the first course, using them as mere skirmishers, who are to fall back and be ignored as the great engagement comes on. "I flatter myself," said he, "that I can manage most classes of men, though I own there is one that totally defies me,—that is to say, he is so obstinately self-willed, and so professionally trained to persistence, that he deems it a triumph. I mean your lawyer!"

"Oh, Laura! what have I done!" exclaimed Georgina, laying her hand on her sister's arm, and staring half wildly at her.

"What is it? What is the matter?"

"Was there ever such a blunder,—how shall we get over it?"

"What is it, then? Tell it," cried Lady Vyner, eagerly.

"I forgot all about him — utterly — completely forgot!"

"About whom?"

"Mr. M'Kinlay, the lawyer. He arrived this morning, came to the cottage very early, saying he was on his way to Ireland to meet Gervais, and only ran over from Crewe to see us; I left him to tell you that he was there. I had it in my head when I quitted the room; but what drove it out again, or what occurred to make me forget it, I cannot now imagine."

In spite of all the annoyance of the incident, Lady Vyner laughed immoderately, and so did Sir Within, and so, at last, did Miss Courtenay, and the mirth was kept up by all sorts of fanciful conceits as to what the lawyer must have thought, said, or done.

"He has driven away in a towering passion; he's hot-tempered at times, I know," said Lady Vyner.

"No, no! you'll find him very comfortably installed when you get back," said Sir Within. "He'll be vexed, he'll be angry, doubtless; but as a minister plenipotentiary vents his ill-temper in a despatch, your man of law consigns all his

indignation, more practically, to his bill of costs. What an avalanche of six-and-eightpences will fall on your forgetfulness!"

"We must hasten to repair the disaster. Sir Within, would you oblige me by ordering our ponies? I know you'll forgive our abrupt leave-taking."

"I shall never forgive the cause of it. Why not let me send a messenger over to ask him, saying I had insisted on detaining you?"

"Oh, on no account! Besides, he's a touchy person, and my husband is most tenacious regarding him. I must hasten back and make my explanations in person."

"I don't know how I am to face him at all!" cried Georgina.

"I'd certainly not try," said Sir Within.

Vague as the mere words were, they were uttered with a significance that plainly said, "You might stay where you are;" and Miss Courtenay evidently so read them, for her cheek reddened as she turned away.

Lady Vyner, however, went on: "I don't think we shall have any difficulty about it, — at least, I hope not; though what I'm to say, and how to say it, I cannot imagine."

"Throw me into the breach," said Sir Within; "say that, hearing of his arrival, I begged a visit from you — that I wanted some legal advice — I required a draft of — what shall I say? — I can scarcely be going to be married. Let it be a will, then."

"Oh, no, not a will, Sir Within!" said Georgina, with a very soft smile.

"It shall be whatever you decide for it," said he, assisting her with her shawl as he spoke.

"Do you ever mean to come over to breakfast with us?" asked Lady Vyner. "The promise has been made and renewed, I think, a dozen times."

"May I say next Sunday, then?"

"And you'll promise to come to church with us afterwards?" cried Lady Vyner.

He muttered something with a smile to Miss Courtenay, and she turned away abruptly; but ere she drew down her veil, her face betokened the reverse of displeasure.

Though, as they drove homeward, the unpleasant explanation that lay before them engaged much of their thoughts, taxing all their address how to encounter its difficulty, yet, from time to time, Georgina would return to talk of the house they had just quitted, and the host.

"It is easy enough to see why our straitlaced neighbors do not take to him," said she; "he is too much a man of the world, — too tolerant and forgiving for their notions."

"A little too lax, also, for the proprieties of English life," added Lady Vyner.

"For its hypocrisies, if you like, Laura. I'm certain people are pretty much the same everywhere, though the way they talk about themselves may be very differeut."

"I suspect he has made a conquest, Georgy," said her sister, laughing; "or rather, that his magnificent old castle, and his Vandykes, and his pineries, and his conservatory have — "

"No! that I protest against. His 'accessories,' as the French would call them, are undeniable. It is a house absolutely princely in all its details; but I think he himself is the gem of the collection. He is courteous and so pleasant, so anecdotic, and full of all manner of *à propos*, and then so utterly unlike every one else that one knows."

"I suppose there lies his chief attraction. We have to measure him with people all whose thoughts and ideas are so essentially homely, and who must, of necessity, be eternally talking of themselves, — that is, of their own turnpike, their own turnips, and their own cock pheasants."

"Is it not strange that he never married?" said Georgina, after a silence.

"I don't think so. He's not a man that would be likely to marry, and very far from being one that a woman would like to take as a husband."

"Do you think so, — do you really think so?"

"I'm certain of it. All those charming little schemes for our entertainment that captivated us awhile ago, show a degree of care and attention bestowed on little things which would make life a perfect servitude. Cannot you imagine him spending his mornings giving audience to his cook, and listening to the report of his gardener? I fancy

I see him in the midst of a levee of domestics, gravely listening to the narrative of the last twenty-four hours of his household."

"So far from that," said Georgina, warmly, "he told me Bernais did everything, — engaged and discharged servants, changed furniture, rearranged rooms, and, in fact, managed little daily 'surprises' for him, that he said compensated for much of the solitude in which he lived."

"But why does he live in solitude? Why not go back to the life and the places that habit has endeared to him?"

"He told me to-day that he intended to do so; and that he is only waiting for the visit of a certain relative, Mr. Ladarelle, after which he means to set out for Italy."

"Ladarelle is the great banker, and, if I mistake not, his heir."

"Yes. Sir Within says that they scarcely know each other, and have all that dislike and distrust that usually separate the man in possession and the man in expectancy."

"One can fancy how distasteful his heir must be to a man like Sir Within Wardle," said Lady Vyner.

"To any man, sister," broke in Georgina, — "to any man who only knows the person as the inheritor of his fortune. I declare I think Sir Within spoke of the Ladarelles with much forbearance, aware, as he is, that they are coming down here to see in what state of repair the castle is, and whether the oaks are being thinned more actively than a mere regard for their welfare would exact."

"Did Sir Within say that?" asked Lady Vyner, with a laugh.

"No; but I guessed it!"

"Well, he supplied the text for your theory?"

"In a measure, perhaps. It was when you went with Groves to look at the large cactus he told me this, and mentioned that, by a singular provision, though the estate is strictly entailed, he could charge the property to any amount with jointure if he married; 'and perhaps,' said he, 'my worthy relatives were anxious to satisfy themselves that this event has not, nor is very likely to occur.'"

"Not now, certainly?" said Lady Vyner, with a saucy laugh.

"I don't know. There are many women well to do and well off would marry him."

"That is to say, there are a considerable number of women who would sacrifice much for money."

Miss Courtenay was silent; when she next spoke, it was about the evening, — the air was growing fresh, and the twilight deepening. "I wonder in what mood we are to find Mr. M'Kinlay, — if we are to find him at all."

"I own it would be very awkward; but I am such a coward about meeting him that I half wish he had gone away, and that we were left to make our lame excuses in a letter."

"I have to confess that the matter sits very lightly on *my* conscience," said Georgina, "though I am the real delinquent. I don't like him, and I shall not be very unhappy if he knows it."

"Possibly enough; but such a breach of all politeness — "

"My dear Laura, he has met this incident, or something very like it, a hundred times. Earls and viscounts have made appointments with him and forgotten him; he has been left standing on that terrace or pacing moodily up that street, for hours long, and, as Sir Within said very smartly, consoled by the item that would record it in the bill of costs."

"Yes, I remember the remark; it struck me as the only bit of vulgarity about him."

"Vulgarity! Sir Within Wardle vulgar!"

"Well, I have no other word for it, Georgy. It was the observation that might readily have come from any ordinary and commonplace person, and sounded unsuitably from the lips of a very polished gentleman."

"Poor Sir Within! if in a gloomy moment you may be wondering to yourself what harsh or envious things your wealth, your splendor, and your taste may have provoked from us, I am certain that you never imagined that the imputation of being vulgar was one of them!"

Fortunately there was no time to continue a theme so threatening to be unpleasant, for already they were at the gate lodge, and a loud summons with the bell had announced their arrival.

CHAPTER IX.

MR. M'KINLAY'S TRIALS.

Mr. M'Kinlay was awakened from a pleasant nap over the "Man of Feeling," which he had persuaded himself he was reading with all the enjoyment it had once afforded him, by the French clock over the mantelpiece performing a lively waltz, and then striking five!

He started, rubbed his eyes, and looked about him, not very certain for some minutes where he was. The hum of the bees, the oppressive perfume of the sweet-brier and the jessamine, and the gentle drip-drip of a little trickling rivulet over some rock-work, seemed still to steep his senses in a pleasant dreamy languor, and a sort of terror seized him that the ladies might possibly have come in, and found him there asleep. He rang the bell, and summoned Rickards at once.

"Where are the ladies?" asked he, eagerly.

"Not come back yet, sir. It 's very seldom they stay out so long. I can make nothing of it."

"You told her Ladyship I was here, did n't you?"

"I told Miss Georgina, sir, and of course she told my Lady."

"What 's your dinner-hour?"

"Always early, sir, when Sir Gervais is from home. My Lady likes four, or half-past."

"And it 's five now!"

"Yes, sir; a quarter-past five. It 's the strangest thing I ever knew," said he, going to the window, which commanded a view of the road at several of its windings through the valley. "We have an excellent lake trout for dinner; but by good luck it 's to be grilled, not boiled, or it would be ruined utterly."

"Capital things, those red trout," said M'Kinlay, to whom, like most of his craft and way of life, the pleasures of the table offered great temptations. "Is your cook a good one, Rickards?"

"Only a woman, sir; but by no means bad. Sir Gervais always takes M. Honoré with him on board the yacht; but you'll see, sir, that she knows how to roast, and we have a sweet saddle of Welsh mutton to-day, if it's not overdone."

"That's what I'm afraid of, Rickards," said the lawyer; and if a sigh ever denoted sorrow, his did as he spoke. "Is the mutton small?"

"Very small, sir. Mountain mutton."

"And of course it will be done to rags! She serves it with currant jelly, I suppose?"

"No, sir, with Guava. Sir Gervais prefers it."

"And what else was there on your bill-of-fare for to-day?"

"A very simple dinner, sir. Partridges on toast, a salad of white truffles, and a roast hare."

"Quite enough, quite enough. Do you bring your wine down with you?"

"Only the Madeira, sir. Sir Gervais gets some claret over from an Irish house called Sneyd's which he calls very drinkable."

"So do I, too, — very drinkable, indeed; and your Madeira, you say you bring with you. I say, Rickards, I think a glass of it and a biscuit would n't be amiss, if I'm to wait much longer."

"I was just thinking the same, sir; and if you'll step into the dining-room, and take a morsel of game-pie, I'll fetch the Madeira out of the sun. It's fine and mellow by this time."

"Is this your woman cook's performance?" said Mr. M'Kinlay, as he helped himself for the second time to the pie.

"Yes, sir; and she'd do better, too, if it was n't that the ladies don't like so much jelly. Here's a fine old truffle, sir!"

"She's a valuable woman, — a very valuable woman. Tell

her, Rickards, that I drank her health in a bumper. Yes, up to the brim with it. She shall have all the honors."

"Something sweet, sir? A little cherry tart?"

"Well, a little cherry tart I'll not object to. No, no, Rickards, don't open champagne for me."

"It's in the ice, sir, and quite ready."

"Let it stay there. I'm very simple about both eating and drinking. I'd not have made a bad hermit, if I had n't been a lawyer."

"No, indeed, sir! I never saw a gentleman so easily pleased. You're not like Mr. Grenfell, sir, that has the bill of fare brought up every morning to his dressing-room; ay, and M. Honoré himself, too, summoned, just as if it was before a magistrate, to explain what's the meaning of this, and why he does n't do the other."

"Your master permits this?"

"He likes it, sir; he laughs heartily at it."

"And the ladies, do they like it?"

"Oh, Mr. Grenfell only comes over to Beau Park when the ladies is away, sir, up in town or at the sea-side."

"He's no favorite of theirs, then?"

"I don't believe they ever saw him, sir. At all events, he was never down with us when we were all at home."

"I suspect I know why," said M'Kinlay, knowingly.

"Yes, sir," replied Rickards, as knowingly, while he took up a jar of pickled onions from the sideboard, and held it ostentatiously forward.

"You're right, Rickards, you've hit it correctly. One glass more of that admirable wine. What's that great ringing at the gate? Is that your mistress?"

"No, sir. The lodge people have orders never to keep her waiting; they always have a look-out when she's coming. There it is again. If you'll excuse me a moment, sir, I'd better step out and see what it means!"

The permission was graciously accorded, and Mr. M'Kinlay emptied the last of the Madeira into his glass, discussing with himself whether the world had anything really more enjoyable to offer than a simple cottage life, with a good cook, and a capital cellar! Little heed did he give to the absence of Rickards, nor was he in the least aware that the

bland butler had been above a quarter of an hour away, when he entered flushed and excited.

"It's the same as a burglary, sir, there's no difference; and it's by good luck you are here to declare the law of it!"

"What is the matter, — what has happened, Rickards?"

"They're in the drawing-room, sir; they walked in by the open windows; there was no keeping them out."

"Who are in the drawing-room?"

"The tourists, sir," exclaimed Rickards. "The tourists! The people that would force their way into Windsor Castle and go through it, if the King was at his dinner there!"

Strong in a high purpose, and bold with the stout courage of that glorious Madeira, Mr. M'Kinlay arose. "This is an unparalleled outrage," cried he; "follow me, Rickards;" and he took his way to the drawing-room. Though the noise and tumult bespoke the presence of several people, there were not above half a dozen in the room. One, however, a pale sickly-looking young man, with long hair which required everlasting tossing of his head to keep it out of his eyes, sat at the piano, playing the most vigorous chords, while over his shoulder leaned a blue-eyed fair ringleted lady, whose years — past the forties — rather damaged the evident determination she evinced to be youthful and volatile.

"Do, Marmy, do, dearest, there's a love," said she, with the faintest imaginable lisp, "do compothe something. A Fanthasia, on visiting Dinasllyn. A dhream —"

"Pray be quiet, Celestina!" said he, with a wave of his hand. "You derange me!"

"Have they got a 'catalog' of the gimcracks?" exclaimed a nasal voice that there was no mistaking. "I a'n't posted in brass idols and boxwood saints, but I'd like to have 'em booked and ticketed."

"Are you aware, gentlemen and ladies," said Mr. M'Kinlay, with a voice meant to awaken the very dullest sense of decorum, — "are you aware that you are in the house of a private gentleman, without any permission or sanction on his part?"

"Oh, don't, don't disturb him, sir," broke in the ringleted lady. "You'll never forgive yourself if you spoil

it;" and she pointed to the artist, who had now let all his hair fall forward, after the fashion of a Skye terrier, and sat with his head drooped over the piano, and his hands suspended above the keys.

"Say what for the whole bilen," cried the Yankee. "It ain't much of a show; but I'll take it over to New York, and charge only twenty-five cents for the reserved seats!"

"I repeat, sir," exclaimed M'Kinlay, "your presence here, and that of all your companions, is a most unreasonable intrusion, — a breach of all propriety, — one of those violations of decency which, however practised, popular, and approved of in a certain country, neither distinguished for the civilization of its inhabitants, nor for their sense of refinement — "

"Is it Ireland you mane, sir, — is it Ireland?" said a short carbuncled-nosed little man, with a pair of fiery red eyes. "Say the word if it is."

"It is not Ireland, sir. I respect the Irish; I esteem them."

"Could you get them to be quiet, Celestina?" said the artist, faintly; "could you persuade the creatures to be still?"

"Hush, hush!" said she, motioning with both her hands.

A tremendous crash now resounded through the room. It was Mr. Herodotus M. Dodge, who, in experimenting with his umbrella on a Sèvres jar to detect if it were cracked, had smashed it to atoms, covering the whole floor with the fragments.

"Send for the police! Tell the porter to lock the gate and fetch the police!" shouted M'Kinlay. "I trust to show you, sir, that you're not in Fifteenth Street or Forty-sixth Avenue. I hope to prove to you that you're in a land of law and order."

Overcome by his rage, he followed Rickards out of the room, declaring that he'd make all England ring with the narrative of this outrage.

The legal mind, overbalanced for an instant, suddenly recovered its equanimity, and he began to reflect how far he was justified in a forcible detention. Would "a claim lie" for false imprisonment? Were he to detain them, too, what

should be his charge? Was it a trespass? Had they been warned off? "Wait a moment, Rickards," said he; "I must think a minute or two. There's a difficulty here. Where a person, passing in the street, smashes accidentally — it must be accidentally — a pane of plate-glass, of the value of, let us say, five-and-twenty or thirty guineas, the law only holds him responsible for the damage of an ordinary window-pane; so that here it will be quite open to the defence to show that this man imagined he was breaking a common jug, a mere earthenware pipkin. It is, then, to the trespass we must look. Call the lodge-keeper; say I wish to have a word with him."

While Rickards hastened on his errand, Mr. M'Kinlay sat down to ponder carefully over the case. Your men conversant with great causes in equity and weighty trials at bar, are nervously fearful of meddling with the small cases which come before petty tribunals. They really know little about them, and are almost certain to fail in them; and they feel — very naturally — ashamed at the sorry figure they must exhibit in such failures.

"They are all gone, sir — they've made a regular retreat of it — not one left."

"Who — who are gone?"

"Them tourists, sir. They overtook me as I went down the avenue, and made George open the gate; and away they are, the whole of 'em."

"I'm not sorry for it, Rickards. I declare I'm not sorry. It would cost more time and more trouble to follow them up than they're worth; and I am certain, besides, Sir Gervais would n't have the affair in the newspapers for ten times the amount of the damage they have done him. What's the noise without, — who's coming now?"

"My Lady!" exclaimed Rickards, and hastened out to receive her.

Mr. M'Kinlay could notice that a short dialogue took place between the ladies and the butler before they entered the door, and that they both laughed at something he was telling them. Was the story that amused them of him or of the invasion? He had not time to consider when they entered.

"How d'ye do, Mr. M'Kinlay?" said Lady Vyner,

quietly. "We 've kept you very long waiting, I fear. You may serve dinner at once, Rickards. Mr. M'Kinlay will excuse our dining in morning dress, Georgina."

"I should hope so," said her sister, with a very saucy toss of the head.

"Your Ladyship will excuse my not remaining to dinner," said he, with a marked coldness. "I only wanted to see you, and ask if you had any commissions for Sir Gervais."

"No, there 's nothing, I fancy. I wrote yesterday — I think it was yesterday."

"Tell him not to meddle with Irish property, and come away from that country as soon as he can," said Georgina.

"Say the garden is looking beautiful since the rain," said Lady Vyner, rising. "Good-bye, and a pleasant journey!"

"Good-bye!" said Georgina, giving him the tips of her fingers.

And Mr. M'Kinlay bowed and took his leave, carrying away as he went very different thoughts of cottage life and its enjoyments from those he might have felt had he gone when he had finished the last glass of Madeira.

CHAPTER X.

THE SHEBEEN.

Just as we see on the confines of some vast savage territory one solitary settlement that seems to say, "Here civilization ends, beyond this the tracts of cultivated men are unknown," so there stood on the borders of a solitary lake in Donegal, — Lough Anare, — a small thatched house, over whose door an inscription announced "Entertainment for Man and Beast," the more pretentious letters of the latter seeming to indicate that the accommodation for Beast was far more likely to prove a success than that intended for humanity.

What imaginable spirit of enterprise could have induced Mr. O'Rorke to have established an inn in such a region is not easy to guess. To the north of Lough Anare lay a vast untravelled, almost roadless, district. Great mountains and deep valleys, wild plains of heather, enclosing lakes, with islands, sometimes mere rocks, sometimes covered with an oak scrub — last remnants of primeval forests — succeeded each other apparently without end. A miserable shealing, usually padlocked on the outside, was all that betokened habitation, and a living being was very rarely met with. It is true there was scenery which for grandeur and beauty might have vied with the most vaunted spots on the island. Mountain gorges far finer than Dunluce, lakes more varied in shape, and with margins bolder in outline and richer in color than Killarney, and coast-line with which the boasted Glengariff could not for a moment compete, all destined to remain as unknown as if they lay thousands of miles away in some Indian sea.

A great proportion of this territory was the property of the University of Dublin, — endowment made in the time of

Queen Elizabeth, when probably all lands without the pale had about the same value; some of it pertained to a wealthy English noble, who, until the accident of a governmental survey, had never so much as cared to ascertain its limits, and who made the first use of his knowledge by announcing for sale the lands of Mac-na-Morroch, Knochlifty, Kilmacooran, and Derryvaragh; in all, nigh fifty thousand acres of mountain, bog, callow, and lake, whose great capabilities, whether for sheep-farming, fishing, for the quarries of marble, or the immense mineral resources, were vouched for by a roll of scientific names, whose very titular letters enforced conviction. If the pen of an imaginative writer might have been employed in depicting the stores of wealth and fortune that lay here entombed, no fancy could have exaggerated the natural loveliness of the landscape. All that was wild and grotesque in outline, with all that was most glowing in color, were there; and when on the nameless lakes the setting sun added his glory to the golden purple of their reflecting light, the scene became one of such gorgeous splendor as Art would not have dared to imitate.

The little inn we have just mentioned stood on a rocky eminence which projected from the mountain-side, and could be seen for miles off, more conspicuous, besides, by a large green flag, with a harp in the centre, which by the patriotism of Mr. O'Rorke flaunted its folds to the wild mountain breezes, as though enjoying in the solitude an immunity which the Saxon might have resented elsewhere. Tim O'Rorke was indeed one who had "suffered for Ireland." Four several times had he figured in Crown Prosecutions, and both fine and imprisonment had been his portion. On the last occasion, however, either that national enthusiasm was cooling down, or that suspicions of Tim's honesty were getting abroad, the subscription for his defence was almost a failure. No imposing names headed the list, and the sums inscribed were mean and contemptible. Unable to fee the great bar, to retain which, perhaps, formed the grandest triumph of his life, O'Rorke decided to defend himself, and in the course of his defence launched forth into a severe and insulting castigation of his party, who, after using up his youth and manhood in their cause, left him, when old and

broken and dispirited, to the merciless cruelty of his enemies. He read aloud in open court the names of the powerful and wealthy men who at first stood by him, and then, with a shameless insolence, contrasted them with the ignoble friends who remained to him. He recited the proud sums once contributed, and, amidst the laughter of the court, ridiculed the beggarly half-crowns that now represented Irish patriotism. The verdict was against him, and once more he was sent back to Kilmainham, to serve out a two years' sentence, this time unalleviated by the sympathy of any friends, or the kind wishes of any partisans. His sentence completed, he made two or three efforts to reinstate himself in public esteem, — he established an eating-house called "The Rebel's Home," he instituted an evening paper entitled the "Pike," he invented a coat-button marked '98, — but somehow friends and enemies had become wearied of him. It was seen that he was one of those who neither have the power of good nor evil, — that he could be of no use to his own, no injury to others; and the world dropped him, — dropped him as it does its poor and disreputable relatives, taking no heed of his gaunt looks nor his tattered raiment, and by this tacit indifference showed that the mass of mankind can behave on certain occasions pretty much as would an individual man. Tim threatened, stormed, and reviled; he vowed vengeance and menaced disclosures; he swore that his revelations would impeach some of the highest in the land, and he intimated that up to a certain day he was yet appeasable. Threats however were not more successful than entreaties; and Tim, gathering together a few pounds, under the plea of departure for Australia, quitted the scene he had so long troubled, and was heard of no more.

For years he had continued to exist in some fashion or other — poaching the chief source — in the wild spot we have just described; and it was on the rock in front of his door, with a short pipe in his mouth, that he now lay stretched, on a fine autumn morning, lazily gazing down the valley, where at a great distance off he could detect a small speck upon the road, intimating that rarest of all events, the approach of a jaunting-car. He threw his glance upwards to see that his flag disported its folds to the air, and to the

sign over his door, — "The Vinegar Hill, by T. O'Rorke, Entertainment for Man or Beast," — to be sure that all was in order, and he then smoked quietly on and watched the road.

By a landslip which had occurred several years before, and whose effects had never been remedied, the road was blocked up about a mile from the little inn, and travellers, desirous of its accommodation, were obliged to continue their journey on foot. Whether from the apathy of hope deferred, or calculating on the delay that must thus intervene, Mr. O'Rorke saw two persons descend from the car, and, each taking his carpet-bag, set out to walk, without the slightest movement on his part to provide for their reception; and this, though he was himself cook, waiter, and housemaid, — all that the inn possessed of master or attendant.

Mr. O'Rorke's experience of travellers included but two categories, each of them rare enough in their visitations. They either came to shoot grouse or convert the natives. All who were not sportsmen were missionaries. A certain amount of peril attended both pursuits. The people were a wild semi-civilized set, who saw with jealousy a stranger amongst them; and certain hints palpable enough not to be mistaken intimated to the lovers of sport, as well as the distributors of tracts, that their pursuits were dangerous ones; and thus, in time, the numbers decreased year by year, till at last the advent of a traveller was a rare event.

The two who now ascended the rocky path had neither guns nor fishing-tackle, — as little had they of missionaries in their aspect, — and he watched them with a lazy curiosity as they approached.

"Are you Mr. O'Rorke?" cried the first who came forward, who was our acquaintance Sir Gervais Vyner.

"Yes, my name is O'Rorke."

"And the owner of this inn, I take it?" asked Grenfell, somewhat haughtily.

"The same."

"Is this your usual way of receiving strangers, my friend, or is your present manner an especial politeness to ourselves?"

"Can you let us have a dinner, and make up a couple of rooms?" broke in Vyner, hastily. "We should like to stop here a few days."

"You can see the rooms, whether they'll do for you or not; such as they are, you can have them, but I can't make them better."

"And for eating what can you give us?"

"Mutton always, — fish and game when there's the season for them, — and poteen to wash them down."

"That is the illicit spirit, is n't it?" asked Grenfell.

"Just as illicit as anything else a man makes of his own produce for his own use; just as illicit as the bread that is made of his own corn."

"You're a politician, I see," said Grenfell, with a sneering laugh. "I half suspected it when I saw your green flag there."

"If I had n't been one, and an honest one too, I'd not be here to-day," said he, with an energy greater than he had shown before. "Have you anything to say against that flag?"

"Of course he has not. Neither he nor I ever saw it before," said Vyner.

"Maybe you'll be more familiar with it yet; maybe the time is n't far off when you'll see it waving over the towers of Dublin Castle!"

"I am not aware that there are any towers for it to wave over," said Grenfell, mockingly.

"I'll tell you what there are! There are hills and mountains that our fathers had as their own; there are plains and valleys, that supported a race braver and better than the crafty Saxons that overcame them; there are holy churches, where your faith was taught before we ever heard of Harry the Eighth and his ten wives!"

"You are giving him more than the Church did," said Grenfell.

"I don't care whether they were ten or ten thousand. He is your St. Peter, and you can't deny him!"

"I wish I could deny that I don't like this conversation," said Vyner. "My friend and I never came here to discuss questions of politics or polemics. And now about dinner.

Could you let us have it at three o'clock; it is just eleven now?"

"Yes, it will be ready by three," said O'Rorke, gravely.

"The place is clean enough inside," whispered Grenfell, as he came from within, "but miserably poor. The fellow seems to have expended all his spare cash in rebellious pictures and disloyal engravings."

"He is an insupportable bore," muttered Vyner; "but let us avoid discussion with him, and keep him at a distance."

"I like his rabid Irishism, I own," said Grenfell, "and I intend to post myself up, as the Yankees say, in rebellious matters before we leave this."

"Is that Lough Anare, that sheet of water I see yonder?"

"Yes," said O'Rorke.

"There 's a ruined tower and the remains of seven churches, I think, on an island there?"

"You 'd like to draw it, perhaps?" asked O'Rorke, with a cunning curiosity in his eye.

"For the present, I 'd rather have a bathe, if I could find a suitable spot."

"Keep round to the westward there. It is all rock along that side, and deep water close to the edge. You 'll find the water cold, if you mind that."

"I like it all the better. Of course, George, you 'll not come? You 'll lie down on the sward here and dose or dream till I come back."

"Too happy, if I can make sleep do duty for books or newspapers," yawned out Grenfell.

"Do you want a book?" asked O'Rorke.

"Yes, of all things. What can you give me?"

He returned to the house and brought out about a dozen books. There were odd volumes of the press, O'Callaghan's "Celts and Saxons," and the Milesian Magazine, profusely illustrated with woodcuts of English cruelty in every imaginable shape that human ingenuity could impart to torture.

"That will show you how we were civilized, and why it takes so long to do it," said O'Rorke, pointing to an infamous print, where a celebrated drummer named Hempenstall,

a man of gigantic stature, was represented in the act of hanging another over his shoulder, the artist having given to the suffering wretch an expression of such agony as no mere words would convey.

"This fellow is intolerable," muttered Vyner, as he turned away, and descended the rocky path. Grenfell, too, appeared to have had enough of his patriotic host, for he stretched himself out on the greensward, drawing his hat over his eyes, and giving it to be seen that he would not be disturbed.

O'Rorke now retreated to the kitchen to prepare for his guests' entertainment, but he started with astonishment as he entered. "What, Kitty, is this you?" cried he; "when did you come?"

The question was addressed to a little girl of some ten or eleven years old, who, with her long golden hair loose on her shoulders, and her cheeks flushed with exercise, looked even handsomer than when first we saw her in the ruined Abbey at Arran, for it was the same child who had stood forward to claim the amber necklace as her right.

"My grandfather sent me home," said she, calmly, as she threw the long locks back from her forehead, "for he had to stay a day at Murranmore, and if he 's not here to-morrow morning I 'm to go on by myself."

"And was that all you got by your grand relation, Kitty?" said he, pointing to the necklace that she still wore.

"And is n't it enough?" answered she, proudly; "they said at the funeral that it was worth a king's ransom."

"Then they told you a lie, child, that 's all; it would n't bring forty shillings — if it would thirty — to-morrow."

"I don't believe you, Tim O'Rorke," said she, boldly; "but it 's just like you to make little of what 's another's."

"You have the family tongue if you have n't their fortune," said he, with a laugh. "Are you tired, coming so far?"

"Not a bit; I took the short cut by Lisnacare, and came down where the waterfall comes in in winter, and it saved more than four miles of the road."

"Ay, but you might have broken your neck."

"My neck was safe enough," said she, saucily.

"Perhaps you could trust your feet if you could n't your head," said he, mockingly.

"I could trust them both, Tim O'Rorke; and maybe they'd both bring me farther and higher than yours ever did you."

"There it is again; it runs in your blood; and there never was one of your name that had n't a saucy answer."

"Then don't provoke what you don't like," said she, with a quivering lip, for though quick at reply she was not the less sensitive to rebuke.

"Take a knife and scrape those carrots, and, when you've done, wash those radishes well."

The girl obeyed without a word, seeming well pleased to be employed.

"Did she leave any money behind her?" asked he, after a pause.

"No, none."

"And how did he treat you? — was he civil to you all?"

"We never saw him."

"Not see him! how was that? Sure he went to the wake?"

"He did not. He sent us 'lashins' of everything. There was pork and potatoes, and roast hens and ducks, and eggs and tea, and sugar and whiskey, and cakes of every kind."

"But why did n't he come in amongst you to say that you were welcome, to wish you a good health, and the time of the year?"

"I don't know."

"And your grandfather bore that?"

She made no answer, but her face became crimson.

"I suppose it was all right; he wanted to show you that it was all over between him and you, and that when she was gone you did n't belong to him any more."

Two heavy tears rolled along the hot and burning cheeks of the child, but she never spoke.

"Your old grandfather's well changed, Kitty, from what I knew him once, or he would n't have borne it so quietly. And what did you get for your journey?"

"We got all her clothes — elegant fine clothes — and

linen — two big boxes full, and knives and forks, and spoons and plates, that would fill two dressers as big as that. And this," and she lifted the amber beads as she spoke, with a flashing eye, — "and this besides."

"He knew you well; he treated you just the way they treat the wild Indians in the Rocky Mountains, where they buy all that they have in the world for an old brass button or a few spangles. In his eyes you were all poor savages, and no more."

"I wish I never set foot in your house, Tim O'Rorke," said she, throwing down the knife, and stamping her bare foot with anger. "'T is never a good word for man or woman comes out of your mouth, and if it was n't so far to go I 'd set off now."

"You 're the making of a nice one," said he, with a sneering laugh.

"I 'm the making of what will be far above you one day," said she; and her large blue eyes dilated, and her nostrils expanded with passion.

"Go down to the well and fill that pitcher," said he, calmly. And she took the vessel, and tripped as lightly on the errand as though she had not come seventeen long miles that same morning.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LEGEND OF LUTTRELL AND THE ——

Doubtless the fresh free mountain air had its influence, and something, too, lay in the surprise at the goodness of the fare; but Vyner and Grenfell sat at the open door after their dinner in the pleasant frame of mind of those who have dined to their satisfaction, and like to reflect on it.

"I can almost look with complacency on your idea of an Irish property, Vyner, when I think of that mutton," said Grenfell, as he lazily puffed his cigar, while he lay full stretched on the grass. "With what consummate tact, too, the fellow avoided all attempts at fine cookery, and sent us up those trouts plainly fried."

"This is the only thing I cannot relish, — this vile, semi-sweet, and smoky compound. It is detestable!" And he held the whiskey to his nose, and laid it down again. "Are we sure that he cannot command something better?"

"Here goes to see," said Grenfell, starting up. "What a crowning pleasure would a glass of sherry — that Amontillado of yours — be in such a spot!"

"Fetch me out that map you'll find on my table," said Vyner, as the other moved away, and he lay half dreamily gazing out at the long valley with its mountain barrier in the distance. It was the thought of space, of a splendid territory princely in extent, that captivated his mind with regard to this purchase. All told him that such acquisitions are seldom profitable, and very often perilous; that whatever changes are to be wrought must be carried out with patience and infinite caution; and that the people — the wild natives, who consider the soil as more than half their own — must be conciliated. But was there ever a man — at least an imaginative impulsive man — who did not fancy he was the person

to deal with such difficulties, — that by his tact and skill and delicate treatment, the obstacles which had closed the way for others would be removed; that with an instinctive appreciation of the people, of their moods of thought, their passions, and their prejudices, *he* would discover the road to their hearts, and teach them to trust and confide in him?

It was in a sort of fool's paradise of this kind that Vyner lay. He was a prince in his own wild mountain territory, his sway undisputed, his rule absolute. He had spread benefits innumerable around him; and the recipients were happy, and, what is more, were grateful. Some terrible crime — agrarian outrage, as newspaper literature has it — had come before the House, and led to a discussion on the question of Irish landlordism, and he imagined himself rising in his place to declare his own experiences, — "very different, indeed, from those of the Right Honorable Gentleman who had just sat down." What a glowing picture of a country he drew, — what happiness, what peace, what prosperity! It was Arcadia, with a little more rain and a police force. There was no disturbance, no scarcity, very little sickness; religious differences were unknown; a universal brotherhood bound man to man, and imparted to the success of each all the sentiment of a general triumph. "And where, sir, will you say, is this happy region, — in what favored country blessed by nature is this Elysium? and my reply is, in the wild and almost trackless mountains of Donegal, amidst scenery whose desolate grandeur almost appalls the beholder; where but a few years back the traveller dared not penetrate above a mile or two from the coast, and where in comparison the bush in Newfoundland or the thicket in New Zealand had been safe. It is my proud privilege to declare, sir, and this I do, not alone before this House, but in face of the country — "

"That you never saw a prettier face than that," said Grenfell, leading forward the little girl by the hand, and placing her before him.

"She is pretty; she is downright beautiful," said Vyner, warmly. "Where did you find this queen of the fairies?"

"At the well yonder, trying to place on her head a pitcher not much smaller than herself. She tells me she is a

stranger here, only waiting for her grandfather to come and fetch her away."

"And where to?" asked Vyner.

"To Glenvallah." And she pointed in the direction of the mountains.

"And where have you come from now?"

"From Arran, — from the island."

"What took you to the island, child?"

"I was at my aunt's wake. It was there I got this." And she lifted one of the beads of her necklace with a conscious pride.

"Amber and gold; they become you admirably."

The child seemed to feel the praise in her inmost heart. It was an eulogy that took in what she prized most; and she shook back the luxuriant masses of her hair, the better to display the ornaments she wore.

"And it was your aunt left this to you?" asked Grenfell.

"No; but we had everything amongst us. Grandfather took this, and Tom Noonan took that, and Mark Tracey got the other, and this — this was mine."

"Were you sorry for your aunt?" asked Vyner.

"No, I did n't care."

"Not care for your father's or your mother's sister?"

"She was my mother's sister, but we never saw her. She could n't come to us, and he would n't let us come to her."

"He, I suppose, means her husband?"

The child nodded assent.

"And what was the reason of this; was there a family quarrel?"

"No. It was because he was a gentleman."

"Indeed!" broke in Grenfell. "How did you know that?"

"Because he never worked, nor did anything for his living. He could stay all day out on the sea-shore gathering shells, and go home when he pleased to his meals or his bed."

"And that is being a gentleman?"

"I think it is; and I wish I was a lady."

"What was this gentleman's name?"

"John Hamilton Luttrell, — Luttrell of Arran we called him."

"John Luttrell! And was your aunt his wife, child?" asked Vyner, eagerly. "And are you the cousin of Harry Luttrell?"

"Yes; but he would not let me say so: he is as proud as his father."

"He need not be ashamed of such a cousin, I think," said Vyner, as he surveyed her; and the child again raised her fingers to her necklace, as though it was there that lay all her claim to admiration.

"Keep her in talk, George, while I make a sketch of her; she is the very brightest thing I ever saw in nature."

"Tell me the names of all these mountains," said Grenfell; "but, first of all, your own."

"My name is Kitty; but I like them to call me Katherine, — as the priest does."

"It is statelier to be Katherine," said Grenfell, gravely.

And she gave a nod of haughty acknowledgment that almost provoked a smile from him.

"That mountain is Caub na D'haoul, the Devil's Nightcap, — whenever he takes it off, there 's a storm at sea; and there 's Kilmacreenon, where the Bradleys was killed; and that 's Strathmore, where the gold-mines is."

"And are there really gold-mines there?"

"Ay, if one had leave from the devil to work them; but it was only old Luttrell ever got that, and he paid for it."

"Tell me the story, child; I never heard it."

The girl here seated herself on a knoll directly in front of them, and with a demure air, and some of that assumed importance she had possibly seen adopted by story-tellers, she began, in a tone and with a fluency that showed she was repeating an oft-told tale: —

"There was one of the Luttrells once that was very rich, and a great man every way, but he spent all his money trying to be greater than the King,— for whatever the King did, Luttrell would do twice as grand; and for one great feast the King would give Luttrell would give two, and he came at last to be ruined entirely; and of all his fine houses and lands, nothing was left to him but a little cabin on

Strathmore, where his herd used to live. And there he went and lived as poor as a laborin'-man; indeed, except that he 'd maybe catch a few fish or shoot something, he had nothing but potatoes all the year round. Well, one day, as he was wanderin' about very low and sorrowful, he came

to a great cave on the hillside, with a little well of clear water inside it, and he sat down for the sake of the shelter, and began to think over old times, when he had houses and horses and fine clothes and jewels. 'Who 'd ever have thought,' says he, 'that it would come to this with me, — that I 'd be sittin' upon a rock, with nothing to drink but water?'

And he took some up in the hollow of his hand and tasted it; but when he finished, he saw there was some fine little grains, like dust, in his hand, and they were bright yellow, besides, because they were gold.

"'If I had plenty of you, I'd be happy yet,' says he, looking at the grains.

"'And what's easier in life, Mr. Luttrell?' says a voice; and he starts and turns round, and there, in a cleft of the rock, was sittin' a little dark man, with the brightest eyes that ever was seen, smoking a pipe. 'What's easier in life,' says he, 'Mr. Luttrell?'

"'How do you know my name?' says he.

"'Why would n't I?' says the other. 'Sure it is n't because one is a little down in the world that he would n't have the right to his own name? I have had some troubles myself,' says he, 'but I don't forget my name, for all that.'

"'And what may it be, if it's pleasin' to you?' says Luttrell.

"'Maybe I'll tell it to you,' says he, 'when we're better acquainted.'

"'Maybe I could guess it now,' says Luttrell.

"'Come over and whisper it, then,' says he, 'and I'll tell you if you're right.' And Luttrell did, and the other called out, 'You guessed well; that's just it!'

"'Well,' says Luttrell, 'there's many a change come over me; but the strangest of all is to think that here I am, sittin' up and talking to the —' The other held up his hand to warn him not to say it, and went on: 'And I'm no more afeard of him than if he was an old friend.'

"'And why would you, Mr. Luttrell? — and why would n't you think him an old friend? Can you remember one pleasant day in all your life that I was n't with you some part of it?'"

"Give up that drawing, Vyner, and listen to this," said Grenfell. "I'll make her begin it again for you."

"I am listening. I've heard every word of it," said Vyner. "Go on, dear."

"'I know what you mean well enough,' said Luttrell. 'I know the sort of bargain you make; but what would be the good of all my riches to me when I'd lose my soule?'

" 'Is n't it much trouble you take about your soule, Mr. Luttrell?' says he. 'Does n't it keep you awake at night, thinking how you're to save it? Ain't you always correctin' and chastisin' yourself for the good of your soule, not lettin' yourself drink this or eat that, and warnin' you, besides, about many a thing I won't speak of, eh? Tell me that.'

" 'There's something in what you say, no doubt of it,' says Luttrell; 'but, after all,' says he, with a wink, 'I'm not going to give it up as a bad job, for all that.'

" 'And who asks you?' says the other. 'Do you think that a soule more or less signifies to me? It don't; I've lashins and lavins of them.'

" 'Maybe you have,' said Luttrell.

" 'Have you any doubt of it, Mr. Luttrell?' says he. 'Will you just mention the name of any one of your friends or family that I can't give you some particulars of?'

" 'I'd rather you'd not talk that way,' says Luttrell; 'it makes me feel unpleasant.'

" 'I'm sure,' says the other, 'nobody ever said I was n't polite, or that I ever talked of what was not pleasing to the company.'

" 'Well,' says Luttrell, 'supposin' that I wanted to be rich, and supposin' that I would n't agree to anything that would injure my soule, and supposin' that there was, maybe, something that you'd like me to do, and that would n't hurt me for doin' it; what would that be?'

" 'If you always was as cute about a bargain, Mr. Luttrell,' says the other, 'you'd not be the poor man you are to-day.'

" 'That's true, perhaps,' says he; 'but, you see, the fellows I made them with was n't as cute as the —'

" 'Don't,' says the other, holding up his hand to stop him; 'it's never polite. I told you I did n't want your soule, for I'm never impatient about anything; all I want is to give you a good lesson, — something that your family will be long the better of, — and you want it much, for you have, all of you, one great sin.'

" 'We're fond of drink?' says Luttrell.

" 'No,' says he; 'I don't mean that.'

"'It's gamblin'?'

"'Nor that.'

"'It's a liking for the ladies?' said Luttrell, slyly.

"'I've nothing to say against that, for they're always well disposed to me,' says he.

"'If it's eatin', or spendin' money, or goin' in debt, or cursin', or swearin', or being fond of fightin' —'

"'It is not,' says he; 'them is all natural. It's your pride,' says he, — 'your upsettin' family pride, that won't let you do this or say that. There's what's destroyin' you.'

"'It's pretty well out of me now,' says Luttrell, with a sigh.

"'It is not,' says the other. 'If you had a good dinner of beef, and a tumbler of strong punch in you, you'd be as impudent this minute as ever you were.'

"'Maybe you're right,' says Luttrell.

"'I know I am, Mr. Luttrell. You're not the first of your family I was intimate with. You're an ould stock, and I know ye well.'

"'And how are we to be cured?' says Luttrell.

"'Easy enough,' says he. 'When three generations of ye marry peasants, it will take the pride out of your bones, and you'll behave like other people.'

"'We could n't do it,' says Luttrell.

"'Try,' says the other.

"'Impossible!'

"'So you'd say about livin' on potatoes, and drinkin' well-water.'

"'That's true,' says Luttrell.

"'So you'd say about ragged clothes and no shoes to your feet.'

"Luttrell nodded.

"'So you'd say about setting in a cave and talking over family matters to — to a stranger,' says he, with a laugh.

"'I believe there's something in it,' said Luttrell; 'but sure some of us might like to turn bachelors.'

"'Let them, and welcome,' says he. 'I don't want them to do it one after the other. I'm in no hurry. Take a hundred years, — take two, if you like, for it.'

"'Done,' says Luttrell. 'When a man shows a fair spirit, I 'll always meet him in the same. Give me your hand; it 's a bargain.'

"'I hurt my thumb,' says he; 'but take my tail, 't will do all the same.' And though Mr. Luttrell didn't like it, he shook it stoutly, and only let it go when it began to burn his fingers. And from that day he was rich, even till he died; but after his death nobody ever knew where to find the gold, nor ever will, till the devil tells them."

"And did his family keep the bargain, — did they marry the peasants?" asked Grenfell.

"Two of them. One before John Luttrell of Arran; and another must do it, and soon, too, for they say the two hundred years is near out now."

"And is it said that the remedy succeeded?" asked Vyner; "are the Luttrells cured of their family pride?"

"They can't be till the third marriage takes place; indeed, my grandfather says they 'll be worse than ever just before they 're cured! 'for,' says he, 'every one that makes a bargain with the devil thinks he has the best of it.'"

"And that, I suspect, is a mistake, Katherine," said Vyner.

She threw down her eyes, and seemed lost in thought, making no reply whatever to his remark.

"I 'd have had no dealings with him at all," said Vyner.

"You are rich, and you don't need him," said she, almost fiercely, as though his words had conveyed a sneer.

"That 's just it, Kitty," said Grenfell; "or if he did want him, it would be for something different from money."

She gave a saucy toss of her head, as though to show she agreed with him, and turned to the table where Vyner was at work with his chalks.

"That 's me," said she, gravely.

"I like your own face better," said Vyner.

"So would the little fellow with the pipe that you were telling us of," said Grenfell.

"Let him say so," said she, with a ringing laugh; and she bounded from the spot, and, skipping from crag to crag,

flew down the rock, and hurried down the little path at speed.

"There 's a man coming up the road; don't you see him waving his hat?"

"It 's an old man," said Vyner, as he looked through his telescope. "I suppose her grandfather."

CHAPTER XII.

THE WALK IN THE MOUNTAINS.

When Vyner went to sleep that night, it was to dream of all that the last few days had presented before him. The wild and rocky Arran, with its ruined Abbey and its lonely occupant; the bright-eyed but over-thoughtful-looking boy, with all the freshness of childhood and all the contemplative temperament of a man; then the iron-bound shore and the semi-savage natives; and, last, of all, the mountain region where he then was, with that fairy figure more deeply impressed than he had drawn her, and whom he now fancied to be tripping lightly before him up the rocky sides of Strathmore.

As he opened his eyes, the view that met them startled him. It was one of those vast stretches of landscape which painters cannot convey. They are too wide, too boundless for picture. The plain which lay outstretched before him, rising and falling like a vast prairie, was unmarked by habitation, — not a hovel, not a hut to be seen. Vast groups of rocks stood out here and there abruptly, grotesque and strange in outline, as though giants had been petrified in the act of some great conflict, the stunted trees that crowned the summits serving as feathers on the helmets. A great amphitheatre of mountain girded the plain, save at one spot, the Gap of Glenvallah, through which, as his map told him, his road on that morning lay.

His object was to see with his own eye the so much vaunted scenery of this region, to visit the lonely spot, and talk himself with its wild natives; he doubted, indeed, if both the solemnity and the savagery had not been exaggerated. To acquire the property was, after all, only one of those caprices which rich men can afford themselves. They

can buy some rare and costly relic, — some curious manuscript, some singular specimen of a contested species, a shell, a stone, a fragment of sculptured marble, — to show which once or twice to some critical eye is all its value; why not then possess in nature what, had it been reduced to art and signed Poussin or Salvator, would have been priceless? It was thus he reasoned: "If this place be but what they have described it, I shall own a landscape that all the galleries of Europe cannot rival. A landscape, too, whose varying effects of sun and shadow, of daybreak and twilight shall be endless. The greatest of all painters, the sun, shall throw over the scene his own lights, and the storm shall wash the canvas and bring out afresh all the most lovely tints of color."

Grenfell had promised him overnight to be up and stirring by an early hour, but when called he refused to rise; he had his lazy fit on him, he said; he might have called it rather a malady than a paroxysm, for it was chronic. He declared that the view from the rock before the door fully satisfied him; he was no glutton about scenery; a little did for him, and here was a feast. "Besides," said he, "I have been reading those atrocious magazines all night, and I mean to devote my day to some rebel colloquies with my host."

Perhaps, after all, Vyner was scarcely sorry to set out alone; Grenfell's companionship was of so essentially worldly a character, his qualities were best exercised when they discussed the men, the things, and the topics of his day. Such a man saw in the wild sublimity of a mountain scene little else than its desolation, and Vyner bethought him how often this town-bred gentleman had jarred upon him in moments of peaceful revery and errant fancy.

O'Rorke served his breakfast in silence; either he was not in communicative mood, or he mistrusted his guest. He answered with brevity the few questions about the road, only adding "that it was a pity the gentleman had not mentioned before where he was going, for there was an old man and his granddaughter had just set out on that very road."

"The child I saw here yesterday?"

"The same."

"Have they been long gone? Could I overtake them, think you?"

"Easy enough; they 've taken some bread and a bottle of milk for their breakfast, and you 'll come up with them, if you walk briskly, before they reach the Gap."

He lost no further time, but, strapping on a light knapsack, and armed with a stout stick, set out at once.

"If it 's a gauger you are, you 'd wish yourself back in the place you came from before night," said O'Rorke, as he looked after him. Vyner was a good walker, and trained to the mountains, so that his eye quickly detected any available short cut, and enabled him at a glance to choose his path. If there was not actual peril in his position, — thus alone and companionless in a wild region, where any suspicion may attach to the stranger, — there was that amount of adventure that summons a man's courage to its post, and tells him that he must look to his own safety; and who that has felt this sensation, this proud sense of self-dependence, does not know its ecstasy! Who has not tasted the small heroism of being alone on the mountain, on the wild heath at midnight, on the rolling sea with a gathering storm in the distance, and who, having felt, has not gloried in it?

But to the man who leaves behind a home of every comfort, where all that can adorn and embellish existence are to be found, the contrast of present privation with past indulgence has something wonderfully exciting. He pictures the pleasant drawing-room with its cheerful fire, and the happy faces around the hearth; he fancies he hears the merry laugh, the melodious chords of the piano, the swell of some sweet voice, and then he bends his ear to the rugged plash of the breaking sea, or the whistling wind as it sweeps through some Alpine "crevasse." If no sense of such dangers arose to Vyner's mind, yet there was enough to make him feel how different was his present position from anything that his daily life exacted. The chances that we voluntarily confront have a wondrous fascination.

From his map he learned that the estate which he wished to purchase began at the Gap of Inchegora, a solemn gorge

visible for many a mile off! It was, indeed, a grand portal, that same Gap, not fully fifty feet in width, and more than nine hundred in height, — a mere fissure, in fact, as complete as though made by the stroke of a giant's scimitar. With his eyes directed constantly to this spot, he went onward, aud came at length to a little stream, at the margin of which, and under the shelter of a solitary ash, sat the old peasant and his granddaughter at their breakfast.

"I have walked hard to come up with you," said Vyner. "I wanted to have your company to the Gap." The old man touched his hat in acknowledgment of this speech, and then bent down his head, while the child spoke to him in Irish.

"'T is deaf my grandfather is, sir, and he did n't hear you," said the girl.

"Tell him I would be glad if he 'd be my guide as far as Mort-na — "

She laughed merrily at his poor attempt at the name, and said with a racy intonation, —

"Mortnagheela. 'T is there we live ourselves."

The old peasant munched his bread and lifted the bottle twice to his lips before he answered the girl's question, and then said, —

"Ask him is he a gauger."

"No," said Vyner, laughing; "I have not come here to molest any one. I want nothing more than to look at your big mountains and grand old cliffs."

"You 're a surveyor," said the old man, whose hearing seemed to have not lost one word Vyner uttered.

"Not even that, my good friend, — a mere idler, no more."

The peasant said something in Irish to the child, and she laughed heartily at it, looking up the while in Vyner's face, as though it made the jest more poignant.

"Well, will you let me bear you company, Katherine?" asked he.

As the girl repeated the question, the old fellow gave a half-impatient shrug of the shoulders, and uttered a few sentences in Irish with a voluble energy that savored of passion.

"'T is what he says, sir," said the child; "that he was in

trouble once before, and found it hard enough to get out of it, and if misfortune was to come to you, that he 'd be blamed for it."

"So, then, he 'd rather have nothing to do with me, said Vyner, smiling. "What does he mean by trouble?"

The old man looked up full in his face, and his eyes took an almost defiant expression as he said, —

"Is n't the assizes trouble? — is n't it trouble to be four months in jail waiting for them? — is n't it trouble to stand

up in the dock, with two sons of your own, and be tried for your life?"

"Yes, that, indeed, may be called trouble," said Vyner, compassionately, as he sat down on the bank and took out a cigar. "Do you smoke? Will you have one of these?"

The old man looked at the cigar and shook his head; either he did not value, or did not understand it.

"That 's the reason I come up here," resumed the peasant. "I 'm a Mayo man, and so is all belongin' to me; but after that" — he laid an emphasis on the last word — "the landlord, ould Tom Luttrell, would n't renew my lease, and so I come up to this wild place, where, praise be to the Virgin, there 's no leases nor landlords either."

"How does that happen? The land surely has an owner?"

"If it has, I never saw him, nor *you* neither. And whoever he is, he knows better than to come here and ax for his rents." The bitter laugh with which the old fellow finished his speech was scarcely short of an insult; indeed, Vyner half winced as he felt that it might have been meant as a menace to himself. "No," continued he, as though following out the flow of his own thoughts; "there 's the Gap of Inchegora before us, and through that Gap tithe-proctor, agent, or bailiff never passed, and if they did, they 'd never pass back again!"

"And who is supposed to own these lands?" asked Vyner, mildly.

"The College of Dublin has some of them; Lord Landsborough has more; John Luttrell of Arran says that there 's part of them his; and, for the matter of that, I might say that the mountain there was mine, — and who 's to contradict me? — or what better am I after saying it?"

Pouring out a cupful of brandy from his flask, Vyner offered it to him; and this he took with gratitude, his eyes devouring with admiration the little silver goblet that held it.

"Drink Mr. Luttrell's health," said Vyner, pouring out the last of the liquor into the cup; "he was an old friend of mine long ago."

"Here 's health to him, and long life, too, if it was any use to him," said the man, doggedly.

"There is truth in what you mean; a life such as he leads now can be of little pleasure or profit either."

"And who brought him to it?" burst in the old man, fiercely, for the spirit had mounted to his brain, maddening and exciting him. "What was it but the old Luttrell pride that ruined every one of them, and will ruin them yet? He married a decent girl, well brought up, and good-looking. She was n't a lady; but not a lady in the land had a better heart or a finer temper, but he would n't own her for all that. No, not a bit of it; there she lived, now with one brother, now with another, nobody darin' to call her Mrs. Luttrell, nor even as much as hint she was married. How we stood it — we never were very patient — I don't know; but we did, and more ill luck to us for doing so!" There was a long pause before he continued: "At last there came that trouble I was telling you of. When Mr. Crowe was shot, and I was tuk with my two sons, — as innocent every one of us as that little girl there, but what did that signify? — the Attorney-General said, 'It 's eight-and-twenty years I 'm coming this circuit, and I never knew a capital felony to be tried without a Malone in it! I wonder,' says he, 'will the time ever come when this will cease?' There was eight of us then banished, some in Botany Bay, and some in America, and, by coorse, it was hard for us to make up money for the 'defence,' — the more because we spent so much already on lawyers. Howsomever, we did do it. We got a pound here, and ten shillings there, and at last gathered twenty-two fourteen-six. I 'll never forget it, twenty-two fourteen-six; in fact, I used to go on saying it over to myself, as I sat in my cell, just as if saying it would make it grow. The attorney, Mr. Roach, who was a good friend of ours, towld me in secret that there was two or three ugly things in the case, and that short of ould Mr. Clancy, the King's Counsel, there warn't a man could get us off; 'and less than thirty guineas,' says he, 'won't bring him down.' All this time none of us would ask Sally Luttrell for a farthin'. We all knew she had nothing of her own, and we would n't be beholdin' to Mr. Luttrell. At last my youngest daughter could n't bear it any longer; she sets off for the house where Sally was stoppin', and what she said, or how she did it,

we never knew; but the next morning there came to Mr. Roach's office a note with the money. It was an order on French's Bank, signed with a letter L. When the trial was come on, — it was the third day, — the Crown lawyers were pushing hard to make out a charge of conspiracy, and show that half the country was in it, and at last declared that they were ready to prove that an immense sum of money lay in the Bank just to defend all the people that ever broke the law, or did anything wrong, and that in this case they would produce a list of subscribers, each of them down for some trifle, every one of whom had been once, at least, in that dock with an indictment against him. Sure enough, however he come by it, he had the list. And such a set of witnesses as he brought up never was seen afore. 'Gentlemen of the jury, I only ask you to look at them,' says he; 'just look at them, and you 'll know what sort of a tie binds these people to the prisoners in the dock.' Clancy said nothing till it was all over, — he would n't cross-question one; but he holds a bit of paper in his hand, and says, 'My Lord,' says he, 'it appears to me that to be poor and wear ragged clothes in this country is to be outlawed, and that any man whose condition is not as comfortable as my learned friend's must be declared a rebel to his King and a liar to his Maker. It 's very hard,' says he, 'but as it comes from so high an authority as the Attorney-General, it must be good law, and I 'll not dispute it. Fortunately, however, for my unhappy client, his character has not only made friends for him amongst good men and kind men, — it is only by his equals in life that his honest nature is known; poor laborers, humble peasants testify by their hard-earned pittance, freely given, to their love for an old neighbor and friend. But what good is it? They are poor, and must be perjured; they are half famished, and, of course, they are infamous. But here, my Lord, is a witness well enough to do to be respected; he eats, drinks, and dresses in the way the law requires; he has an estate, and, of course, a conscience; he keeps an agent, and therefore he has a sowl to be saved; his sympathies are written down here at the cost of eleven pounds eight shillings, and — though his modesty is satisfied with a mere letter L — his name is John Hamilton Luttrell.'"

As if the strain on his memory to recall the precise words employed and to bring back the whole scene had been too much for him, or as though the emotions of the past had surged back to overwhelm him, the old peasant held his hand over his eyes, and sat several minutes without speaking.

"Did Luttrell come on the table, then?" asked Vyner.

"No, sir; he was seen in court a short time before, but when he was called he could n't be found; nor from that day out was he ever seen in the streets of Castlebar. It was that sent him away to the island, — his pride and his shame together."

"You are less than just to my old friend," said Vyner, warmly. "To know what he felt, to understand all the difficulties that he saw before him, you should be in *his* place as he was."

"That 's as much as to say that I ought to be a gentleman before I condemned him," said the old fellow, with a look of intense craftiness. "But the lawyer that defended *me* did n't want to be a laborin' man to explain what *I* felt, or what was passin' in my heart. No, sir, there 's things in the world that are just the same to the rich man as to the poor one, just as sickness and sorrow is. Get up, Kitty, we 're stayin' too long here; it will be black night before we get home."

"How many miles do you count it?"

"Twenty-one, — long miles, too, — the last four of them over shingle, and steep, besides."

"Shall I find an inn — well, shall I find shelter for the night?" said he, correcting himself.

"Shelter I could give you myself, but I 'd rather you 'd look for it anywhere else. I told you already why."

"Well, I 'm not afraid of your company; and, if you don't dislike mine, we 'll travel together."

The little girl said something with eagerness, in Irish, and then, turning to Vyner, she took his hand, and said, "Yes, come with us." And they set out.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PROJECT.

It was on the evening of the second day after Vyner's departure, that Grenfell, never much given to anxieties about others, felt a certain uneasiness, and sauntered down the glen, wondering what might have detained him. He had not gone fully a mile, when he saw, in the gray twilight, a man approaching; he hailed, and was answered in his friend's voice, "All right; it is I."

"I was going to start the hue and cry, or whatever may represent that institution here, after you, Vyner. Where have you been all this time?"

"As to the where, my friend, it would require a very different tongue from yours and mine to say; Russian and Polish names are nothing in comparison. As to the how I have been, is easier to answer, — never better; though with all due gratitude be it said, I have passed my time in rather questionable company."

"At least they recognized the rights of hospitality?"

"Arabs themselves were never more punctilious. My host was the grandfather of our little friend the fairy queen, a man of nigh eighty, who had been tried on two capital charges, and ought, I suspect, to have been convicted on both. His friends, to the number of twenty-odd, were all Whiteboys, Ribbonmen, or whatever other name includes law-breakers of the first magnitude; and one, as handsome and frank-featured a young fellow as ever you saw, who accompanied me to the lake-side this evening, had made his escape from Castlebar jail when under sentence of death, and actually went back to the town to witness the execution of his cousins on the following Saturday, it being,

as he said, the only mark of affection he was able to show them."

"I make you my compliment, as the French say, on your company. And the women, what were they like?"

"I saw but two, — an old hag that was brought down special to give an opinion upon me from external traits, and pronounce whether I had the color of hair or eyes that indicated a tendency to bear witness against my neighbor; the other was a sickly creature, bedridden though in the prime of life, mother of little Katherine."

"But explain how you could have prolonged your stay amongst such people. What were you doing? What were you saying?"

"Doing? The whole day we walked the mountains. They led me, by paths known only to themselves, over an immense mountain district, showing me all that was noteworthy, and pointing out effects of scenery and picturesque spots with a feeling and taste that amazed me. They used no cant of art, none of that tricky phraseology, it is true, which we accept as the vernacular of all landscape description; but in their wild imagery and reckless imagination they gave names to the places which showed how deeply objects of terror or beauty had appealed to them. Then at nightfall we gathered close to the turf fire and the potato 'kish,' a wide, open basket, which served as strainer and dish together. There we supped, talked politics, religion, law, and a little literature, — at least so far as the Life of Freeny and the story of Moll Flanders enter into biographical letters."

"How I should like to have drawn a cordon of policemen round the party and netted the whole."

"You might like to have planned the campaign, but I'll be sworn if you had been favored with a look at the company you'd never have led the expedition."

"What a traveller's knack it is to exaggerate the war-paint of one's Indian friends!" said Grenfell, superciliously. "But here we are with our supper waiting for us, and even Mr. O'Rorke's noble feast will contrast favorably with your host's."

The meal ended, they seated themselves on the door-sill,

looking out into the still and starry night, and resumed the theme they were discussing.

"I take it that you said you were a mere tourist rambling for pleasure?" asked Grenfell.

"No, I told them I had come down to see the country with some intentions to make a purchase. It was not so easy to explain that I was more eager to acquire a very beautiful and picturesque tract than a remunerative one, but they believed me at last, — that is, they gave credit to my sincerity at the cost of my shrewdness." Grenfell nodded, as though he agreed with them, and Vyner went on: "We were a full house when I made my declaration — there were, I should say, six or seven-and-twenty present — and they concurred in applauding the frankness with which I spoke to them. A very old man, a venerable figure, whose high forehead and white beard would have impressed me, perhaps, more reverentially if I had not been told that he had been flogged by John Beresford, in the year '98, for some cruel outrage he had committed — this apart — he, however, complimented me highly on my straightforwardness, and said that if others would do like me there would be fewer disturbances about land; and the illustration he used was this: 'If you go into a fair to buy a horse, and you see a splendid animal, strong-boned, well-ribbed, and powerful, with every promise of speed and strength; you are as well satisfied with his price as with his perfections, but do your inquiries stop there? — Not a bit of it. You know well that he may be a capital hunter and a noble roadster, but you want to learn what his temper is. All his fine qualities depend upon this; for if he be unruly and unmanageable, to what purpose is his power or his activity? It is precisely the same with a property; you may have wood and water, arable land and lay, mines and meadows, and with all these there may be a "temper" that renders them worthless. Landlords won't believe this; buyers won't listen to it. They say, "Make out my title clear and clean, and leave me to deal with it." Men with money in the bank, and who, because they can live anywhere, are chained to nowhere, cannot understand the love of a poor laboring-man to some mud-hovel or some shealing, to a brook where he

has paddled in boyhood, to the mountain that he has seen from his earliest infancy. They do not, cannot, perceive why poverty should sharpen any susceptibilities, — poverty, that can blunt so many, — and they say, "Turn him out. I'll find a place for him elsewhere." But that's a mistake; you might as well say you'd replace the child he has followed to the churchyard. The man, in the very proportion of his destitution, has bound up his heart with some half-dozen little objects that have, from time and long usage, grown to be part of him. The monotony that wearies the rich man is the luxury of the poor. To live where their fathers lived, to see an unchanged world around them, to have few contrasts of the present with the past, is their paradise —'"

"Where did you get all this?" broke in Grenfell. "From your friend of the cat-o'-nine-tails?"

"Exactly. The words of wisdom were all his own, and, unlike the fate of most wisdom, it was listened to. He showed me, in fact, that though the Law might give possession, it would not ensure me one of the rights of property: I might own, but not enjoy; I might have and hold, but neither sow nor reap; I might walk over, and shoot over, but with no privilege to keep any other from doing the same, and that before I thought of preserving the game, I should take some measures about preserving myself. The man who enunciated these principles — for they were principles — declared them calmly and dispassionately, not as sentiments that conveyed anger or passion; far from it, — he felt all the dignity of a sage instructing ignorance. He was a great Saquem, delivering the laws of his tribe, and showing what had been their guides and directors for centuries. I did, indeed, once, only once, venture upon a mild remonstrance, that there were some things which a landlord possessed for the betterment of those under him; that he might assist them in many ways, and be the means of their advancement and prosperity; but he demurred to this, and so did his followers. Their experience, they said, did not confirm this; as a class they had found landlords narrow-minded and selfish, very ignorant of the people, and very indifferent to them. They opined that as an institution, landlordism had not succeeded, and half hinted that it was a Saxon innova-

tion that was brought over in days of violence and oppression, and did not suit the conditions of the country at present."

"And you listened to these rascals coolly propounding such doctrines?"

"Yes; and so would you have done too, had you have been in my place, my dear George! A minority is never very truculent when the majority could pitch it over a cliff without the slightest risk of being called to account for it."

"It would have pushed my patience hard, though."

"It would have been your prudence, and not your patience, that you'd have consulted."

"Well, I'll not quarrel with the rogues if they have disabused you as to the pleasures of Irish proprietorship; they've done you a good service, but I must say, I think their case a more hopeless one, now that I see lawlessness is a system."

"I don't think you would if you talked with them! They were too argumentative not to be open to conviction; too logical, with all their prejudices, not to be approachable by reason. I was, all the time we were talking, so impressed with this, that I could not help imagining what a race so quick-sighted and intelligent might become when educated and instructed. Take my word for it, George, Hodge will have no chance against Paddy if he ever get book-learning."

A mocking laugh was Grenfell's answer.

"So satisfied am I of the truth of what I say, that I'm going to give a proof of it."

"What, going to set up a school in the wilds of Donegal!"

"No. I'm going to carry away that pretty child, and educate her with Ada."

"You'll not do anything so foolish, I trust!"

"It is all settled, the conditions arranged, the terms agreed to. I have given her grandfather ten pounds for her outfit, some few things she needed, and as much more to pay their journey over to Wales; for the old fellow, with a caution that was creditable to him, wished to see the ladies to whom his child was to be confided, and confer a little with them besides."

"All your scheme for the property was absolute wisdom compared with this!"

"How so?"

"Where everything is so absurd one cannot decide what to ridicule. Suppose you succeed, — and it is what I by no means grant, — what will you do with her? You 'll give her the tastes, the accomplishments, and the habits of a lady — to marry her to your gamekeeper or your gardener. You 'll turn her brain with ten years of luxury — to make the whole of her after life a dreary servitude. You 'll excite ambition, whose very least evil will be bitter disappointment; and for what? To gratify a caprice, to paint the moral of a vapid theory about Irish intelligence. No, no, Vyner, don't make such a blunder as this, and a serious blunder, too; for, amongst other pleasant contingencies, Paddy MacHackaway is sure to call you to account some fine day, — why you dared to do this, or omitted to do that; and with all your respect for his reasoning qualities, he sometimes expresses his sentiments with a bludgeon."

"The thing is done, George, if you were to rail at it for a week. It is done, and cannot be undone, even if I wished it."

"But why not? What is easier than to send for this old rascal who has so over-blarneyed you, and compromise the matter? A couple more of those crisp ten-pounders that I must say you displayed before these creatures with an unpardonable rashness —"

"Be it so," broke in Vyner. "But let me tell you that they saw my pocket-book full of them; they saw on the window-seat, where by chance I had left it, a purse heavy with gold, and yet these poor fellows were proof against the temptations; and it was the jail-breaker himself who carried my knapsack on my way back, which contained, as he knew, both purse and pocket-book; so that against their honesty I 'll not listen to a word."

"Let them have all the virtues under the sun if you will; call them all Arcadians. All I ask is that we should have no dealings with them. Send off O'Rorke; let him bring this old fellow before me, and I 'll answer for it that I settle the question at once."

"No, no; my word is pledged, and I 'll not break it."

"I don't ask you to break it. What I propose is that you should be released from a very ill-judged contract, certain to turn out ill to all it includes. Let me, at least, try if what I suggest is not practicable."

"If the negotiation were to be carried on with men of your own rank and condition, Grenfell, there is not any one to whom I would with more confidence confide it; but forgive me if I say that you 're not the man to deal with these people."

"Why not?"

"For a number of reasons. First of all, you are strongly prejudiced against them; you are disposed to regard them as something little better than savages — "

"Pardon me, there you are wrong, — as not one whit better."

"That 's enough, then; you shall be no envoy to them from me."

"Well, I 'll knock under; I' ll agree to your high estimate of them, intellectually and morally, only with that detractive element of poverty which makes even clever men submissive, and occasionally squeezes conscience into a compromise. You tell me they are very amenable to reason; let me see if I agree with you. You assure me that with all their seeming impulsiveness and headlong rashness they are eminently calculating and forecasting. I want to see this. Bethink you what a grand witness I shall be to the truth of your theory when I am converted. Come, consent to send for this old fellow; make any pretext you please for seeing him, so that I may have a quarter of an hour's talk with him."

"To what end? You could scarcely address to him the arguments you have just used to me — "

"Leave that to my discretion. I suspect, Vyner — mind, it is mere suspicion, — but I suspect that your Celtic friend will be far more practical and business-like in his dealings with me than with you; that his shrewdness will show him that I am a commonplace man of the world, not caring, nor indeed believing in any great regeneration for Ireland, and that all our intercourse must take the shape of a bargain."

"I consent," said Vyner; "but, I own, less from choice than necessity, for time presses, and I find, by a note I have just received, that M'Kinlay, my man of business, has arrived at Westport, and whatever we decide on must be done at once."

"If I 'm not very much mistaken, Vyner, my negotiation will not take ten minutes, and, perhaps, as many pounds, so that you may order whatever it be that is to carry us hence, and I 'll guarantee to be ready."

While Vyner hastened to give the necesary orders, Grenfell opened his writing-desk, from which he took some banknotes and gold, and thrust them together in his pocket.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DISCUSSION.

"When that old man comes," said Grenfell, — "Malone, I think, is the name, — let him come in here. I want to speak to him."

"He 's outside now, before the door," said O'Rorke, whose prying looks showed how eager he felt to know what might be the subject of their conversation.

"Does he hold any land in this neighborhood?"

"He 's like the rest," replied the other, half sullenly; "he lives where he can, and how he can."

"What you would call a squatter?" said the Englishman, who smiled at his own sharpness in employing the word.

"What I would n't call any such thing," replied O'Rorke, firmly; "no more than I 'd say it was squatting to sit down on my own hearthstone."

"Which, perhaps, would n't be your own, my good friend, if you were merely a tenant, and not a solvent one."

"You may talk that way up in Leinster, or some of the counties that border on Leinster; but I tell you that you know mighty little of Ireland if you think that what your newspapers call the 'Great name of England' terrifies any one down here. Just try it. It 's about fifty miles from this to the Land's End, and I 'll give you all that distance to find ten, no, but five men, that you 'll frighten by the threat of British law or British vengeance, — which is about the same thing."

"I 'm sorry to hear it; that is to say, I should be sorry it was true."

"Well, if you mean to deny, why don't you prove it? What 's easier than to tell the carman we 're not going to Westport, we 're going up through Donegal to count the

people that 's in love with the British rule in Ireland! You shake your head. I don't wonder, indeed; no shame to you, that you would n't like the journey. But I 'll tell you what you can do instead of it," said he, with a firm and steady voice.

"What 's that?"

"Leave sixpence here, in my hands, and it will treat every well-wisher of England from this to the Giant's Causeway. Is n't that a fine investment for you?"

Grenfell's face flushed, his brow darkened, and he turned to hurl a stern reproof to this insolence; but he saw in the elated look of the other all the delight of one who was gradually drawing an adversary into the lists, and to a combat in which practice had given him a certain dexterity.

Determined, at all events, to foil this design, the Englishman affected indifference, looked at his watch, turned over some papers that lay on the table, and then carelessly said, "Send in Malone here."

With the dogged air of one disappointed and baffled in his designs, O'Rorke left the room; and soon after the old man entered, stroking down his white hair as he came forward, and making his reverences with a strange mixture of servility and defiance.

"Your name is Malone?" said Grenfell.

"Peter Malone, sir."

"Come nearer, Malone. I have heard a good deal about you from my friend, whom you treated so hospitably up in the mountains, and he has also spoken to me of a sort of plan — I won't call it a very wise one — that he struck out the other night, and which it appears you agreed to, about your granddaughter." He paused, hoping that the peasant would speak; but the old man simply bent his two dark and piercing eyes on him, and nodded. Grenfell went on: "I have pointed out to him some, though very far from all, of the inconveniences of the scheme, and I have asked his leave to point them out to you; and from what he has told me of your good sense and clear-headedness, I suspect I shall not have undertaken my task in vain."

"Does he mean that he wants to go back of it?" asked Malone, with a calm and resolute look.

"Listen to me patiently, and you shall hear all." It is not necessary I should weary my reader with a sermon where the text conveys so much. The chief burden of Grenfell's argument was what he had addressed to Vyner; and upon this he expanded freely, laying much stress on the misfortune that must accrue to any young girl raised to a temporary elevation from which she must come down to meet a life of, perhaps, privation and hardship. He pictured an existence of luxury on the one hand, and of poverty on the other, and asked what right had any one to expose another to such extremes; what preparation could ease and indulgence be to a life of toil and suffering? "How were the acquirements of the one to be made applicable to the other? — how," he asked, "is the young lady — for she will have become a young lady — to change at once to the condition of the ill-fed, ill-dressed, hard-worked country girl?"

Had the orator only glanced, as he spoke, at the features of the listener, he would have seen what a lamentable blunder his rhetoric had made. At the mention of the words "young lady," the whole expression of the old man's face altered; his half-sullen obduracy, his rugged sternness disappeared, his eyes lighted up, his lips parted, his nostrils dilated, and his whole face beamed with joy that was positively triumphant. "Go on, sir! — go on!" he cried, as though he yearned for a perfect picture of what imagination had but sketched an outline.

"You cannot mean, my good man," said Grenfell, hastily, "that you would think it any benefit to be placed where you could n't remain? — to stand at a height where you could n't balance yourself? It 's not enough that people can dress well, and talk well, and look well; they must have, besides, the means to do all these, day after day, without an effort, without as much as a care or a thought about them. Do you understand me?"

"Sure, people was n't born ladies and gentlemen from the beginnin' of the world?"

"No; great families took their rise in great actions, — some by courage, some by cleverness, some by skill, and some by great industry."

"Just so!" broke in the old man. "There was always some one to begin it, and likely enough, too, in a mighty small way. Dare I ax your honor a question?"

"Ask freely, my good fellow."

"Though I suppose your honor will have to go back very far, can you tell me what was the first of your own great family?"

From the purpose-like energy of the old peasant's manner, and the steady and penetrating look of his bright eyes, Grenfell felt certain that the man had been prompted to put this insult upon him, and, in a voice broken by passion, he said, —

"You 'll gain very little by insolence, old man! With my family you have nothing to do; they were in no wise connected with yours."

"Begorra! I knew it," cried the peasant, slapping his thigh with his hand. "I 'd have taken my oath of it. I was as sure of it as I was of my skin that you were not a born gentleman. You may be as rich as you please, and have houses and lands and cows and horses, but there 's not a dhrop of the real blood in your body! I said it the first minute I looked at you, and I say it again."

Pale, and quivering with anger, Grenfell could not utter a word. The savage violence of the peasant came on him so much by surprise that he was actually overwhelmed by it; and though he darted on the old fellow a look of fury, he turned away without speaking, and entered the house.

Vyner had just received tidings that Mr. M'Kinlay had arrived at Westport to await his instructions, and he was writing a hurried line to despatch by the messenger, to say that he would return there on the morrow, when Grenfell entered, and threw himself into a chair.

"I have met with ruffianism in most shapes, Vyner," cried he, "but so insolent a scoundrel as that yonder never came across me before."

"Insolent! Is it possible? What pretext could he have for insolence?"

"I know well, with your infatuation for these people, what a hopeless task it would be to persuade you that they

were not miracles of good manners, as well as of loyalty and good conduct. I am quite prepared to hear that I mistook or misunderstood — that, in short, what I fancied was insult was Irish *naïveté.*"

"But tell me what passed between you, — what he said."

"I will not."

"Will you not let me judge of what you accuse him?"

"I will not; nay, more, I make it a charge upon you, as you desire our friendship to continue, that not only you never interrogate me on this matter, but that you neither question nor permit that man to be questioned upon it. Such a fellow should have as small a place in one's memory as in one's esteem, and I 'd rather forget him."

"Tell me, at least, what have you done in the negotiation?"

"Nothing. He opines that you have given him a pledge, to which, as a gentleman, you are bound; and as he sees neither peril nor inconvenience to result from converting a peasant child into a mock young lady, I suppose you have no choice, but must carry out your fine project with all the success it deserves."

"I wish you would let me know what passed between you. If there was any intentional offence, I 'd certainly not overlook it."

"I 'll tell you nothing."

"Shall he ask your pardon?"

"He may; but he shall never have it."

"You are provoking, George, I must say. You are not just to either of us; for, certainly, if I were convinced that you were aggrieved to the extent you suppose — "

"I tell you once again, and for the last time, I will not discuss it; and as you have promised me not to open the matter with this fellow, it may be forgotten at once."

"You really wish it?"

"I insist upon it."

"That is sufficient." Vyner took out his pocket-book, and walked to the door. "Malone," cried he; and the old man came forward bareheaded and respectful, without a shade of passion on his face. "Malone, I am not so fully assured as I felt last night when I first proposed it, that my plan for

your grandchild would be a wise one; at least, reflection has shown me some difficulties about it — "

"Just tell me, sir, do you want to draw back?" said the old man, resolutely but respectfully.

"It would be better that you heard me out," said Vyner, severely. "I am willing to do all that I offered — "

"That will do, sir. I never doubted the word of a real gentleman."

"I was going to say that if, instead of taking your child from you, you preferred that I should settle a certain sum of money on her, to be her marriage portion — "

"No, sir; no, sir. What you offered, or nothing. Make her a lady, as you said you would, or leave her where she is."

"I think, my good man, you suffer your hot blood to get the better of your judgment occasionally, and it would be as well if you would give yourself some more time for reflection."

"My blood is just as God gave it to me, neither hotter nor colder; and what I say now, I'd say to-morrow. Keep your word, or break it, whichever you plaze!"

"I can very well understand how my friend — " Vyner stopped himself in time, and after a second's pause proceeded: "You hold me, then, to my bargain?"

"How can I hould you? You may hould yourself, but *I* can't hould you!"

Vyner's cheek flushed, partly with anger, partly with shame, and he said; "With this you will buy what clothes your grandchild will require at present. Do not spend more of it than you like, for these things shall be looked to by others; and this will pay the cost of your journey. I have written down the way you are to go, and also the name and place of my house. My present intention is to be at home within a fortnight; but if you arrive before that, you will be equally welcome."

"Very well, sir," said the old man, as he deposited the bank-notes in a leather purse. "I may go now?"

"Yes, you may go. Remember, however, Malone, that if between this and next Thursday week you are inclined to think that my last offer is a better one — "

"No fear of that, your honor!" broke in the old man, with a laugh. "I 'm a poor man and an ignorant man, but I know what 's best for the stock I came from. It is n't money we want. It 's the place where we can make money, and more than money;" and with a jerk of his frieze coat over his shoulder, the old fellow strode away down the valley.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. M'KINLAY'S MISSION.

WHEN Mr. M'Kinlay set out from the cottage in Wales, it was in no especial good humor towards Miss Courtenay. She had what is vulgarly called "snubbed him," and this is a process uncommonly painful to a well-to-do middle-aged gentleman, accustomed to a great deal of daily respect, and not a little looked up to in his peculiar sphere.

All night long, as he travelled, he pondered over these things, his irritation growing ever deeper. He recalled every word she had said, and in his anger even imitated to himself the careless impertinence of her tone as she said, "And are *you* going yachting?" just as if such a thought was too absurd to be entertained. "And why not, I 'd like to know? Is there anything in my status or position that would make a pleasure excursion ridiculous in a man like me? I could afford it. I hope she does n't imply I 'm too old for it. Age is an ugly subject; she 'd better not cross-examine her witnesses there. And my red tapery! What a blessing it was there were creatures to docket, and tie up, and register, and save superior souls the trouble of remembering anything! And then her last impertinence, when, after a sneer at Irish property, she said she wished I had one! I 'm much mistaken, madam," cried he, half aloud, "if a little of that same secluded savagery that Ireland affords would n't do you a world of good; if a couple of years of country life, with a bog landscape and a rainy sky, would n't prove an admirable alterative to you! No fine acquaintances, none of those pleasant idlers, who like to run down for a week to the country, and bring all the gossip of town along with them, will follow you to Ireland. No

fealty, no affection will cross the Channel, and traverse that dreary waste of morass, dotted with mud hovels, they call in irony the Green Isle. If anything could bring you to your senses, madam, it would be a residence here."

Such were Mr. M'Kinlay's thoughts as the mail lumbered heavily along through the deeply rutted roads, and the rain swooped down in torrents. "I should like to see her yonder," muttered he, as they passed a dreary two-storied house that stood alone on the bleak moor they call the Curragh. "That 's the reformatory I should like to try you with!"

With such benevolent intentions as these did he arrive at Carrick's Royal Hotel, in Westport, just as Vyner and Grenfell had reached the same spot.

"You 've had an uncomfortable journey of it, I fear, Mr. M'Kinlay," said Vyner, as he shook him cordially by the hand. "Nothing but wind and rain for the last three days. Come into my room here; I want to speak to you before you meet any one. I don't think you know Grenfell," said he, when they were alone, "and I should like to prepare you a little for a man who, with unquestionable abilities, has a number of oddities about him, and has a most intense pleasure in contradiction. This has been especially called out by a project of mine which, perhaps, you will not fully approve, but at all events will accept as a pardonable caprice."

With this prelude he related his plan about the little girl whom he destined to make a companion for Ada. He told how he had been struck by her wonderful beauty, but far more by the signs of remarkable intelligence she displayed, and the traits of decision and firmness so rare in a creature of her age. He urged the advantage it would be to Ada, whose fault was an excess of timidity, to see one of her own age so bold and fearless. "That intrepid spirit, trained to independence, will certainly impart some of its nature to my timid and gentle girl," said he, "and the companionship will as certainly dispel the tendency to depression which is the besetting sin of my dear child."

"Do you mean to adopt her?" asked the lawyer.

"No, not adopt her. I mean to educate her, and bring

her up with Ada, portion her when she is married, or make some provision for her if she lives single."

"That is to say, you want some eight or ten years of her life, and are not overburdened with anxiety as to what comes of her after."

"Grenfell himself could n't have judged me more unfairly, M'Kinlay. I want to deal honorably and liberally by her, and I want you to counsel me how to do so."

"Make a settlement on her, fix upon a sum, appoint trustees, and arrange that on her coming to a certain age she shall be declared in the enjoyment of it."

"I am quite willing; nay, more, I'll leave the entire matter in your hands. You shall decide on the amount, — yes, I insist upon it, — and shall make all the other arrangements. I don't think there will be much more to detain us here, for I am not so eager about this property as I was some weeks ago."

"Have you been over it?"

"Yes, and am delighted with its picturesque beauty. It is infinitely finer than I expected; and if I believed they 'd let me live there for a few weeks every year, I would even build a house, and furnish it."

"And who doubts it?"

"I do; and so would you, M'Kinlay, if you talked the matter over, as I did, with a committee of the whole House. We discussed the thing very coolly and impartially; we entered upon the question of landlordism in all its bearings, what it contained of good, and where it degenerated into evil; and although they failed to convince me that capital, skill, and intelligence, backed by an honest desire to do good, were only unwarrantable interferences with people who wanted none of them, they assuredly made me believe that the pleasure of possession would be dear at the price of being shot at, and that the great probability of being thrown over a precipice rather detracted from one's enjoyment of wild scenery."

"The fellows who talk like this are not the stuff murderers are made of, Sir Gervais. They like to frighten away purchasers, just as people get up ghost stories to deter persons from taking a house. If you like the property — "

"I repeat, I am charmed with it."

"In that case, don't lose it. Ireland cannot remain forever out of the law. One day or other she must come into civilization; and these acres, that are bought for less money than so much land in South Africa or New Zealand, will be as profitable as an estate in the West Riding."

Vyner smiled, and shook his head. "Have you not been hearing this story for more than a century back?"

"Let us hear it for a century still, and the investment will pay cent. per cent. But come, I will tell you of a plan to test this problem fairly. Make the estate the fortune you intend for this young girl, with a power of redemption on your part by payment of a certain sum, — let us say half as much more as you are now to pay for it. By the time that she will have grown up to womanhood you will have had the opportunity of deciding whether you desire to become an Irish proprietor or not. At all events, she will have either a good round sum in hand, or an estate which certainly will be no perilous heritage to her, though it might be a dangerous possession to you. This, I think, meets every difficulty."

"Grenfell would tell us that instead of overcoming one obstacle it raises two," said Vyner, laughing.

"But why consult him on the matter ?"

"Because I shall want him. I should like to make him a trustee; he's a hard-headed man of the world, and well adapted for the office."

"And whom will you name for the other? Has the girl any relative or connection of a class sufficiently elevated for the duty?"

"I suspect not; they are all peasants, and of the very poorest kind. I doubt, greatly, if there be one amongst the number who could read and write. Stay!" cried he, suddenly. "An idea just occurs to me; and if the notion be at all practicable, it solves every difficulty at once. The child's aunt, a peasant like the others, was married to a gentleman, an old friend and college companion of my own. Unfortunate in many ways, and, of course, lost to the world of society by this unequal match, he retired to a lonely island on the coast, where he has lived for some years in a

condition and with habits scarcely above the half-savage creatures about him. He was and is still a man of considerable ability, although soured and disgusted with a world wherein he met nothing but failure. I met him last week by mere accident, having landed on the lonely rock he inhabits. I will not say he was at all pleased with the recognition, but, in short, we renewed acquaintance, and parted a little more like friends than we met. If he could be induced to accept this trust, it would accomplish all that I wish."

"Has his wife any influence over him?"

"She is dead. She died a few days since."

"Does he care for and interest himself about those who belong to her?"

"I have no means of knowing; but I suspect not."

"Then, probably, it would be better that you made this proposition to him without any intimation that you knew of the relationship between him and this girl; asking him to assist you in carrying out a whim, — a mere caprice?"

"I have been thinking over that. I believe you are right. He might not feel indisposed to serve these people, though he might shrink from declaring them his near connections. At the same time, I feel he may refuse us on other grounds. He rejects whatever in the remotest way would lead him back into the world he has quitted. His is a passive sort of misanthropy, — I believe, the least curable kind."

"It would be a pity not to secure him; he is the very man, with his local knowledge and thorough acquaintance with the people, to give your experiment the fairest chance of success."

"Well, here goes for the attempt. Let us first have our dinner, M'Kinlay, and then I'll write your credentials. You shall go over to Arran, and use your best powers of persuasion. I'll tell you by and by all that you ought to know beforehand of your adversary, — for adversary you'll find him, whatever subject you broach; but I shall call it a great victory if you succeed."

"Where is Arran?" asked the lawyer, in some trepidation, for he only half liked his mission.

"Here it is," said Vyner, spreading a map over the table,

and pointing to some three or four insignificant dots off the coast of Donegal. "It is the most northern of these, — that one."

"And how is it to be come at?"

"We must learn all that from the people at the inn here. A fishing-lugger, I take it — "

"I declare, frankly, I have no fancy for the expedition; nor is there, indeed, any reason for it. A letter will be amply sufficient to explain your object."

"Yes, but not to urge and persuade him, — not to meet the doubts and the difficulties he will suggest, — not to reassure him about this, and convince him about that. He 's a clever fellow, M'Kinlay, and one who will require to examine every phase of a subject before he 'll accept it."

"Good heavens! what a place to go to!" cried the other, as his eyes were still intently bent upon the little spot on the map.

"The place is most interesting; some remarkable scenery, and a very curious ruin of an ancient Abbey."

"Not in my way, — not at all in my way, Sir Gervais. I 'd rather see a snug chop-house than the purest specimen of pointed Gothic."

"Well, it will be an event in your life, at any rate, — an incident to recall hereafter; and more than all, it will be a service to myself personally, which I shall not easily forget."

"If you make a point of it, I 'll certainly go. I have told you that the adventurous spirit is not my strongest characteristic. Out-of-the-way places or buildings or out-of-the-way people have no interest for me. They are like a language I don't know; they may be eloquent and charming to others, to me they make no appeal. But I 'll go, as you wish it, and I 'll do my best."

"And you 'll succeed, too, I know it. Luttrell and you will understand each other at once. He 'll be pleased with your purpose-like, straightforward manner, while he 'd reject flatly any attempt to influence or cajole him. He 'll possibly oppose his habitual indolence and his life of isolation to all plans for exertion or activity; but you 'll satisfy him that we have no intention to burden him unnecessarily, and

that, in all likelihood, he'll not be called upon for more than a single act of an executive nature."

"What are these luggers like? Are they considered safe?"

"The best sea-boats in the world."

"And the sailors?"

"None better in the kingdom. In fact, on a coast like this —" He stopped suddenly, just remembering in time that by any picturesque description of an iron-bound shore or an Atlantic swell, he might effectually deter M'Kinlay from all thought of the expedition. "Say nothing of what we have been talking over, at dinner," said he; "and I rejoice to say, here comes the waiter to announce it."

M'Kinlay sighed; he could have eaten with a capital appetite half an hour ago. It was all gone now. He'd have liked a stiff glass of brandy and seltzer-water, nothing more.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OLD LEAVEN.

The little intercourse which Luttrell maintained with the world was with his agent, a gentleman who had long acted in that capacity for his family when such an office was profitable, and when portentous tin boxes on office shelves, with the name of Hamilton Luttrell on them, told of title-deeds and estates.

To this gentleman Luttrell had applied to assist him to sell a quantity of antiquarian objects, the collecting of which had been the pursuit of many a solitary day, and in cataloguing which he had passed many a long night. At first, this taste had been adopted as a pastime, — a something to impart an interest to a dreary and purposeless life; but when three deficient harvests had so far lessened his income that he was driven to obtain a small loan to live, he resolved to sell his collection, and applied to his agent to aid him, making one only condition, — that the bargain should not be effected in Ireland, where his name was still well known, but with some English dealer, who might never have heard of the Luttrells.

Though the carefully drawn catalogue which Luttrell forwarded comprised a variety of rare and curious objects all bearing upon and illustrating ancient Irish history, they were, with a very few exceptions, of little intrinsic value. There were weapons of stone, spear-heads and javelin points, massive clubs embossed with sharpened peebles, bronze ornaments and clasps, strangely shapen casques and shields, and swords of forms that bespoke an antiquity long antecedent to the Roman wars, with amulets of amber and silver. Some rings and a sword-hilt alone were gold; this latter carved with marvellous beauty of design and great artistic excellence.

At last, after many months of utter silence on the matter, he received the following letter: —

"KILDARE STREET, DUBLIN.

"DEAR MR. LUTTRELL, — I am very sorry at the failure of all my attempts to dispose of your collection. Vangheest, however, in sending me back, as you wished, the catalogue yesterday, spoke of an American gentleman who appeared disposed to treat with you. As he is a perfect stranger to both of us, and the native of a distant country I saw no reason for refusing him the permission he asked to view the collection, and, if allowed, confer with you personally.

"I have accordingly given him a few lines of introduction, and he will present himself to you as Mr. or Captain Herodotus M. Dodge, U. S. I do not opine you will find him the possessor of much antiquarian lore; but he is an outspoken, straightforward man, with whom a business matter can be readily transacted.

"I know how reluctant you are to be intruded upon, but I am aware — better, perhaps, than yourself — that you want money at this moment, and I trust you will pardon me for having transgressed your orders respecting visitors, and made this case an exception to your rule. If, however, you persist in your determination not to receive a stranger, a line addressed to Mr. D., at Carrick's Hotel, will be in time, any day till the tenth, to prevent his visit.

"Should you deal with Mr. D., you need not give yourself any trouble about the details of the payment, as his reference to bankers and others here have perfectly satisfied me as to his respectability.

"Believe me, dear Mr. Luttrell,

"Faithfully yours,

"GEORGE CANE, for Cane and Carter."

Luttrell was very angry at this letter. It was an insufferable liberty that Cane had taken. Cane should have written — should have asked his pleasure — should have inquired whether even the certainty of selling the collection was not overpaid for at the price of this unseemly intrusion. "There is no inn on the island. This man must be my guest, and with the variable weather here, who can tell for how long? He may feel, or affect to feel, interest about the place and its people, and prolong his stay for days!"

There was, however, one passage in the letter which pained him to the quick; it was very brief, but, to him, very

significant. It ran thus: "But I am aware — better, perhaps, than you are — that you are in want of money."

Now, Messrs. Cane and Carter had been for some time making advances — small, it is true — to Luttrell, and as well to intimate to him that he had overdrawn with them as to imply that they did not desire a continuance of the practice, his correspondent threw in that parenthesis, — so full of meaning as it was.

There was a time, as late as his own father's day, when Messrs. Cane and Company would not have written such a letter. Not a few of the broad acres of the Luttrells had passed into their hands since that, however. They had not their country-houses and conservatories in those days, nor their sons in the "Guards," nor a daughter married to a viscount.

How is it that men will often grow more bitter over their fallen fortunes, when they contrast them with the prosperity of others who have never injured them? Cane had actually befriended Luttrell in many ways, — in keeping the agency of the small remnant of property that belonged to him, he was really performing a kind office; but Luttrell could not, for all this, forgive him for being prosperous.

He sat down to write two notes, — one to Mr. Cane, a very sharp reproof for a liberty which he ought never to have presumed upon, and which nothing in their respective conditions could warrant or excuse.

"While," added he, "I am no less surprised at your remark, that you are even more than myself aware of my need of money. The observation either implies a sensitive sympathy for which I was not prepared, or a covert impertinence which I hesitate to accept as credible.

"I will not receive your friend Mr. Dodge, nor shall I again trouble you with the private and personal interests of

"Yonr faithful servant,

"JOHN HAMILTON LUTTRELL."

The second note was even briefer.

"Mr. Luttrell begs to inform Mr. H. M. Dodge that he cannot receive his visit at Arran, nor can he at present decide to dispose of his collection."

"How is the wind, Hennesy?" asked he of his boatman.

"Strong from the east, sir, and comin' on harder."

"Could you beat up to Westport, think you? I have two letters of importance to send."

"We might, sir," said the man, doubtingly, "but it's more likely we'd be blown out to sea."

"How long is this gale likely to last?"

"It's the season of these winds, your honor, and we'll have, maybe, three weeks or a month of them now."

"In that case, you must try it. Take three men with you, and the large yawl; put some provisions and water on board, perhaps a little ballast too."

"That we will, sir. She'll take a ton more, at least, to carry sail in this weather."

"Are you afraid to go?" asked Luttrell; and his voice was harsh, and his manner stern.

"Afraid! devil a bit afraid!" said the man, boldly, and as though the imputation had made him forget his natural respect.

"I'd not ask you to do what I'd not venture on myself."

"We all know that well, sir," said the boatman, recovering his former manner. "'T is only that, maybe, we'll be more time about it than your honor thinks. We'll have to make a long stretch out beyond Spanish Bay, perhaps, near 'the Cobbles.'"

"I don't care how you do it, but mind that these two letters reach Westport by Monday night, or Tuesday morning at farthest. This is for the post; this for the person whose name is on it, and who will be at Carrick's Hotel. Give it if you can into his own hands, and say that there is no answer required."

"You bade me remind you, sir, that the next time the boat went over to Westport, that I was to take Master Harry, and get him measured for some clothes; but of course you'd not like to send him in this weather."

"I think not; I think there can be no doubt of that," cried Luttrell, half angrily. "It's not when the strong easterly gales have set in, and a heavy sea is coming up from the south'ard, that I'd tell you to take a boy —" He stopped suddenly, and, turning fiercely on the sailor, said:

"You think I have courage enough to send you and a boat's crew out, and not to send my son. Speak out, and say it. Is n't that what you mean?"

"It is not, sir. If you towld me to take the child, I would n't do it."

"You would n't do it?" cried Luttrell, passionately.

"I would not, sir, if you never gav' me another day's pay."

"Leave the room, — leave the house, and prepare to give up your holding. I'll want that cabin of yours this day month. Do you hear me?"

"I do, sir," said the man, with a lip pale and quivering.

"Send Sam Joyce here."

"He's only up out of the fever since Monday, sir."

"Tell Maher I want him, then; and mind me, sir," added he, as the man was leaving the room, "no story-telling, no conspiring, for if Tom Maher refuses to obey my orders, whatever they are, he'll follow you, and so shall every man of you, if I leave the island without a family except my own."

"Don't send your child out, anyways," said the man.

"Leave the room, sir," said Luttrell, imperiously; and the man, cowed and crestfallen, closed the door and withdrew.

As though to carry corroboration to the sailor's warning, a fierce blast struck the window at the moment, making the old woodwork rattle, and threatening to smash it in, while the dark sky grew darker and seemed to blend with the leaden-colored sea.

"I want you to go over to Westport, Maher," said Luttrell to a hard-featured, weather-beaten man of about fifty, who now stood wet and dripping at the door.

"Very well, sir," was the answer.

"Take the big yawl, and any crew you please. Whenever all is ready, come up here for your orders."

"Very well, sir," said the man, and retired.

"Where's Master Harry, Molly?" cried Luttrell, advancing into the passage that led towards the kitchen.

"He's out on the rocks, watching the sea."

"Call him in here. I want to speak to him. What are you doing here, sir? I told you to leave this." This stern

speech was addressed to Hennesy, who, with evident signs of sorrow on his face, stood half hid beside the door.

"I was hopin' your honor would n't turn me out after nine years' sarvice, when I never did or said one word to displaze you."

"Away with you — be off — I have no time to parley with fellows like you. Come in here, Harry," and he laid his hand on the boy's shoulder, and led him into his room. "I'm sending a boat over to Westport; would you like to go in her?"

"Would n't I?" said the boy, as his eyes flashed wildly.

"You are in want of clothes, and you could go to Sweeney's and get measured for a suit."

"I do not care for the clothes; but I'd like the sail. Is n't Tim Hennesy to go?"

"Hennesy is not to go. Maher is to command the boat."

"I'd rather have Tim; but I don't care."

"Be ready, then, in half an hour."

"I'm ready now."

"I mean, get another coat, something warmer, for you'll be out one night at least; and put your woollen wrapper round your throat. Molly will give it to you."

"There's thunder!" cried the boy; "I hope it won't lull the wind. It's blowing fiercely now."

"You're a good swimmer, ain't you?"

"I can beat every one but Tim."

"And what would you do if you were upset?"

"Hold on by the boat or a spar."

"Till you were picked up? But if none came to pick you up?"

"Hold on still, till I was near enough to swim."

"And if you did n't get near enough?"

"Go down, I suppose," said the boy, with a laugh. "One can always do that!"

Luttrell nodded, and after a moment said, "Get ready now, for here's Maher coming for orders."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NOR'-WESTER.

THE day — a dark and stormy one — was drawing to a close as the yawl got under weigh. She was manned by a stout crew of five hardy islanders; for although Maher had selected but three to accompany him, Tim Hennesy volunteered, and, indeed, jumped on board, as the boat sheered off, without leave asked or given. Luttrell had parted with his boy in his habitual impassive way, — reminded him that he was under Tom Maher's orders, equally on shore as on board, — that he trusted to hear a good account of him on his return, and then said a cold "good-bye," and turned away.

When Harry, who rarely had so long an interview with his father, left the room, he felt a sort of relief to think it was over. He had been neither punished nor scolded; even the warning that was given was very slight, and uttered in no unkindness.

"Give me a kiss, Molly, and throw an old shoe after me, for luck!" cried he, gayly, as he reached the door. "We 've got the big yawl; and though Tom has put two reefs in the mainsail, won't I make him shake them out when we 're well out to sea!"

"I 'll just go and tell the master this minit, then," said she, eagerly, "and you 'll see what he 'll say to you."

"Will you be quiet?" said he, catching hold of her apron to detain her; "was n't I only joking? I 'm to be under Tom's orders, and of course I 'll obey him."

There was a waggish drollery in the way he said this that by no means reassured her; but, taking his hand, she walked down to the beach beside him, telling him to be careful of himself and do nothing rash, and to mind what Tom Maher

said, and, above all, to remember he was the last of the family, and if anything was to happen to him, there was an end of the name forever.

"And don't you think, Molly, that the world would continue to go round, even if it lost us, great as we are?"

"Ah, ye're a young imp! that's what ye are," said she, wiping a tear from her eye as she spoke. "'T is wishin' them well I am, the same clothes. I'd rather see you in a suit of sealskin than sent out on such a day as this, just to be measured by a tailor."

"You'd dress me worse than Brian O'Lynn, Molly," said the boy, with a merry laugh. "Did you ever hear what he did for a watch?"

"Arrah! what do I care what he did?"

"Here it is, and very ingenious too," said he, —

> "'Bryan O'Lynn had no watch to put on,
> So he scooped out a turnip to make him a one.
> He then put a cricket clean under the skin,
> "They'll think it is ticking," says Bryau O'Lynn.'"

'May I never!" began she, trying to reprove his levity; but as he stepped into the boat at the same instant, her grief overcame all else, and she burst into tears. She threw her apron over her face to hide her emotion; but she suddenly drew it down, as a wild cry, half yell, half cheer, broke from the fishermen on the shore; a squall had struck the boat just as she got under weigh, and though she lay over, reeling under the shock, she righted nobly again, and stood out boldly to sea.

"There's not a finer craft in the King's navy," said a very old man who had once been a pilot. "I'd not be afeerd to go to 'Quaybeck' in her."

"Come up and taste a dhrop of sperits this wet day," whispered Molly in his ear, for his words were a balm to her aching heart.

At first from the window of his lonely room, and then, when the boat had rounded the point of land, and could be no more seen, from a little loopholed slit in the tower above him, Luttrell watched her course. Even with his naked eye he could mark the sheets of spray as they broke over the

bow and flew across her, and see how the strong mast bent like a whip, although she was reduced to her very shortest sail, and was standing under a double-reefed mainsail and a small storm-jib. Not another boat, not another sail of any kind, was to be seen; and there seemed something heroically daring in that little barque, that one dark speck, as it rose and plunged, seen and lost alternately in the rolling sea.

It was only when he tried to look through the telescope, and found that his hand shook so much that he could not fix the object, that he himself knew how agitated he was. He drew his hand across his brow and found it clammy, with a profuse and cold perspiration. By this time it was so dark that he had to grope his way down the narrow stairs to his room below. He called for Molly. "Who was that you were talking to? I heard a strange voice without there."

"Old Moriarty, the pilot, your honor; I brought him in out of the wet to dry himself."

"Send him in here to me," said Luttrell, who, throwing a root of oak on the fire, sat down with his back to the door, and where no light should fall upon his face.

"It's blowing fresh, Moriarty," said he, with an affected ease of manner, as the old man entered and stood nigh to the door.

"More than fresh, your honor. It's blowin' hard."

"You say that, because you have n't been at sea these five-and-twenty years; but it's not blowing as it blew the night I came up from Clew, no, nor the day that we rounded Tory Island."

"Maybe not; but it's not at its worst yet," said the old fellow, who was ill-pleased at the sneer at his seamanship.

"I don't know what the fellows here think of such weather, but a crew of Norway fishermen — ay, or a set of Deal boatmen — would laugh at it."

"Listen to that now, then," said the other, "and it's no laughing matter;" and as he spoke a fierce gust of wind tore past, carrying the spray in great sheets, and striking against the walls and windows with a clap like thunder. "That was a squall to try any boat!"

"Not a boat like the large yawl!"

"If it did n't throw two tons of water aboard of her, my name is n't Moriarty."

"Master Harry is enjoying it, I 'm certain," said Luttrell, trying to seem at ease.

"Well! It 's too much for a child," said the old man, sorrowfully.

"What do you mean by a child? He 's no child; he 's a well-grown boy, and if he 's ever to have a man's heart in him, ought to begin to feel it now."

"It was no night to send him out, anyhow; and I say it, though it was your honor did it!"

"Because you 're an old fool, and you think you can presume upon your white head and your tottering limbs. Look here! Answer me this —"

A fearful thunder-roll, followed by a rattling crash like small-arms, drowned his words. "It *is* a severe night," said he; "and if she was n't a fine sea-boat, with a good crew on board her, I 'd not feel so easy!"

"Good as she is, it will thry her."

"What a faint-hearted old dog you are, and you were a pilot once."

"I was, sir. I took George Bowyer up the Chesapeake, and Commodore Warren could tell you whether I know the Baltic Sea."

"And you are frightened by a night like this!"

"I 'm not frightened, sir; but I 'd not send a child out in it, just for —" He stopped, and tried to fall back behind the door.

"Just for what?" said Luttrell, with a calm and even gentle voice, — "just for what?"

"How do I know, your honor? I was saying more than I could tell."

"Yes; but let me hear it. What was the reason that you supposed — why do you think I did it?"

Deceived and even lured on to frankness by the insinuating softness of his manner, the old man answered, "Well, it was just your honor's pride, the old Luttrell pride, that said, 'We 'll never send a man where we won't go ourselves,' and it was out of that you 'd risk your child's life!"

"I accused you of being half a coward a minute ago,"

said Luttrell, in a low deep voice, that vibrated with intense passion, "but I'll tell you, you're a brave man — a very brave man — to dare to speak such words as these to me! Away with you; be off; and never cross this threshold again." He banged the door loudly after the old man, and walked up and down the narrow room with impatient steps. Hour after hour he strode up and down with the restless activity of a wild animal in a cage, and as though by mere motion he could counteract the fever that was consuming him. He went to the outer door, but he did not dare to open it, such was the force of the storm; but he listened to the wild sounds of the hurricane, — the thundering roar of the sea, as it mingled with the hissing crash, as the waves were broken on the rocks. Some old tree that had resisted many a gale, seemed at last to have yielded, for the rustling clash of broken timber could be heard, and the rattling of the smaller branches as they were carried along by the swooping wind. "What a night! what a terrible night!" he muttered to himself. There was a faint light seen through the chinks of the kitchen door; he drew nigh and peeped in. It was poor Molly on her knees, before a little earthenware image of the Virgin, to whom she was offering a candle, while she poured out her heart in prayer. He looked at her, as, with hands firmly clasped before her, she rocked to and fro in the agony of her affliction, and noiselessly he stole away and entered his room.

He opened a map upon the table, and tried to trace out the course the boat might have taken. There were three distant headlands to clear before she could reach the open sea. One of these, the Turk's Head, was a noted spot for disasters, and dreaded by fishermen even in moderately fresh weather. He could not take his eyes from the spot, — that little speck so full of fate to him. To have effaced it from the earth's surface at that moment, he would have given all that remained to him in the world! "Oh, what a destiny!" he cried in his bitterness, "and what a race! Every misfortune, every curse that has fallen upon us, of our own making! Nothing worse, nothing so bad, have we ever met in life as our own stubborn pride, our own vindictive natures." It required some actual emergency, some one

deeply momentous crisis, to bring this proud and stubborn spirit down to self-accusation; but when the moment *did* come, when the dam *was* opened, the stream rushed forth like the long pent-up waters of a cataract.

All that he had ever done in life, all the fierce provoca-

tions he had given, all the insults he had uttered, his shortcomings, too, his reluctance to make amends when in the wrong, passed spectre-like before him, and in the misery of his deep humiliation he felt how all his struggle in life had been with himself.

That long night — and how long it was! — was spent thus; every wild gust that shook the window-frames, every

thunder-clap that seemed to make the old ruin rock, recalling him to thoughts of the wild sea on which this poor child was tossing. "Have they got well out to sea by this time, or are they beating between the Basket Rocks and the Turk's Head?" would he ask himself over and over. "Can they and will they put back if they see the storm too much for them?" He tried to remember his parting words. Had he taunted them with reluctance to venture out? Had he reflected on their courage? He could not now recall his words, but he hoped and he prayed that he had not.

The leaden gray of morning began to break at last, and the wind seemed somewhat to abate, although the sea still rolled in such enormous waves, and the spray rose over the rocks and fell in showers over the shingle before the windows. Luttrell strained his eyes through the half-murky light, but could descry nothing like a sail seaward. He mounted the stairs of the tower, and stationing himself at the loopholed window, gazed long and earnestly at the sea. Nothing but waves, — a wild, disordered stretch of rolling water, — whose rocking motion almost, at last, made his head reel.

The old pilot, with his hat tied firmly on, was standing below, and, careless of the beating rain, was looking out to sea.

"The gale is lessening, Moriarty," cried out Luttrell; "it has blown itself out."

It was evident the old man had not caught the words aright, for all he said was, "She 's a fine sea-boat if she did, sir," and moved away.

"He thinks it doubtful, — he does not believe they have weathered the storm," said Luttrell; and he sat down with his head between his hands, stunned, and almost senseless.

There is no such terrible conflict as that of a proud spirit with misfortune. He who sees nothing in his calamities but his own hard fate has the dreariest and least hopeful of all battles before him. Now, though Luttrell was ready to utter his self-accusings aloud, and charge himself audibly with the faults that had wrecked his life, yet, strange as it may seem, the spirit of true humility had never entered his heart, far less any firm resolve to repent.

With all the terrible consequences that his unbridled temper could evoke before him, he still could not but regard himself as more persecuted than erring. "I did not make myself," cried he, impiously. "I no more implanted the passions that sway than the limbs that move me! Other men — is not the world full of them? — have been as haughty, as unyielding, and domineering as myself, and yet have had no such disasters heaped upon them, — far from it. Out of their very faults has sprung their fortune. In their pride they have but asserted that superiority that they knew they possessed."

While he reasoned thus, his heart, truer to nature than his brain, trembled at every freshening of the storm, and sickened as the dark squalls shot across the sea.

Nor was his agony less that he had to control it, and not let those about him see what he suffered. He sat down to his breakfast at the accustomed hour, and affected to eat as usual. Indeed, he rebuked Molly for some passing carelessness, and sent her away almost choked with tears, "as if," as she sobbed to herself, — "as if she was a dog. To know whether the milk 'took the fire' or not! Musha! any man but himself would n't know whether it was milk or salt water was afore him."

It was his habit to pass the morning in reading. He would not appear to deviate from this custom, but sat down to his books as usual. No sooner, however, was all still and quiet around him than he stole up to the tower, and stationed himself at the narrow window that looked over the sea.

The wind had greatly abated, and the sea also gone down, but there was still the heavy roll and the deafening crash upon the shore, that follow a storm. "The hurricane is passing westward," muttered Luttrell; "it has done its work here!" And a bitter scorn curled his lips as he spoke. He was calling upon his pride to sustain him. It was a hollow ally in his time of trouble; for, as he gazed and gazed, his eyes *would* grow dim with tears, and his heavy heart would sigh, as though to bursting.

As the day wore on, and the hour came when he was habitually about, he strolled down to the beach, pretending

to pick up shells or gather sea anemones, as he was wont. The fishermen saluted him respectfully as he passed, and his heart throbbed painfully as he saw, or fancied he saw, a something of compassionate meaning in their faces. "Do they believe, can they think that it is all over, and that I am childless?" thought he. "Do they know that I am desolate?" A pang shot through him at this, that made him grasp his heart with his hand to suppress the agony.

He rallied after a minute or so, and walked on. He had just reached the summit of the little bay, when a sort of cheer or cry from those behind startled him. He turned and saw that the fishermen were gathered in a group upon one of the rocks, all looking and pointing seaward; with seeming indolence of gait, while his anxiety was almost suffocating him, he lounged lazily towards them.

"What are the fellows looking at?" said he to the old pilot, who with some difficulty had just scrambled down from the rock.

"A large lugger, your honor, coming up broad."

"And is a fishing-boat so strange a thing in these waters?"

"She 's out of the fishing-grounds altogether, your honor; for she 's one of the Westport boats. I know her by the dip of her bowsprit."

"And if she is, what does it signify to us?" asked Luttrell, sternly.

"Only that she 's bearin' up for the island, your honor, and it 's not often one of them comes here."

"The seldomer the better," said Luttrell, gloomily. "When the fellows find there are no grog-shops here, they turn to mischief, break down our fences, lop our trees, and make free with our potatoes. I 'll have to do one of these days what I have so often threatened, — warn all these fellows off, and suffer none to land here."

Perhaps the old pilot thought that other and very different feelings might at that moment have had the sway over him, for he looked away, and shook his head mournfully.

"She has a flag at the peak," cried one of the men from the rock.

"She has what?" asked Luttrell, impatiently.

"She has the half-black, half-white ensign, your honor."

"Your own flag at the peak," said the pilot.

"More of their insolence, I suppose," said Luttrell; "because they have a hamper or a parcel on board for me, perhaps."

"I don't think it 's that, sir," said the other, moodily.

"What is it, then?" cried he, harshly.

"'T is, maybe, your honor, that they have some news of — " He was going to say "Master Harry," but the ghastly paleness of Luttrell's face appalled and stopped him.

"News of what did you say?"

"Of the big yawl, sir; they, maybe, saw her at sea."

"And if they had, would that give them a right to hoist the Luttrell flag? We are low enough in the world, Heaven knows!" he cried; "but we are not come to that pass yet, when every grocer of Westport can carry our crest or our colors."

This burst of mock anger was but to cover a rush of real terror; for he was trembling from head to foot, his sight was dimmed, and his brain turning. He felt the coward, too, in his heart, and did not dare to face the old man again. So, turning abruptly away, he went back to the house.

"My fate will soon be decided now," said he, as he tottered into his room, and sat down, burying his face in his hands.

The group of fishermen on the rock grew larger and larger, till at last above thirty were clustered on the point, all eagerly watching, and as earnestly discussing every motion of the lugger. It was soon clear that her course was guided by some one who knew the navigation well; for instead of holding on straight for the bay, where she was to cast anchor, she headed to a point far above it, thus showing that her steersman was aware of the strong shore current that had force enough to sweep her considerably out of her course. Meanwhile they had ample time to discuss her tonnage, her build, her qualities for freight and speed, and her goodness as a sea-boat. "I wonder did she see the yawl?" said one, at length; for, with a strange and scarcely accountable terror, none would approach the theme that was uppermost

in every heart. The word once uttered, all burst in at once, "'T is with news of her she 's come! She saw her 'put in' to Belmullet or to Westport, or she saw her sheltering, perhaps, under the high cliffs of the coast, 'lying to,' till the gale lightened." None would say more than this.

"Hurrah!" cried one at last, with a joyful cheer that made every heart bound, "I see Master Harry; he 's steerin'!"

"So he is!" shouted another; "he 's settin' up on the weather gunwale, and his head bare too. I see his hair flyin' wild about him."

"Go up and tell the master."

"Faix, I 'm afeerd; I never spoke to him in my life."

"Will you, Owen Riley?"

"Sorra step I 'll go; he turned me out of the place for saying that the cobble wanted a coat of pitch, and she sank under me after. Let old Moriarty go."

"So I will. 'T is good news I 'll have to bring him, and that never hurt the messenger." And so saying, the old pilot hastened, as fast as his strength would permit, to the house.

The door was open, and he passed in. He sought for Molly in the kitchen; but poor Molly was away on the beach, following the course the lugger seemed to take, and hoping to be up at the point she might select to anchor at. The old man drew cautiously nigh Luttrell's door, and tapped at it respectfully.

"Who 's there? Come in; come in at once," cried Luttrell, in a harsh voice. "What have you to say? Say it out."

"'T is to tell your honor that Master Harry —"

"What of him? What of him?" screamed Luttrell; and he seized the old man by the shoulders, and shook him violently.

"He 's steerin' the lugger, your honor, and all safe."

A cry and a wild burst of laughter broke from the overburdened heart, and Luttrell threw himself across the table and sobbed aloud.

Overcome by terror at such a show of feeling in one he had deemed dead to every emotion, the old man tried to

move away unseen; but just as he had closed the door behind him, Luttrell screamed out, "Come back. You saw him, — you saw him yourself?"

"No, sir; but better eyes than mine did, and they could see that he had no cap on his head."

"And they were sure it was he?"

"There 's no mistakin' him among a thousand!"

"If they deceived me — if this was false — " He stopped, and wiped the cold sweat from his forehead "There, I see her now. She 's rounding to, — she 's going to anchor. I have been poorly of late, Moriarty," said he, in a low subdued tone; "things fret and worry me that I 'd not let annoy me if I were stronger. Men of *your* stamp fancy there can never be much amiss with men of *mine*, because we have enough to eat and drink. What 's that noise without? Who is talking there?"

The door opened suddenly; and Harry, with flushed face and wildly disordered hair, and with clothes all wet and dripping, stood before his father. He made no motion to embrace or even approach him, but stood within the door, respectful, but not abashed, and as if waiting for leave to advance farther.

Luttrell's cheek trembled, and changed color twice; but, subduing his emotion with a great effort, he said, in a tone of affected indifference, "You had rough weather, — did you make Westport?"

"No, sir; we lost the boat."

"Lost the boat: how was that?"

"She filled; at least, she took so much water that she would not answer her helm, and then she heeled over and went down."

"Down all at once?"

"Yes; I had barely time to cut away our ensign from the peak. I thought I 'd save the Luttrell colors, and so I did."

"Were you far from land at the time?"

"About fifteen miles; as good as fifty, for the wind was strong off shore, and such a sea!"

"And what did you do?"

"We had plenty of spars. There were oars and stretch-

ers, and four large planks of the flooring, all floating about, and each of us laid hold of something."

"By my sowle, you 're a brave boy!" cried the old pilot, who could restrain himself no longer.

Luttrell turned a fierce look on the old man, and pointed to the door; and the poor fisherman slunk away overwhelmed with shame.

"So we 've lost our best boat and all her tackle," said Luttrell, moodily; "a heavy loss."

"It is!" said the boy, gravely; "but the fellows that picked us up say that they don't know how we held on so long with an undecked boat. They were watching us for an hour before we went over."

"Who were they?"

"Westport men; they were taking that man over here you gave us the letter for, — a Yankee fellow."

"What do you mean by a Yankee, sir?"

"Tom Crab called him so to me, that 's all I know; but he 's a good fellow, and gave me some brandy when he pulled me on board; and I hear he rubbed me till I got quite warm."

"Where is he now?"

"He 's helping them to carry that sick man up here, and I don't think he 's so sick as they say. I 'm sure it 's just fright, and no more; for every time the boat went about in stays, he 'd raise his head and give a groan."

"Of whom are you talking?"

"I don't know his name, sir; but they tell me he wants to see you very much. There he goes; they have got him in that blanket, and are bringing him here."

"Where will I put the sick gentleman, sir?" said Molly, coming in; "may I make a bed in the store-room?"

"Do so," said Luttrell, briefly; "and for the other, give him the room that was your mistress's; and do you, Harry, go out and be civil and attentive to these people. I will see them myself later on. They must put up with rough fare, but they came self-invited."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A SKIPPER.

Luttrell had just made up his mind that he would inform the American visitor he would receive him, when Harry entered, leading the stranger by the hand. "That 's papa," said the boy, and retired.

"I hope I see you in very good health, sir," said Mr. Dodge, advancing boldly, and shaking Luttrell's hand in a hearty, vigorous manner. "You live in a pretty lonesome spot here, and, as the man said to the whip-snake in the spout, 'you ain't easy to get at.'"

"Perhaps that was one of the reasons that led me to choose it, sir," said Luttrell, stiffly; "and had you got my note, you 'd have seen that I never intended you should incur the inconvenience of coming to it."

"Well, sir, it warn't pleasant; I 'll tell no lie, it warn't pleasant! I 'm a seafarin' man, sir, and I 've been one all my life; but such a harbor to get out of, and such a port to get into, and such a craft to do it in, I never seed in all my born days."

"You compel me to repeat my regrets, sir. I am, indeed, sincerely sorry for your fruitless journey."

"Well, it warn't all time lost; we picked up that crew, and that lad of yours. He 's a fine 'buoy,' sir; I know 'buoys' well, and I say it again, he 'll be a smart man."

Luttrell bowed a cold and haughty acknowledgment.

"He ain't a bit like you, not a bit; there 's no pride, no stand-off about *him;* he 's a raal frank, straight-ahead one. I seed it before he was well aboard. It was all I could do to keep him from swimming after his cap, — a darned old sealskin thing it was; but he said it was his best one, and he 'd not get another in a hurry."

"His frankness deserved all your praise, sir; it went to the extent of exposing his father's poverty."

"And if it did, what o' that? You ain't ashamed of it, are you? Look at me, sir; I have a matter of seventy thousand dollars in the Tennessee Bank, and a trifle more in Ohio scrip, and I own every timber in the bark 'Prettyman Quincey Squash,' four hundred and odd tons, a clipper to sail, and a whale for freight, and I ain't proud, nor no ways blown up to burstin' for that!"

"I am delighted to know of your prosperity, sir, for your sake," said Luttrell, coldly.

"Mind," said the other, who accepted the words in their most flattering sense, "I did n't say it was all got with my hands in my 'pants'-pockets. I had a darn'd deal of smart work for it. I was up among the Injians for four years, I was over the Rocky Mountains trappin', I was a cook aboard a South Sea whaler, and" — here he winked one eye, and gave Luttrell a good-humored poke with his fingers — "and I did a little in Ebony off the Samsoo River, you understand; unwholesome work it was, with the baracoons always flooded, and the alligators flopping through the mud, and stirring up foul air and fever. Ugh!" he cried, with a wry face, "you 'd see an ugly sort of a blotch on your cheek at night, and before the same hour next evening the ground sharks would be a-fi'tin' over you. You have n't got anything to drink, have you?"

"I can, unfortunately, offer you nothing but our mountain whiskey; it is home-made, however, and not bad."

While Luttrell took a bottle and some glasses from a small cupboard in the wall, Mr. Dodge employed himself in a leisurely examination of the chamber and its furniture. "May I never," exclaimed he, "if it ain't a droll sort of crib! Why, stranger, I 'd not live here three months without making something better to sit on, and handier to eat off, than these. Just you give me a hatchet, and a hammer, and a handful of nails, to-morrow morning early, and see if I won't."

"I am afraid my furniture deserves all the ill you can say of it," said Luttrell, with a faint smile.

"That ain't a chair, — it 's not like a chair."

"I will not defend it, certainly."

"And yet it shows why you Britishers never can, by any possibility, be a great people, — no, sir, never."

"I am really curious to hear that explanation."

"Well, sir," said he, tossing off a fresh tumbler of undiluted whiskey, "you're a-goin' to hear it; but 'don't be impatient,' as the bush squirrel said to the young mouse, 'I've got your mother in my mouth, but I'll eat you presently.' Here's how it is. When you was makin' that chair, you had in your mind some old-fashioned, ramshackle, nine-cornered machine you had seen of your father's, or your grandfather's, and nothin' would persuade you but to imitate that. It was wisdom of your ancestors; but we never had no ancestors. We did n't begin the world with fifty cranks in our head, about how some helpless old critter, ten centuries back, would ha' tried to do this or to mend that. There's the difference between us, sir; and mind my words, when we've got a ten-inch gun that'll send a shot from Long Island to the Battery Point, you Britishers will be a-going back to bows and arrows, and a-paintin' your bodies blue, like your ancestors."

"The picture is not flattering," said Luttrell, gravely. "And now, sir, let us talk of something more nearly interesting to us. I am informed by my correspondent that you have seen the catalogue of my small collection, and desire to examine the objects themselves."

"If that's a home brew, stranger, it does you more credit than the chair," said Mr. Dodge, smacking his lips after the third tumbler of whiskey.

"I am proud to have anything worth offering you, sir."

"If you've a barrel or two of that spirit to dispose of, we'll deal, sir, that's a fact;" and Mr. Dodge emptied the bottle into his glass.

"I'm not certain whether my resources extend so far; but if they do, the whiskey is much at your service, and I will feel honored if you accept it."

"Now for the gimcracks; let's see 'em," said Mr. Dodge, as though eager to show how promptly he could respond to a graceful or generous action.

"Some of the gimcracks are here before you," said Lut-

trell, making a rather awkward attempt to smile, as he repeated the word. "This curiously misshapen attempt at a figure is, I have every reason to believe, an image of the idol 'Crom,' the object of worship to the Irish in the days of Paganism. You see, he holds in his hand a sort of weapon like a fork."

"It ain't a brand, and it ain't a fork! The Choctaws have idols that beat that critter hollow, and they stick eyes in them of a red stone that sparkles when there 's light on it. What 's this?"

"An ancient Irish spear, or javelin."

"It 's a whale harpoon, and a rare bad one to boot; the spike ain't well fastened, and no lead on the butt-end. Here 's a bowie-knife, ain't it?"

"It 's the sword of an Irish chieftain, and was found in the tomb of Thady O'Shaughlen, Prince of the Keil, and the lands of Maroon; the inscription that you see here — "

"I see nothing but scratches, made belike with an old nail or a dinner-fork, — they ain't letters."

"This inscription signifies 'I am.'"

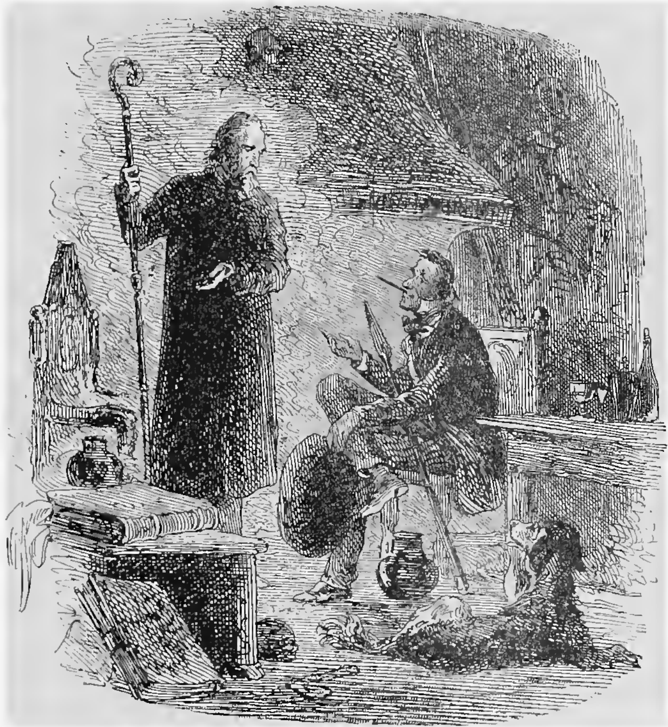
"Well, I 'm blessed if I believe them 's old, — they 're rubbish, stranger, jist rubbish, — and as for the big dish — "

"It is a shield; a more perfect specimen is not extant. It was the battle-shield of Brian Ogh-na-Tiernach; he was killed in the great battle of Gongal-a-Murrah, which some historians have confounded with the battle of Claddahmore."

Perfectly insensible to the sneers, or the not less offensive ridicule expressed by the American, Luttrell went on displaying object after object with all the zeal of one who gloried in his pursuit, and delighted in his success as an antiquarian. He drew forth rare scraps of manuscript, some worn and tattered fragments discolored by age, and to all seeming undecipherable; he read out names of kings and saints, valiant chieftains, and holy martyrs, whom he mentioned with a voice tremulous with veneration; and he showed signet-rings and amulets they had worn, as a priest might have displayed the most sacred relics.

"Look here, stranger," said the Yankee, as he threw himself into the old chair, and stretched out his legs to the full-

est extent, "there's a museum in my native town of Halkanpolis, and I want to make 'em a present; it's to be somethin' nobody ever seed the like of afore, nor ever will ag'in. I du think this gatherin' here is pretty nigh that ticket! And now, I say, what will you take for the whole bilin' as it stands?"



"You have not seen one-tenth of the collection as yet!" cried Luttrell, whose zeal as an antiquarian was far greater than his eagerness as a vendor. "There's the great book of the Three Curses."

"We can do the swearin' and cursin' pretty well without a book where I come from," said the Yankee, with a grin.

"Diarmid's Token, as it is called. This curious gem,

with its setting of pure gold, was formerly believed to be a protection against witchcraft."

"In my country, Britisher, it 's the witches would want the amulet! We 're a pretty hard set down there, and can take care of ourselves without any help from charms. Come now, — let 's deal; what 's the whole figure, in one word?"

"You are unjust to both of us," said Luttrell. "You neither know what I want to sell, or yourself to buy. Let me go on and show you some curious relics of a later period; they may have more interest for you, perhaps."

"Not a hickory shaving's difference, whether you showed me a trowel that helped to build Babel, or a snuff-box of Queen Bess. If you want to please me, talk of dollars, stranger, hard dollars."

Luttrell's face flushed with a passing anger; this reducing him to the position of a tradesman, first displaying and then pricing his wares, sorely tried a temper that was never proof against much pressure. The purpose-like cold face of the American, however, showed him that the man meant no covert impertinence by his demand; but simply desirous of finishing a bargain as speedily as might be.

"I am sorry, sir," said he, at length, "that you will not let me lay before you even the few objects that I prize the most; however, as you give me no choice in the matter, and as circumstances render me anxious to part with my collection, I obey you. I estimated the whole at three hundred pounds. My agent informed me that, in London, two hundred pounds was deemed the value, and I never got a higher offer than a hundred and fifty, which I refused, but which I will now take, if offered me."

The American took a very scrubby note-book from his pocket, and made a short calculation with a pencil.

"Well!" said he, in a drawling, dreary sort of way, "it ain't much. I suppose you was years over it?"

"Yes," said Luttrell, taken suddenly off his guard, "they occupied me many very sad days and nights. They were labors that lightened sorrow, and took me away from cares that were eating into my heart."

"Ah! and how much better you 'd have been, stranger, if

you 'd ha' been doin' something genuine useful, something to make yourself and others more comfortable, and not a grubbin' after old shoe-buckles and saints' shinbones. Well, you don't think so! No matter; that 's our way o' looking at it. Now to business. There 's just one thing in these diggin's that has tuk my fancy. It s the only thing here that I 'd give a red cent for, on my own account; but I do like it wonderful. I don't suppose you 'll let me have it to buy, but if you 'll jist give a loan of it, we 'll say for a year or two, — two years, — I 'll close the deal, and give you your first price, fifteen hundred dollars."

Luttrell's dark face lighted up at the prospect of relief from much embarrassment, and his eyes ranged over the room to see what it possibly could be that had captivated his strange visitor's fancy. A few gaffs, a single-barrel gun, and some fishing-tackle, were in one corner, and a pair of high sealskin boots in another, and a rough wolf-like "lurcher" lay under the table, — could it be any of these? It was scarcely credible, and yet the American had seen none other; he had walked straight from the landing-place to the Abbey. "What signifies what it is?" said Luttrell to himself. "It is the caprice of an unlettered fellow, who would, perhaps, care more for a tobacco-pouch than for my 'Book of the Four Gospels.'"

"I have no doubt that I shall accept your offer, and gladly accept it," said Luttrell; "but it would gratify me if you were to say what it is that you desire to possess."

"It 's then just as likely you 'd refuse me."

"And I mistake you much if, in such a case, you 'd hold me to my bargain!"

For the first time the American's features brightened; the dull leaden cheek colored, and the firm-set thin lip curved into a pleasant smile, as he said, "You 're right, Britisher, — you 're right there. I 'd not ha' clinched the nail if I saw it was goin' to fester you! Here 's how it is, then," and he drew a long breath to give him courage, — "here 's how it is, — I want your 'buoy.'"

"My what?"

"Your buoy, — your son!"

"You want my son," said Luttrell, drawing himself up,

and looking with an air of haughty insolence. "Have you forgotten, sir, which side of the Atlantic you are standing on, and that you are no longer in a land where men deal in their fellow-men? Or is it that, presuming on what poverty you have seen here, you dare to insult me with a proposal your own mean whites would have resented with a bowie-knife?"

"You ha' been a rare chap on a stump, Britisher, that 's a fact!" said the Yankee, coolly. "Your words come rushin' out like water out of a pump; but they don't squash me, for all that. Hairy Dodge, — Dan Webster always called me Hairy, the short for Herodotus, — Hairy Dodge is a hard grit, and it 's not every millstone can grind him."

"Will you do me the favor, sir, to accept the very humble hospitality I can offer," said Luttrell, proudly, "and let there be no more question of any business between us? I think I heard mention of a sick friend who accompanied you."

"He ain't a friend of mine. It was a critter I met at the inn, and who wanted to come over here to see you, and so we agreed we 'd take the lugger between us."

"He is ill, I am told."

"Jist fright, — nothing but fright! The first sea that took the boat on the quarter, he cried out, 'Lord, 'a' mercy on us!' 'Oh, are ye there?' says I; 'are ye prayin' for that sort o' thing?' and, surely, he did go at it, till he grew too sick for anything but groans. There was no use reasonin' with him, for all he said was, 'Put me ashore where you like, and I 'll give you five hundred pounds.' He got up to a thousand; and once, when the peak halyards gave way, and the sail came clattering down, he raised the bid to half his whole fortune."

"So that there is no actual malady in the case?"

"Nothin' o' the kind. It 's jist fright, — mere fright! How you 're ever to get him off this to the mainland again is clean beyond me. He 'll not go, that 's certain, if he can help it."

"I must look to him, and see that, so far as our very poor accommodation serves, he wants nothing. You 'll excuse me, I trust, sir."

Luttrell spoke in a cold and formal tone, hoping that his visitor, seeing no prospect of any transaction between them, would now take his leave. Mr. Dodge, however, either did not deem the battle lost, or he saw no reason to retire from the field; for he disposed himself once more in the old chair, and, taking out a cigar about as long as a modern parasol, prepared to smoke.

"You have n't any objection to this sort o' thing?" he asked coolly, as he lit it.

"None whatever. I 'd say, make yourself at home, sir, if it were not that this humble house of mine is so little like a home."

"It will look jollier in the evening, when there 's a good fire on the hearth, and a strong brew o' that pleasant spirit smokin' afore us." And Mr. Dodge vouchsafed a strange sort of grin, which was the nearest approach he could make to a laugh; and Luttrell, stung by the notion that another was assuming to do the honors of *his* house, and to himself too, retired hastily, without speaking.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAWYER "ABROAD."

To reach the "store-room" where Mr. M'Kinlay lay, — for, of course, it is needless to inform our readers he was the much terrified voyager alluded to, — Luttrell was obliged to pass through the kitchen, and in so doing, beheld a scene which had never before presented itself to his eyes in that spot. Molly Ryan, feeling all the importance of the occasion, and well knowing that her master would never remember to give her any orders on the subject, had issued a general requisition for supplies all over the island, which was so quickly and well responded to, that the place looked less like a room in a dwelling-house than a great mart for all sorts of provisions.

Great baskets of fish stood on every side, — fish of the strangest and most uncouth forms many of them, and with names as uncouth. There were varieties of ugliness among them to gratify the most exacting naturalist, — flat-headed, many-toothed monsters, with bony projections all over them, and dorsal fins like hand-saws. Even the cognate creatures wore an especial wildness in that wild spot, and lobsters looked fiercer, and crabs more crabbed, while oysters, least aggressive of all floating things, had a ragged and rocky exterior that seemed to defy all attempt at penetration. Besides, there were hampers of eggs, and "creels" of potatoes, and such other garden produce as the simple cultivation permitted. While, meekly in one corner, and awaiting his fate with that air of conscious martyrdom which distinguishes the race, stood a very lean sheep, fastened by a hay-rope to the leg of a dresser.

But the object which more than others attracted Luttrell's attention was a pale, sallow-faced man, who sat next the

Mr. McKinlay repairing damages after the Storm.

fire, on a low seat, all propped up by pillows, and his legs enveloped in a blanket; his wan and singular appearance being considerably heightened by the feathers of a goose having lighted on him, giving him half the look of some enormous fowl in the act of being plucked. This addition to his picturesqueness was contributed by Harry, who, engaged in plucking a goose at the opposite side of the fire, sent all the down and feathers in that direction. Harry himself, without shoes or stockings, indeed, with nothing on but a flannel shirt and trousers, was entertaining the stranger, and giving him, so far as he could, an insight into the life and habits of the islanders.

It is perhaps fortunate for me that it is not part of my task to record the contributions to history which Harry Luttrell afforded the stranger; they were not, possibly, divested of a little aid from that fancy which narrators are sometimes led to indulge in, and certainly Mr. M'Kinlay felt, on hearing them, that terrible as were the perils of the voyage, the danger that beset his place of refuge seemed infinitely more terrible. A few traditionary maxims were all that they knew of law, of religion they knew still less; in a word, the stranger learned that he was in the midst of a people who cared no more for British rule than they did for the sway of the Grand Llama; and in a place where, if it were very difficult to live, few things were so easy as to get rid of life.

So intensely interested was M'Kinlay in the boy's narrative, that he never noticed Luttrell, who entered the kitchen, and made his way towards him. Luttrell himself was so preoccupied with one thought, that he hardly acknowledged the salutations of the people who made way for him to pass. The thought that engaged him was this: that the man before him was the bearer of a writ against him. That the law, which in his fastness he had so long defied or evaded, had at last tracked him home; and though he knew that, were this to be the case, nothing could be easier for him than to conceal himself in the island, — there were spots there, where, had it been safe to have followed, no search could have discovered him, — yet, in the passionate boldness which prompted him always to meet the coming peril half-

way, he now sought out this man, whatever might be his mission, to confront him.

Who can tell, besides, what an insolent pride he felt in being able to say to the emissary of the law, "Go back to those who sent you, and tell them that you saw and spoke to Luttrell of Arran, but that you did not dare to lay a hand upon him, nor utter the stupid formula of your craft, because one single word from him would have settled your doom forever; that he did not avoid nor evade you; that he received you courteously, and, so far as he could, hospitably; but with the proud consciousness that *he* was more the master of *your* fate than were you of *his*, and that the wisest thing you could do was to forget the errand you came upon, and go back as you came." With some such thoughts as these Luttrell now came forward and stood before the stranger, and for some seconds each looked in silence at the other.

"Are you Mr. Luttrell of Arran?" asked M'Kinlay, in a low feeble tone.

"I am accustomed to believe, sir, that a stranger usually announces his own name and quality first, when presenting himself in the house of another," said Luttrell, slowly and gravely.

"I ask pardon; my name is Robert M'Kinlay, sir, of Furnival's Inn, and 28, Regent's Terrace, London, conveyancer."

"And I am John Hamilton Luttrell of Arran. Now that we know each other, are there any matters we can treat of, or is this meeting to have merely the character of a pleasant *rencontre?*"

"It was business brought me here, Mr. Luttrell!" said M'Kinlay, with a groan of such intense sincerity that Luttrell almost smiled at it.

"Whenever you feel equal to treat of it, you 'll find me at your service," said Luttrell.

"Could it be now, Mr. Luttrell, — could it be now?" cried M'Kinlay, with eagerness.

"It shall be this minute, if you desire it."

Unwrapping the blanket from around him, and disposing it, not very gracefully, perhaps, over his shoulders, Mr.

M'Kinlay scrambled rather than walked after Luttrell to his room.

"Ah, sir!" cried he, as he entered, "if I had but the shadow of a suspicion of what the expedition was before me, I'd have refused flatly; ay, sir, if I had to throw up the agency for it the day after."

"I am truly sorry, sir, your impressions of this place should be so unfavorable."

Mr. M'Kinlay was too full of his disastrous experiences to listen to excuses, and he went on: "People cross the Atlantic every week and don't suffer one-half what I did since I left Westport. I vow I think they might round the Cape with less actual danger; and when we tacked about and ran down to take up the creatures that were upset, one of our sailors — no, indeed, but two of them — declared that it was at the imminent risk of our own lives we were doing it; that if something held on, or did n't hold on, I forget which, and that if we were to get entangled in the wreck — but I can't describe it, only I remember that the American — the greatest savage I ever met in my life — took a pistol out of his pocket, and swore he'd shoot the man at the helm if he did n't bear up for the wreck. He swore — I'll never forget his awful oaths, doubly terrible at such a moment — that he saw a boy, or, as he called it, 'a buoy,' on a spar waving his cap to us, and he said, 'I'll go down to him if we upset beside him.' Yes, sir, it sounds incredible that a man so dead to any sentiment of humanity could exist, and who could declare that he'd imperil five lives, and his own, too, just out of — what shall I call it? — a whim, a caprice, a fancy, and for what? — for some fishermen, some starving creatures whose miserable lives ought to make death a release, and a boy that possibly, until your kind cook gave him leave to sit at the kitchen fire, had no home to go to to dry himself."

Luttrell's face grew almost purple, and then, of a sudden, ashy pale. To suppress the passionate impulse that worked within him made him feel sick almost to fainting, but he did suppress it, and with an immense effort of self-control said, "And the American, you say, was resolved that he'd save the boy."

"Ah! at any cost! Indeed, he had the cruelty to say to myself, 'If the boat goes over, mind that you keep up' to windward, or to leeward, or somewhere, I don't know where, for I was well aware that it was down I should go. 'You can swim,' said he, 'I suppose?' 'Not a stroke,' said I. 'It don't matter,' said he, 'you can grip on all the same.' Yes, sir, that was his unfeeling remark: 'You can grip on all the same.'"

"But he declared that the boy he *would* save!" cried Luttrell, with a scornful toss of his head at the other's prolixity.

"That he did; I am willing to make oath of it, let the consequences be what they may to him."

"He never told *me* of that," said Luttrell, thoughtfully.

"I should think not, sir; it 's not very likely that a man will parade his own inhumanity, and declare how he risked five valuable lives to save a few savage creatures, who might as well be drowned at sea as die of starvation on shore."

"You are severe, sir. You judge us somewhat hardly. With all our barbarism, we have our uses, and, more too, we have ties and affections pretty much like our betters." Though there was far more sadness than sarcasm in the way Luttrell said these words, Mr. M'Kinlay winced under the reproof they conveyed, and hastily blurted out his excuses.

"You cannot suppose I could have meant to include you, sir. You could n't imagine that in speaking of these poor ignorant creatures, I had the slightest intention — "

"I never suspect an insult where it is possible to believe such was not intended, sir," said Luttrell, haughtily. "But I don't think that we are here now to discuss the fishermen of Arran, or their claim to be deemed civilized."

"You are right, — you are quite right, Mr. Luttrell. I ask pardon for all this digression, the more since it was entirely personal; but a man's first shipwreck takes a wonderful hold on his imagination;" and the lawyer laughed with one of those practised laughs which, by setting others off, frequently cut short an unpleasant discussion. Luttrell was, however, impassive in his gravity; if anything, he looked more stern than before. "I have come here,"

resumed M'Kinlay, "at the request of my friend and client, Sir Gervais Vyner. This letter is my introduction to you."

Luttrell took it, read the address, turned it round, and looked at the seal, and then laid it down upon the table. He heaved a long sigh, too, but it was a sigh of relief, for he had had sore misgivings as to M'Kinlay's visit, and visions of law and its dire consequences in various ways had been flitting before his eyes.

"I opine that the letter will explain the object of my coming here more briefly than I could."

"Do me the favor to tell it in words, sir," said Luttrell, coldly; and the other bowed and began.

Our reader may not be as patient a listener as was Luttrell, nor, indeed, need he hear Mr. M'Kinlay's account of a mission with which he is already familiar; enough, then, if we say that he was listened to for above an hour in perfect silence. Not one word of remark, not a question, not even a gesture, interrupted the flow of the narrative; and although at some moments the lawyer grew pathetic over peasant hardships and privations, and at others was jocose over their drolleries, Luttrell neither vouchsafed any show of sentiment or of mirth, but heard him throughout, as might the Chancellor have heard a pleading in Equity. Vyner had cautioned M'Kinlay not to divulge the name of the girl in whose behalf Luttrell was entreated to act, until he had given some pledge of his willingness to accept the trust. He knew well the proud susceptibility of the man, and how instantaneously he would reject what savored of an advantage to those connected with him, not to speak of the additional pain he would feel in knowing that these peasants had been paraded as his near relatives; and so Vyner had said, "Keep the name of the girl in the background, and even when asked for it, do not appear aware of her being his connection. Leave it entirely to him to avow it or not, as he pleases. Remember," said he, as he parted with him, "you will have to treat with not only a very acute, ready-witted man, but one of the most sensitive and easily irritated temperaments in the universe."

In fact, so profuse had Vyner been of his directions, his counsels, and his warnings, that he frightened M'Kinlay

considerably, impressing him with a very wholesome fear of the man he was to deal with. "I'll let him pick out the facts from the brief itself," thought he, as he handed the letter. "I'll not open the case by a speech." This clever tactic was, however, routed at once by Luttrell, as he said, "Let me hear the statement from yourself, sir. I will give it all my attention."

Thus called upon, he spoke, and, apart from those little digressionary excursions into the pathetic and the humorous, he spoke well. He owned that though Vyner's desire to be an Irish proprietor met a certain encouragement from himself, that he looked with little favor on the other project, and less even of hope.

Indeed, of this plan, not being a father himself, he spoke less confidently. "But, after all," said he, smiling, "they are one and the other but a rich man's fancy. He can afford an unprofitable investment and a somewhat costly experiment."

In all he said, Mr. M'Kinlay took pains to show that Sir Gervais was acting under his own judgment; that he, M'Kinlay, was a cool, calm long-headed man of the world, and only looked on these matters as a case he "was to carry," not criticise; a question he was to consign to parchment, and not ratify by an opinion.

Perhaps he was a little prolix in his excuses and exculpation, dwelling somewhat needlessly on the guarded prudence he had hinself maintained throughout the affair, for Luttrell at last said, and rather abruptly, "Come to *me* now, sir. Let me hear what part is assigned to me in these matters, for assuredly I cannot guess it."

"My friend and client wishes you to be a trustee in this case; that you will act for the young girl on whom he purposes to make the settlement, and, in fact, consent to a sort of guardianship with respect to her."

Luttrell gave a smile; it was a smile of much meaning, and full of inexpressible sadness. "What a strange choice to have made!" said he, mournfully. "When a captain loses a frigate, the Admiralty are usually slow to give him another; at all events, they don't pass over scores of able and fortunate officers to fix upon this one unlucky fellow, to

intrust him with a new ship. Now, this is precisely what your friend would do. With a large and wide acquaintance, surrounded with friends, as few men are, esteemed and loved by many, he goes out of his way to seek for one whose very name carries disaster with it. If, instead of conferring a benefit upon this poor child, he owed her a deep grudge, then, and then only, I could understand his choice of me! Do you know, sir," — and here his voice became loud and full and ringing, — "do you know, sir, it would be difficult to find a man who has accumulated more failures on his head than he who now stands before you, and these not from what we usually call fate, or bad luck, or misfortune, but simply and purely from an intractable temper, a nature that refused to be taught by its own hard experiences, and a certain stubborn spirit, that ever took more pleasure in breasting the flood than others took in swimming with the full tide of fortune. It takes very little knowledge of life to teach a man one lesson, — which is, to avoid such men as me! They whose qualities insure failure are truly unlucky! Tell Sir Gervais Vyner that it is not out of apathy or indolence that I refuse him, it is simply because, when he makes *me* the partner of his enterprise, it insures disaster for it."

Mr. M'Kinlay replied to this passionate outburst as lamely as men usually do to such like appeals; that is, he strung platitudes and commonplaces together, which, happily for him, the other never deigned to pay the slightest attention to.

One only observation did reach Luttrell's ears. It was a remark to which the speaker imparted little force; for when he made it, he had come to the end of his persuasive resources, and was in the position of those gunners who, when their ammunition is expended, charge the piece with the nearest rubbish they can lay hands upon. The remark was to this purpose: that, simple as the act seems, the choice of a trustee is one of the most puzzling things in the world, and nothing is often more embarassing than being refused by one upon whom, without ever directly asking, we have confidently counted for that office.

Luttrell started; he suddenly bethought him of Harry.

What would be more forlorn or friendless in the world than that poor boy's lot, if he were left fatherless? Except Vyner, was there one he could ask to befriend him? Indeed, whenever the contingency crossed his mind, and the thought of death presented itself full before him, he at once reverted to the hope that Vyner would not refuse this his last request. If, however, by declining what was now asked of him, any coldness or estrangement ensued, he could not, of course, make this demand. "I shall have forfeited all my claim upon him," said he to himself, "if I deny him this small service, and perhaps he will not understand, and, at all events, not give any weight to the scruples I have detailed. He may say these are but the gloomy fancies of a solitary, cheerless life." — "Yes," said he, on the closing a discussion with himself, and now speaking the result aloud, — "yes. It shall be a bargain between us. Let Vyner be the guardian of my boy, and I will accept this charge; and, to show what confidence I place in his generosity, I shall accede at once; and when you get back to England, you will tell him the compact I have made with him."

"I do not feel myself in a position, Mr. Luttrell, to make a formal pledge on the part of Sir Gervais Vyner," began M'Kinlay —

"I shall not ask you, sir," broke in Luttrell, proudly; "we have been friends some five-and-twenty years, without any assistance from lawyers, and it is possible we may continue the attachment without their aid. Tell me now of this trust, for I am ashamed to say how little attention I have given the subject hitherto."

It was a pleasure to Mr. M'Kinlay to leave diplomacy, and get back again into those pleasant pasturages where duties are "recited," and obligations laid down, with all the rules of action stated, and with the rigid cautions impressed, due stress being stamped at every step on separate responsibility, and reiterated warning given, how "each acted for himself, and not one for the other," till Luttrell's less practised brain actually whirled with the repetitions and reiterations; nor was he more comforted by learning that on certain difficulties not at all improbable arising, he would have to recur to the law courts for guidance, — a

gloomy prospect which all Mr. M'Kinlay's fluent readiness could not dispel, as he said, "A mere matter of form, I assure you, and only requiring a short bill in Equity, and a hearing before the Master."

"There, there, that will do," cried he, at last; "don't terrify me any more. A surgeon never made his operation less painful by describing every step of it beforehand to the patient; but, sir, I accede; and now forgive me if I leave you for one moment. I have a word to say to your fellow-traveller, whom I see out yonder."

The American was seated on a rock smoking, and Harry beside him, when Luttrell drew nigh.

"Come here, Harry," cried he to the boy; "I want to speak to you."

"Oh, papa," said the boy, as he came up, "if you only heard all the pleasant stories he has! There 's nowhere he has n't been. In countries where the trees are covered with fruit, and monkeys and peacocks all over them; in lands where there are mines of gold and silver and diamonds, all for the taking; in seas, too, where you look down and see great reefs that look like rocks but are really precious stones. And now he was telling me of a beautiful island, far, far away, so rich in flowers and spices that you can know for more than a hundred miles off when you are coming to it."

"Has he asked you to go away with him, Harry?"

"No, papa."

"But you would like to do so? Speak out, boy; tell me frankly. Do you wish it?"

"Would he take me, papa?" asked he, timidly.

"Yes."

"And would you let me?" and he spoke with even a fainter voice, and greater anxiety in his look.

"First answer me my question, Harry. Do you wish to go?"

"Yes, papa, greatly."

Luttrell turned away his head and drew his hand across his eyes, and for several minutes did not look round again. When he did, it was to see the boy standing calm, firm, and

erect before him, — not a trace of emotion on his features, as his eyes confronted his own.

"I suppose you are right," said Luttrell, half speaking to himself, — "I suppose you are right. It is very dreary here!"

"And there are no wild beasts to hunt, nor red men to fight, nor beautiful birds to catch, papa; nor any gold —"

"No, boy! There is not any gold, assuredly. But remember, Harry, how many there are here who never saw gold, never heard of it; brave fellows, too, who are not afraid to scale the straightest cliff, nor venture out on the stormiest sea."

"And for what, papa? For a curlew's nest, or a hamper of fish; and he, yonder, tells me that one good voyage of his bark would buy out all the islands here forever."

"So, then, you have eaten of the apple already," cried he, with a bitter laugh. "Well, as he has tempted, he may take you. Send him to me."

The boy almost flew in his speed back, and, gulping out a word or two, pointed to his father.

"Are you of the same mind, now, that you were an hour or two back? Do you wish to have that boy of mine on board your ship?" asked Luttrell.

"I'll give you a thousand dollars for him down, sir, and you shall keep the gimcracks."

"You may take him. There must be no money-dealings between us now, sir; I will sell you nothing. Come into the house with me; a very few minutes will be sufficient."

As they walked side by side towards the house, the American, with a quaint brevity, told all that Luttrell could have desired to know of him. He and his craft, the "Quincey Squash," were well known at Liverpool and London; he was sole owner, and traded in everything, from "lumber" to Leghorn bonnets; he went everywhere, and ventured in everything; in fact, he liked an "assorted cargo of notions" better than a single freight. "I won't say he'll come back a rich man to you, sir, in five years, but you may call me a Creole if he don't know a bit of life. Just look here," said he, as he opened a pocket-map and spread it over the table, "there's ten years of my life marked out on that chart; these lines — some of 'em pretty long ones — is my voy-

ages." Captain — for we must now give him his accustomed title — Captain Dodge spoke fluently, and vaingloriously too, of all he had travelled and all he had seen; of how he had traded for ivory on the Gold Coast, and for furs up at Hudson's Bay; how he had panted in the tropics, and shivered at Behring's Straits. If a little proud of his successes against Malays and Moors, it was not quite certain that he "had not done" a little mild buccaneering occasionally, when "freights were low and trade was heavy." Not that Luttrell gathered much of what he narrated, for a strange confusion was in his brain, and as he gazed at the chart and tried to follow the lines, a dimness obscured his sight, and he had to turn away and wipe his eyes.

"Wud your honor like the dinner now?" whispered Molly Ryan from the door; "the strange gentleman that was sick is dyin' of hunger."

"Yes, we're quite ready," said Luttrell; and taking a key from a nail, he betook himself to a little closet which formed his cellar. A few bottles of port, and two or three of Burgundy — remnants of a stock which once had been famous — were all that survived; but he took them forth, saying, "I am unlikely to play the host again; let us make festival for the last time."

CHAPTER XX.

THE SUPPER AT ARRAN.

With all the ardor of an Irish menial to do honor to her master's hospitality, Molly Ryan had taken the unwonted step of laying out the dinner in the "sacristy" of the Abbey, which Luttrell had once on a time intended to have converted into a grand gallery for all his rare and curious objects, and from which he soon desisted, deterred by the cost.

It was a long narrow vaulted chamber, with four pointed windows in one wall, and blank niches to correspond to them in the other. If in the cold unflattering light of day it would have presented an air of cheerless gloom and destitution, not so did it look now, as a great fire of turf blazed and glowed on the ample hearth, and the light of four huge pine-torches flared red from the niches, and threw a warm and mellow glare over everything; while the board was spread with an abundance which would have been utterly wasteful, if some five-and-twenty sailors and fishermen without were not to revel at second-hand, and feed on what fell from the master's table.

Luttrell had heard nothing, — knew nothing of this arrangement; and when he was told, in a whisper, that the dinner was ready in the sacristy, his brow darkened, and his cheek flushed with anger. "We need not have starved them with cold as well as hunger," muttered he, sternly, to the woman; but she knew better than to await his reproaches, and hastened away to the kitchen.

"To you, who have seen where I live, gentlemen," said he to his guests, "it will be unnecessary to apologize for how I live; I can but say how much I regret it for *your* sakes; custom has made it easy to myself." With this he

led the way along a little narrow passage, and then, crossing a courtyard, entered the sacristy. If M'Kinlay and the Yankee stared with amazement at the ample preparations to regale them, and the fine old hall — for such it looked — in which they were displayed, Luttrell could scarcely master his astonishment at what he saw, and nothing short of that "dignity which doth hedge" a host as well as "a king" could have prevented him from openly expressing his surprise. Molly whispered a word in his ear, to which, as hastily, he said, "Certainly, of course;" and just as the guests took their seats, Harry, dressed in what remained to him of his best, came forward, and stood near the table. "Sit opposite to me, Harry; the foot of the table is the fitting place for the heir of the house, is it not, Mr. M'Kinlay?"

"And is this your son, sir? Is this young gentleman the — the — "

"The boy you picked up at sea," resumed Luttrell, courteously, "and who will be proud to renew his acquaintance with you more pleasantly than it opened."

"Well, young 'un, you have got a jollier color on your cheeks now than when we saw you bobbing behind that bit of broken jib-boom! You was blue, that 's a fact; but I 'm a raw Eastern if you was bluer than the lawyer!"

Poor Mr. M'Kinlay! scarcely had one shame overcome him when came the terror of another; for now, for the first time, did he recognize in the Yankee the terrible tourist of the Welsh mountains. A vague something would cross him as he lay in the lugger, sea-sick and miserable, that the horrid voice and the horrid look and the horrid gesture of his fellow-traveller were not encountered for the first time; but he was too full of his own sorrows to waste a thought on such speculations, and it was only now, as they sat at the same board, eating of the same dish, and hobnobbing together, that the measure of his conviction became full.

"He does n't know — he cannot know me!" muttered he, "and I have only one blunder to atone for; but who could have thought it was his son!" He turned to engage Harry in conversation, to inquire into his habits, his tastes, and his amusements; but the boy, fascinated by the Yankee's

discourse, could not bear to lose a word of it. Dodge, — "Gen'ral" he called himself, as he spoke of those days, — Gen'ral Dodge had served in many of the wars of the South American Republic; he had been with Bolivar and against him; he had made and lost his fortune three successive times, had taken part in a buccaneer expedition to Mexico, was imprisoned and condemned to death, and saved by an earthquake that left the jail and one quarter of Santa Fé in ruins. As to his shipwrecks and adventures with pirates, his hunting exploits, his raids either with Indians or against them, they were legion; and, certainly, to these narratives he imparted a "gusto" and an expression which gave them a marvellous power, occasionally corroborated, as they were, by material evidence, as when he showed where he had lost the thumb and two fingers of his left hand, the terrible cicatrix in the back of his head from an Indian's attempt to scalp him, and the mark of a bullet which had traversed his body from the neck to the opposite collar-bone. There was no disbelieving a man whose every joint and limb could come into court as his witnesses, not to say that he was one of those men whom few love to contradict. If he were, at some times, rather boastful on the score of his courage and daring, he was, at others, equally frank as to his shortcomings in honesty, and he told, with an astonishing frankness, of some acts which, had they not been committed in unsettled and semi-civilized lands, would worthily have been requited by the galleys.

"Well, old Ramskin!" said he, addressing M'Kinlay, — for while he talked he drank freely, and was already in his third bottle of Burgundy, warmed up with occasional "flashes" of brandy, — "well, old Ramskin, I'd guess you'd rather be perched on a tall stool in your counting-house than up on a rock, watching for an Indian scout party; but mark me, it's all prejudice, and for my part, I'd rather put a ball in a redskin than I'd torture a white man with law and parchments." He here diversified his personal recollections by some anecdotes of lawyers, and of the esteem in which their fellow-citizens hold them "Far West," the whole winding up with a declaration that such creatures "warn't in natur'," and only grew out of a rank, rotten, and stagnant

condition of society, which, when only stirred by any healthy breeze of public opinion, either "left 'em or lynched 'em." He turned round for the approval of his host to this sentiment, and now saw, for the first time, that he had quitted the table.

"If you had not been so energetic in your censures of my profession, sir," said M'Kinlay, "you might have heard Mr. Luttrell asking us to excuse his absence for a few minutes while he spoke to his son."

Perhaps the American felt this rebuke as a sharp one, for he sat in silence for some minutes, when he said, "Am I to have the pleasure of your company to-night when I weigh anchor?"

"Yes; I intend to leave when you do."

"Your business is done, then?"

"It is."

"And mine, too," said the American; and each looked at the other, to see who first would divulge his secret.

"I have made arrangements for the guardianship of his son, whom, by the way, I never suspected to be the boy we picked up at sea," said M'Kinlay, thus endeavoring, by a half confidence, to obtain the whole of the American's.

"He 'll not want such guardianship, I promise you, when he lives a few years with me."

"With you! What do you mean?"

"Just what I say, stranger; that he 's coming aboard the 'Squash,' bound now for the Isthmus; and, I repeat it, five years with Hairy Dodge will turn him out a long sight cuter than if he passed his 'prenticeship even with yourself."

"It is a strange notion of Mr. Luttrell's, — a very strange notion."

The American raised himself up in his seat, and looked as if he were about to resent the speech; but he repressed the temptation, and merely said, "We 're going to have lighter weather than we came over in, and a fine bright night, besides."

"I hope so, with all my heart," said the other; and now each sat and sipped his wine in silence.

Leaving them thus, let us turn one moment to Luttrell, as he stood at the window of his room, with his boy beside

him. There was neither lamp nor candle, but a strong moonlight streamed into the chamber, and their shadows were distinctly marked upon the floor.

"Why is Molly crying so bitterly, papa? Sure I 'm not going away forever!" said Harry.

"I hope not, — I think not; but when people part, some are always faint-hearted about the chances of meeting again."

"But you are not, papa?"

Luttrell did not answer for a few seconds. "Are you quite sure, Harry, that this life is what you like? I mean," said he, correcting himself quickly, — "I mean, would you not rather live here till you were a man, and make Arran your home, as it is mine uow?"

"No, papa. I 'd like to see the countries that the Captain told of, and see some of the things he did, and then come back very rich, and build a fine castle here, and a great pier out in the sea, and have the finest cutter that ever sailed."

"But, before all this can come to pass, bethink you what a hard life is before you, — what days of storm and nights of weariness. You may be hardly used, and have none to pity you; be ill, and not have one to speak kindly to you. Are you ready for all this, Harry?"

"I suppose I must bear it if I want to be a man;" and he drew himself up proudly as he spoke.

"You 'll have to remember, too, sir, that you are a gentleman," said Luttrell, almost sternly; "that there are scores of mean and shabby things the fellows around may do, a Luttrell must not stoop to. Keep your word when you once pledge it; insult no man willingly; fight him who insults you; and never, if it be your fortune to command others, never say 'Go,' in a moment of danger, but 'Come.'"

"I 'll not forget that," said the boy, seriously.

"Keep this purse, Harry. It was one your mother knitted, many years ago. The few guineas that are in it spend when and how you like; only remember that when gone they cannot easily be replaced by me. And now give me a kiss, for they must see us part easily."

The boy sprang into his arms, and held him fast in his

embrace, while he kissed him over and over; and Luttrell parted the hair upon his forehead, kissing him tenderly there, as he muttered a few words beneath his breath.

"There, go back to them, Harry, and tell them I will join them presently."

As Harry left the room, Luttrell lighted his lamp and sat down at his table to write. It was to Vyner he addressed himself, and intended to be as brief as might be, — very little, indeed, more than the intimation that he had accepted the trust proposed to him, and begged, in turn, Vyner would do as much by him, and consent to be the guardian of his boy, should he be left fatherless.

"I ask this with all the more confidence," wrote he, "that your kind interest in poor Harry is so fresh in my mind, and all your generous offers to befriend him are the only cheering thoughts that occur to me in this, one of the gloomiest moments of my life.

"An American trading-captain, led hither by an accident, has captivated the boy's imagination by stories of travel and adventure, and I have consented to let Harry go with him. To remain here and live as I have done was open to him; he could have succeeded me in this wild spot without the bitterness of feeling the fall that led to it; but in the restless spirit of our race, he might some day or other have emerged, and I dreaded to imagine what a semi-savage Luttrell would be; strong of limb, vigorous, daring, and ignorant, with pride of blood and poverty to stimulate him. What is there he might not have done in a fancied retribution against a world that had crushed his race and ruined his family, — for such were the lessons he has been learning from his cradle, the only teachings he has ever had!

"The hardships of life at sea will be better training than these. The boy is very like me. I would sorrow over it, Vyner, if I did not count on that resemblance for your love to him. In one respect, however, we are not like. Harry *can* forgive an injury. Who knows, however, what he might become were he to grow up in daily contact with me? for I dreaded to mark how each year seemed to develop the Luttrell more and more in his nature. Now pride of birth with prosperity may lead to intolerance and oppression, but leash it with poverty and it will conduce to violence, perhaps to crime.

"Before the mast he will see things differently. Night-watches and hard junk are stern teachers. To rescue him from my influence, to save him from me, I send him away, and leave myself childless. I can scarcely expect that you will be able to follow me in these

reasonings. How could you, happy as you are in every accident of your life, blessed in everything that gives value to existence? I feel I shall never see him again; but I feel, too, just as confidently, that at some day or other — distant it may be — you and he will meet and talk of me, speaking in love and affection, forgiving much, pitying all.

"Say nothing of this guardianship to your wife, lest it should lead her to speak of me; or, at all events, wait till I am gone. Talk of me then they may, for there is no voice so eloquent to defend as the wind that sighs through the long grass over our graves!

"I have made a will, not very formally, perhaps, but there is none likely to contest it. What a grand immunity there is in beggary! and Cane and Co. will, I apprehend, if called upon, vouch for me in that character. There are several lawsuits which have dragged on their slow course for two generations of us. I believe I myself continued the contests rather as obligations of honor than aught else. Harry was not trained with such principles, however, and I shall leave to your discretion whether our claims be abandoned or maintained.

"Last, but far from least of all, the family to which Harry's mother belonged contains many very bold, restless, and I might say dangerous men. One of the reasons of my retirement to this lonely spot was the security I possessed in the midst of my own wild islanders against demands not always urged with moderation. They are not likely to forget the near relationship to my boy, if they can make it a source of profit; or, failing that, to convert it to a matter of menace. On every account, therefore, I entreat that he may not come back here, or, if so, but passingly.

"I hope he will never sell these islands; they would be a sorry commodity in the market, and they are the oldest possessions of our name in this kingdom. When Henry the Second sent John de Luttrell as Envoy to Rome — But where am I straying to? The shouts that ring without tell me that all is ready for their departure, and in a few moments more I shall be alone in the world. Think of me sometimes, dear friend, even if the thought come in your happy hours to dash its joys with sadness; but do not speak of — last of all, do not write to —

"Yours, while he lives,

"JOHN HAMILTON LUTTRELL.

"I am half ashamed to add one other request; but if my cheeks grow red as I write, my heart will be the calmer when it is written. Be a friend to my boy in all ways that your kindness, your sympathy, your counsel can dictate. Guide, direct, encourage, or, if need be, reprove him; but never, whatever you do, aid him with your purse. It is on this condition alone I commit him to you. Remember!"

"They are growing impatient, papa," said the boy, entering the room half timidly. "It is nigh flood, and we shall want all the ebb to take us round the Caskets."

"And are *you* so impatient to be off, Harry?" said he, in a low soft voice; "do you wish to leave me, Harry?"

"Not if you would have me stay, papa; but I thought, I used to think, at least — that — "

"That we made but little companionship together, you would say," said Luttrell, mildly; "that we lived too much

apart. Well, it is true," said he, with a deep sigh, "quite true." He paused for a moment, and then, with a sort of effort, and in a changed voice, continued: "If I should be no more here when you come back, Harry, do not let this old place fall to ruin. It has sheltered me during many a year of sorrow, and sorrow has a very attaching quality!"

"Papa, I will not go. I will not leave you!" said the boy, falling on his neck, and kissing him over and over.

"You must be manly, sir," said Luttrell, rising and disengaging himself from the boy's embrace. "When men promise, they are bound to keep their word."

The tone, the look, the gesture, full as much as the stern words themselves, recalled Harry to himself, and he drew his hand roughly across his eyes, and, stepping back, stationed himself, as he was wont, to hear his father's commands.

"I have written to Sir Gervais Vyner the letter you see here, asking him to be your guardian in case I should die before your return. I have reason to hope he will not refuse me. If he accept, you will obey him in all things. You would obey me, at all events. Whenever you return to England, seek him out, and learn to know him as the last friend I had left me."

"I will, sir."

The calm and resolute tone of the boy seemed for an instant almost to overcome the father, who stood and stared steadfastly at him.

"I have told Sir Gervais," he continued, "that he will find you honorable, truthful, and brave; see that my words be borne out. And I have besought him to give you all that his friendship can bestow; but on no account, — mind this, boy, — on no account, assist you with money. You hear me, Harry?"

"I do, sir. I will not forget your words."

"If you should have any immediate call for money, I have told your Captain I will repay him for what he will advance you; be thrifty, for I have but little to live on, as you will discover one of these days when it is all your own."

"My dear sir," broke in Mr. M'Kinlay, as he bustled into

the room, all coated and muffled for the journey. "Will you pardon me if I say we shall lose the tide if we delay? This young gentleman's luggage is all on board; and if there be no very urgent reason for deferring our departure, I should take it as a favor to say good-bye."

"There is nothing unreasonable in your haste, sir," said Luttrell, with a faint smile. "This is a place where few would care to dally. I have been saying a few words to my son, before he leaves me. This is the cause of your delay."

"My dear sir, I offer a thousand apologies, and beg to retire at once."

"They are all said, sir. Harry and I have nothing more of any consequence to talk over. If Sir Gervais had not been here himself, Mr. M'Kinlay, I'd have asked you to paint us somewhat less savage than we are. Oh, here comes the Captain."

"I say, youngster," cried Dodge, entering, "if you ain't bent on kissin' the ugliest population I ever saw since I left the Feejees, just step out by the back of the house, and make the best of your way down to the shore. Good-day, sir. You shall have news of us. Let me see; it will be a matter of six months or so. But I'll have a sharp lookout after the 'buoy,' and he'll do well, you'll see. Don't you be surprised if you see him a-comin' in some fine morning with a green monkey or a fur-caped baboon. Cheer up, sir! Don't let the buoy see you down-hearted," whispered he. "Come along, Harry! Be lively, my lad; out of that window, and let me find you aboard when I get down."

"Be kind to him!" muttered Luttrell, as he drew his hand hastily across his eyes.

"Lord love ye! I'm the kindest crittur that ever breathed. The whole time I was with the Choctaws, I never scalped an enemy. I could n't bear it; and whenever I cut a fellow's head off, I turned him right round so that I should n't see his face. Soft-hearted, warn't it? But that's my natur'. There, I hear them heaving short; so good-bye, for the last time."

"Harry, Harry — one word — "

"He's gone, poor fellow; don't break down his courage. Good-bye. Don't call him back."

"Be it so," said Luttrell, as he sunk down into his chair, and covered his face with his hands. For a while all was still; then suddenly a wild cheer, a cry, in which the wail of sorrow was blended with the swell of the deep voices crying out; and Luttrell arose, and flung open his window. The lugger was under weigh. The shadow of her full canvas moved slowly along, growing fainter and fainter, at least to eyes that were now dimmed with tears; and when he turned away to wipe them, she was gone.

CHAPTER XXI.

A WELCOME HOME.

To welcome Sir Gervais Vyner home, the ladies had invited Sir Within Wardle to dinner, — one of those privileged little family meetings, to be of which one must be an honored guest, — and so, indeed, did the old baronet with his fine tact understand it; for he was very skilful in comprehending all those situations which make the so-to-say diplomacy of daily life.

He knew that he was admitted to that very pleasant brevet rank, the friend of the family, before whom everything can be said and talked over; and he showed by innumerable little traits how he valued his promotion, and, with a subtlety all his own, talked of himself and his own affairs with an easy confidence that seemed to say, "Here we are, all in secret committee; we may speak as freely as we like."

The dinner was a very pleasant one. Vyner gave an amusing account of his Irish experiences, spoke of everything and every one but Luttrell, for his was a name that was never mentioned amongst them. Indeed, in the wrong that the Courtenays had done him was the seal that closed their lips; for while we can talk, and talk fluently, of those who have injured us, of such as we have ourselves injured we are dumb.

Sir Within saw, with the old craft of his trade, that there was a reserve; he smelled it like a secret treaty, but it did not touch him, and he was indifferent about it. He joined with the ladies warmly in their depreciation of Ireland as a residence, and laughingly concurred in their insistence that they were never to be asked to go there.

As to the project of adopting the little peasant girl, they made it the subject of much pleasant banter; for, of course,

Vyner was totally unable to reply to one-tenth of the questions which the matter suggested.

"We will suppose she is very pretty, and, what is still harder to believe, we will suppose that she'll grow up prettier, what is to come of it, what do you intend her to be?" said Georgina.

"Yes," said Sir Within, "let us look a little to what Italians call *e poi!*"

"When well brought up and well educated, she might surely be a governess," said Lady Vyner, coming to her husband's rescue.

"And was it worth while to withdraw her from the drudgery she knew, to enter upon a slavery that she never heard of?" asked Georgina.

"To tell truth," said Vyner, "I must confess I was thinking more of the benefit to Ada, the advantage she would have in a joyous, high-spirited creature of her own age, that might make her hours of lessons more full of emulation and her play hours pleasanter."

Sir Within bowed a courteous assent to a speech principally addressed to himself.

"And," continued Sir Gervais, bolder for this encouragement, — "and as to forecasting what is to happen to any of us, even if we be alive, some ten or twelve years hence, I really own I don't think it is called for."

"I am not sure of that," said Sir Within. "I have made up my mind to live about five-and-thirty years more, and even speculated on how I am to live it."

"Do let us hear your plan," said Georgina, with a slight flush of eagerness in her face.

"I have two," said he; "and as there is not a little to be said for each, I hesitate between them."

"We cannot pretend to be of any use in counselling you, unfortunately," said Lady Vyner; "but if there be anything which what you slightingly call 'woman's wit' can add to your own reasonings, we offer it freely."

"I am deeply, infinitely gratified; your kindness is most acceptable. My first plan is one with whose details I am but too conversant. It is to live an old bachelor."

The ladies looked at each other, and then looked down.

They did not very well see what was to be said, and they said nothing, though, by his silence, he seemed to expect a remark.

"Well," said Vyner, trying to break the awkward pause, "you, at least, know its resources, and what such a mode of life can offer."

"A good deal," resumed Sir Within. "A well cultivated selfishness has very great resources, if one has only sufficient means to indulge them. You can, what is called, live well, consult the climate that suits you, frequent the society that you like, know the people that you care to know, buy the picture, the horse, the statue that takes your fancy. You can do anything and be anything but one."

"And what is that?"

"Be happy, — that is denied you! I am not, of course, speculating on any supreme bliss. I leave all these divine notions to novelists and play-writers; but I speak of that moderate share of daily contentment which we in our mundane humility call happiness; this you cannot have."

"But, if I mistake not, you have given all the ingredients of it in your late description," said Georgina.

"And the Chinese cook got all the ingredients to make a plum-pudding, but he forgot to tie the bag that held them; so is it the old bachelor's life has no completeness; it wants what the French call *l'ensemble.*"

"Then why not tie the bag, Sir Within?" asked Lady Vyner, laughing.

The old diplomatist's eyes sparkled with a wicked drollery, and his mouth curved into a half-malicious smile, when Sir Gervais quietly said, —

"She means, why not marry?"

"Ah, marry," exclaimed he, throwing up his eyebrows with an air that said, "Here is a totally new field before us!" and then, as quickly recovering, he said, "Yes, certainly. There is marriage! But somehow I always think on this subject of a remark Charles de Rochefoucauld once made me. He said he was laid up once with an attack of gout in a château near Nancy, without a single friend or acquaintance; and, to beguile the weary hours, he used to play chess with himself, so that at last he fancied that he was very

fond of the game. When he came up to Paris afterwards, he engaged a person to come every day and play with him; but, to his horror, he discovered that he could no longer win when he pleased, and he gave up the pursuit and never resumed it. This is, perhaps, one of the discoveries men like myself make when they marry."

"Not if they marry wisely, Sir Within," said Lady Vyner.

"I declare," broke in Georgina, hastily, "I think Sir Within is right. Telling a person to marry wisely is saying, 'Go and win that thirty thousand pounds in the lottery.'"

"At all events," said Vyner, "you 'll never do it if you don't take a ticket."

"But to do that," said Lady Vyner, laughingly, "one ought to dream of a lucky number, or consult a sorceress, at least."

"Ah! if you would but be the sorceress, Lady Vyner," exclaimed he, with a mingled seriousness and drollery.

"And tell you, I suppose, when you ought to venture?"

"Just so."

"Am I so certain that you would respect my divination? A prophet can't afford to be slighted."

"I promise," said he; and rising from his seat, he extended his right hand in imitation of a famous incident of the period, and exclaimed, "Je jure!"

"It is then agreed," said she, quietly, but with a slight show of humor. "If it should ever be revealed to me — intimated to my inner consciousness is the phrase, I believe — that a particular person was Heaven-sent for your especial happiness, I 'll immediately go and tell you."

"And I 'll marry her."

"Her consent is, of course, not in question whatever," said Georgina; "but I think so gallant a person as Sir Within might have mentioned it."

"So I should, if Lady Vyner had n't said she was Heaven-sent. When the whole thing became destiny, it was only obedience was called for."

"You 're a lucky fellow," cried Vyner, "if you 're not married off before Easter. There 's nothing so dangerous as giving a commission of this kind to a woman."

"Sir Within knows he can trust me; he knows that I feel all the responsibility of my charge. It is very possible that I may be too exacting — too difficult — "

"I pray you do so," cried he, with much eagerness.

"Do you see how he wants to get off?" said Vyner; "like certain capricious ladies, he'd like to see all the wares in the shop, and buy nothing."

"I fancy it's pretty much what he has done already," said Georgina, in a half-whisper; but the butler put an end to the discussion by announcing that Mr. M'Kinlay had just arrived.

"Shall we go into the drawing-room?" said Georgina to her sister.

"If you like; but he'll certainly come in to tea," was the answer.

"Well, it is at least a reprieve," said she, with a dreary sigh; and they retired.

As they left by one door, Mr. M'Kinlay entered the room by the other. After a cordial greeting, Sir Gervais presented him to Sir Within, and began to question him about his journey.

"Well, Sir Gervais," said he, after a long-drawn breath, "it is no exaggeration if I say that I have not another client in the world for whom I would undergo the same fatigues, not to say dangers."

"My friend, Mr. M'Kinlay, has been on an excursion of some peril and much hardship," said Sir Vyner to Sir Within.

"Ah? In Canada, I presume."

"No, sir," resumed M'Kinlay, "far worse, — infinitely worse than Canada."

"You speak of Newfoundland, perhaps."

"Excuse me, sir, I mean Ireland, and not merely Ireland itself,— though I believe a glutton in barbarism might satiate himself there, — but worse again, sir, — I have been over to visit some islands, wretched rocks without vegetation,— well would it be could I say without inhabitants, — off the west coast, and in — actually in the wild Atlantic Ocean!"

"The Arran Islands," interposed Vyner, who saw that Sir Within was doubtful of the geography.

"Yes, sir; had they called them the Barren Islands, there would have been some fitness in the designation." Mr. M'Kinlay appeared the better for his very small drollery, and drank off a bumper of claret, which also seemed to do him good.

"And was the estate you wished to purchase in these wild regions?" asked Sir Within.

"No; my friend's mission to Arran was only remotely connected with the purchase. In fact, he went in search of an old friend of mine, whose assistance I needed, and whose caprice it was to retire to that desolate spot, and leave a world in which he might have made a very conspicuous figure. I am not at liberty to tell his name, though, perhaps, you might never have heard it before. M'Kinlay will, however, give us an account of his reception, and all that he saw there."

"My troubles began," said Mr. M'Kinlay, "almost immediately after we parted. You remember that on our last evening, at Westport it was, that the waiter informed me a gentleman then in the house had engaged a lugger to take him over to Innismore, the very island I wanted to reach. I commissioned the man to arrange if he could with the gentleman to accept me as a fellow-traveller. It was settled, accordingly, that we were to sail with the ebb tide at eight o'clock the next morning. My first shock, on reaching the pier, was to see what they called the lugger. She was a half-decked tub! I say tub, for her whole length was certainly not double her breadth. She was tarred all over, her sails were patched, her ropes knotted, and for ballast she had some blocks of granite in a bed of shingle, which shifted even as she lay surging in the harbor. They — the sailors, I mean — answered my questions so rudely, and with so much ferocity of look and demeanor, that I was actually afraid to refuse going ou board, lest they should take it as an offence, though I would willingly have given five guineas to be excused the expedition, and wait for a more responsible-looking craft. My fellow-traveller, too, a very rough-looking and evidently seafaring man, settled the point, as, seeing my hesitation, he said, 'Well, sir, ain't the boat good enough for you? Why don't you step aboard?' The faces of the

bystanders quickly decided me, and I went down the plank praying for my safety, and cursing the day I ever saw Ireland."

Our reader would possibly not thank us to follow Mr. M'Kinlay in his narrative, which, indeed, only contained sorrows common to many besides himself, — the terrors of being shipwrecked added to the miseries of sea-sickness. He told how, through all his agonies, he overheard the discussions that overwhelmed him with terror, whether they could "carry" this, or "take in" that; if such a thing would "hold," or such another "give way;" and lastly, whether it were better to bear away for Cork or Bantry, or stand out to open sea, and — Heaven knows where! "Terrors that will keep me," cried he, "in nightmares for the rest of my life!

"At last — it was all that was wanting to fill the measure of my fears — I heard a sailor say, 'There! she's over at last!' 'Who's over?' cried I.

"'The fishing-boat that was down to leeward, sir,' answered he. 'They're all lost.'

"'Lucky for them,' said I to myself, 'if it's over so soon. This prolonged agony is a thousand deaths.' 'They're on the spars; I see them!' cried my fellow-traveller; 'slack off.' I forget what he said, but it was to slack off something, and run down for them. This atrocious proposal rallied me back to strength again, and I opposed it with an energy, indeed with a virulence, that actually astonished myself. I asked by what right he took the command of the lugger, and why he presumed to imperil my life — valuable to a number of people — for God knows what or whom. I vowed the most terrific consequences when we got on shore again, and declared I would have him indicted for a constructive manslaughter, if not worse. I grew bolder as I saw the sailors, fully alive to our danger, were disposed to take part with me against him, when the fellow, one of the greatest desperadoes I ever met, and, as I afterwards found out, a Yankee pirate and slaver — drew a pistol from his breast, and presented it at the helmsman, saying, 'Down your helm or I'll shoot you!' and as the man obeyed, he turned to me and said, 'If I hear another word out of your

mouth, I 'll put an ounce ball in you, as sure as my name is' — I think he said 'Hairy.' I believe I fainted; at least I only was aware of what was going on around me as I saw them dragging on board a half-drowned boy, with a flag in his hand, who turned out to be the son of Mr. Lut — "

"There, there, M'Kinlay," burst in Vyner, "all this agitates you far too much, — don't go on, I 'll not permit you. To-morrow, after a good sleep and a hearty breakfast, I 'll make you finish your story; but positively I 'll not listen to another word now." The hastily thrown glance of displeasure showed the lawyer that this was a command; and he hung his head, and muttered out an awkward concurrence.

"Won't you take more wine, Sir Within?"

"No more, thank you. Your capital Bordeaux has made me already exceed my usual quantity."

"Let us ask the ladies, then, for a cup of tea," said Vyner, as he opened the door; and, as M'Kinlay passed out, he whispered, "I just caught you in time!"

The ladies received Mr. M'Kinlay with that sort of cool politeness which is cruel enough when extended to the person one sees every day, but has a touch of sarcasm in it when accorded to him who has just come off a long journey.

Now, in the larger gatherings of the world, social preferences are scarcely felt, but they can be very painful things in the small, close circle of a family party.

"You have been to Ireland, Mr. M'Kinlay, — I hope you were pleased with your tour? Won't you have some tea?" said Lady Vyner, with the same amount of interest in each question.

"Mr. M'Kinlay must have proved a most amusing guest," said Georgina, in a low voice to Sir Within, "or we should have seen you in the drawing-room somewhat earlier."

"I felt it an age," said he, with a little bow and a smile intended to be of intense captivation.

"But still you remained," said she, with a sort of pique.

"*Ma foi!* What was to be done? The excellent man got into a story of his adventures, a narrative of a shipwreck which had not — as I was cruel enough to regret — befallen him, and which I verily believe might have lasted all night, if by some lucky chance he had not approached so near a

topic of some delicacy or reserve that your brother-in-law closed 'the séance,' and stopped him; and to this accident I owe my freedom."

"I wonder what it could have been!"

"I cannot give you the faintest clew to it. Indeed I can't fashion to my imagination what are called family secrets, — very possibly because I never had a family."

Though Georgina maintained the conversation for some time longer, keeping up that little game of meaningless remark and reply which suffices for tea-table talk, her whole mind was bent upon what could possibly be the mystery he alluded to. Taking the opportunity of a moment when Sir Within was addressing a remark to Lady Vyner, she moved half carelessly away towards the fireplace, where Mr. M'Kinlay sipped his tea in solitude, Sir Gervais being deep in the columns of an evening paper.

"I suppose you are very tired, Mr. M'Kinlay?" said she; and simple as were the words, they were uttered with one of those charming smiles, that sweet captivation of look and intonation, which are the spells by which fine ladies work their miracles on lesser mortals; and as she spoke, she seated herself on a sofa, gracefully drawing aside the folds of her ample dress to convey the intimation that there was still place for another.

While Mr. M'Kinlay looked rather longingly at the vacant place, wondering whether he might dare to take it, a second gesture, making the seat beside her still more conspicuous, encouraged him, and he sat down, pretty much with the mixed elation and astonishment he might have felt had the Lord Chancellor invited him to a place beside him on the woolsack.

"I am so sorry not to have heard your account — the most interesting account, my brother tells me — of your late journey," began she; "and really, though the recital must bring back very acute pain, I am selfish enough to ask you to brave it."

"I am more than repaid for all, Miss Courtenay, in the kind interest you vouchsafe to bestow on me."

After which she smiled graciously, and seemed a little — a very little — flurried, as though the speech savored of

gallantry; and then, with a regained serenity, she went on, "You narrowly escaped shipwreck, I think?"

"So narrowly that I believe every varying emotion that can herald in the sad catastrophe passed through me, and I felt every pang, except the last of all."

"How dreadful! Where did it happen?"

"Off the west coast of Ireland, Miss Courtenay. Off what mariners declare to be the most perilous lee-shore in Europe, if not in the world; and in an open boat too, at least but half decked, and on a day of such storm that, except ourselves and the unlucky yawl that was lost, not another sail was to be seen."

"And were the crew lost?"

"No; it was in saving them, as they clung to the floating spars, that we were so near perishing ourselves."

"But you *did* save them?"

"Every one. It was a daring act,—so daring that, landsman as I was, I deemed it almost foolhardy. Indeed, our crew at first resisted, and would n't do it."

"It was nobly done, be assured, Mr. M'Kinlay; these are occasions well bought at all their cost of danger. Not only is a man higher for them in his own esteem, but that to all who know him, who respect, who —" She hesitated, and in a flurried sort of way suddenly said, "And where did you land them?"

"We landed them on the island," said he, with an almost triumphant air; "we brought them back to their own homes, — dreary enough, in all conscience; but they never knew better."

"How is the place called?"

"Innishmore, the most northern of the Arran Islands," said he, in a whisper, and looking uneasily over at Sir Gervais, to see that he was not overheard.

"Is the place interesting or picturesque, or are there any objects of interest?" said she, carelessly, and to let him recover his former composure.

"None whatever," continued he, in the same cautious voice; "mere barbarism, and such poverty as I never witnessed before. In the house where we were received, — the only thing worthy the name of a house in the place, — the

few articles of furniture were made of the remnants thrown on shore from shipwrecks; and we had on the dinner-table earthenware pipkins, tin cups, glasses, and wooden measures, indiscriminately; while, as if to heighten the incongruity, a flagon of silver, which had once been gilt, too, figured in the midst, and displayed a very strange crest, — a heart rent in two, with the motto, 'La Lutte réelle,' a heraldic version of the name."

"Luttrell!" whispered she, still lower. "What is his Christian name?"

"John Hamilton. But, my dear Miss Courtenay, where have you been leading me all this time? These are all secrets; at least, Sir Gervais enjoined me especially not to speak of where I had been, nor with whom. I am aware it was out of respect for the feelings of this unfortunate man, who, however little trace there remained of it, has once been a gentleman and a man of some fortune."

"If you never tell my brother that you have revealed this to me, I promise you I'll not speak of it," said she; and with all her effort to appear calm, her agitation nearly overcame her.

"You may depend upon *me*, Miss Courtenay."

"Nor to my sister," muttered she, still dwelling on her own thoughts.

"Certainly not. It was a great indiscretion; that is, it would have been a great indiscretion to have mentioned this to any one less — less — "

While he was searching his brain for an epithet, she arose and walked to a window; and Mr. M'Kinlay, rather shocked at his own impetuous frankness, sat thinking over all that he had said.

"Come, Sir Within," cried Vyner, "here's my friend M'Kinlay, a capital whist-player. What say you to a rubber? and, Georgina, will you join us?"

"Not to-night, Gervais. Laura will take my place."

Lady Vyner acceded good-naturedly, with many excuses for all her ignorance of the game; and while Sir Within and Vyner held a little amicable contest for her as a partner, Georgina drew again nigh to where M'Kinlay was standing.

"Did he look very old and broken?" asked she, in a low but shaken voice.

"Terribly broken."

"What age would you guess him to be?"

"Fifty-four, or five; perhaps older."

"Absurd!" cried she, peevishly; "he 's not forty."

"I spoke of what he seemed to be; his hair is perfectly white, he stoops considerably, and looks, in fact, the remains of a shattered, broken man who never at any time was a strong one."

An insolent curl moved her mouth; but she bit her lips, and with an effort said, "Did you see his wife?"

"He is a widower; except the little boy that we rescued from the wreck, he has none belonging to him."

"Come along, M'Kinlay, we are waiting for you," cried Sir Gervais; and the lawyer moved away, while Georgina, with a motion of her finger to her lips to enjoin secrecy, turned and left the room.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOME WORDS AT PARTING.

It was as the Vyners sat at breakfast the following morning that the servant announced the arrival of an old countryman and a little girl, who had just come by the stage.

"Oh! may I go, papa, may I go and see her?" cried Ada, eagerly; but Sir Gervais had stooped across to whisper something to his wife, and the governess, deeming the moment favorable to exert her authority, moved away at once with her charge.

"The peasant child that we told you of, Sir Within," said Lady Vyner, "has arrived, and it is a rare piece of fortune you are here, for we shall steal a travelling opinion out of you."

"In what way may I hope to be of use?"

"In telling us what you think of her. I mean, of her temper, character, disposition; in short, how you, with that great tact you possess in reading people, interpret her."

"You flatter me much, Lady Vyner; but any skill I may possess in these respects is rather applicable to people in our own rank of life, where conventionalities have a great share, now in hiding, now in disclosing traits of character. As to the simple child of nature, I suspect I shall find myself all at fault."

"But you are a phrenologist, too?" said Sir Gervais.

"A believer, certainly, but no accomplished professor of the science."

"I declare it is very nervous work to be in company with a magician, who reads one like an open volume," said Georgina. "What do you say, Mr. M'Kinlay, if we take a walk in the garden, while these learned chemists perform their analyses?"

Mr. M'Kinlay's eyes sparkled with delight, though he had to stammer out his excuses: He was going to start off for town; he must meet the "up mail" somewhere, and his conveyance was already waiting at the gate.

"Then I'll stroll down the avenue with you," said she, rising. "I'll go for my bonnet."

"Let me have the draft as early as you can, M'Kinlay," whispered Sir Gervais, as he drew the lawyer into a window-recess. "I don't think Luttrell will like acting with Grenfell, and I would ask my friend, Sir Within here, to be the other trustee."

"No; he certainly did not seem to like Grenfell, though he owned he did not know him."

"Then as to his own boy, I'll write to him myself; it will be more friendly. Of course, all these matters are between ourselves."

"Of course."

"I mean strictly so; because Lady Vyner's family and the Luttrells have had some differences, years and years ago. Too long a story to tell you now, and scarcely worth telling at any time; however, it was one of those unfinished games — you understand — where each party accuses the other of unfair play; and there are no quarrels less reparable. I say this much simply to show you the need of all your caution, and how the name 'Luttrell' must never escape you."

Mr. M'Kinlay would like to have declared at once that the imprudence had been committed, and that the warning had come too late; but it required more time than he then had at his disposal to show by what a mere slip it had occurred, and, at the same time, how innocuously the tidings had fallen. Lastly, there was his pride as a business man in the way, — the same sort of infallibility which makes popes and bank cashiers a little less and more than all humanity; so he simply bowed and smiled, and muttered a something that implied a perfect acquiescence. And now he took his leave, Lady Vyner graciously hoping soon to see him again; and Sir Within, with a courtesy that had often delighted arch-duchesses, declaring the infinite pleasure it would afford him to see him at Dalradern, with which

successes triumphant, he shook Vyner's hand, and hastened out to meet Miss Courtenay.

It is a very strange thing to mark how certain men, trained and inured to emergencies of no mean order, — the lawyer and the doctor, for instance, — who can await with unshaken courage the moment in which duty will summon them to efforts on whose issue another's life is hanging, — I say, it is a strange thing to mark how such men are unnerved and flurried by that small by-play of society which fine ladies go through without a sensation or an emotion. The little commonplace attentions, the weak flatteries, the small coquetries that are the every-day incidents of such a sphere, strike them as all full of a direct application, a peculiar significancy, when addressed to themselves; and thus was it Mr. M'Kinlay issued forth, imbued with a strong conviction that he had just taken leave of a charming family, endowed with many graceful gifts, amongst which, conspicuously, shone the discernment they showed in understanding himself.

"I see it," muttered he, below his breath, — "I see it before me. There will come a day when I shall cross this threshold on still safer ground. When Sir Gervais will be Vyner, and even — "

"I trust I have not kept you waiting?" said the very sweetest of voices, as Miss Courtenay, drawing her shawl around her, came forward. "I sincerely hope I have not perilled your journey; but I went to fetch you a rose. Here it is. Is it not pretty? They are the true Japanese roses, but they have no odor."

Mr. M'Kinlay was in ecstasy; he declared that the flower was perfection; there never was such grace of outline, such delicacy of coloring, such elegance of form; and he protested that there was a faint, a very faint, but delicious perfume also.

Georgina laughed, — one of those sweet-ringing little laughs beauties practise, just as great pianists do those seemingly haphazard chords they throw off as in careless mood they find themselves before a piano, — and they now walked along, side by side, towards the gate.

"You don't know in what a position of difficulty my in-

discretion of yesterday evening has placed me, Miss Courtenay," said he. "Here has been Sir Gervais enjoining me to the strictest secrecy."

"You may trust me to the fullest extent; and tell me, what was your business with Luttrell?"

"You shall know all. Indeed, I have no desire to keep secrets from you." It was somewhat of a hazardous speech, particularly in the way it was uttered; but she received it with a very sweet smile, and he went on, "My journey had for its object to see this Mr. Luttrell, and induce him to accept a trusteeship to a deed."

"For this child?"

"Yes; the same."

"But she is his daughter, is she not?"

"No; he had but one child, the boy I spoke of."

"Who told you so? Luttrell himself, perhaps, or some of his people. At all events, do you believe it?"

He was a good deal startled by the sharp, quick, peremptory tone she now spoke in,—so like her wonted manner, but so widely unlike her late mood of captivating softness,—and for a second or two he did not answer.

"Tell me frankly, do you believe it?" cried she.

"I see no reason to disbelieve it," was his reply.

"Is the boy older than this girl?" asked she, quickly.

"I should say so. Yes, certainly. I think so, at least."

"And I am almost as certain he is not," said she, in the same determined tone. "Now for another point. My brother Vyner is about to make a settlement on this girl, is it not so?"

"Yes; I have instructions to prepare a deed."

"And do you believe—is it a thing that your experience warrants you to believe—that he contemplates this for the child of Heaven knows whom, found Heaven knows where? Tell me that!"

"It is strange, no doubt, and it surprised me greatly, and at first I could n't credit it."

"Nor you don't now! No, no, Mr. M'Kinlay, don't be a churl of your confidence. This girl is a Luttrell; confess it?"

"On my honor, I believe she is not."

"Then I take it they are cleverer folk than I thought them, for they seem to have deceived you."

"We shall not do it, sir, in the time," cried the postilion from his saddle, "unless we start at once."

"Yes, yes, I am coming. If you would write to me, Miss Courtenay, any of your doubts, — if you would allow me to write to you."

"What for, sir? I have no doubts. I don't, certainly, see how all this came about; nor — not having Mr. Grenfell's acquaintance, who was with my brother — am I likely to find out; but I know quite as much as I care to know."

"You suspect — I see what you suspect," said Mr. M'Kinlay, hoping by one clever dash to achieve the full measure of her confidence.

"What is it I suspect?" asked she, with an air of innocent curiosity.

"You suspect," said he, slowly, while he looked intently into her eyes at the time, — "you suspect that Sir Gervais means, by adopting this child, to make some sort of reparation to Luttrell."

"A what, sir?" said she, opening her eyes to almost twice the usual size, while her nostrils dilated with passion. "What did you dare to mean by that word?"

"My dear Miss Courtenay, I am miserable, the most wretched of men, if I have offended you."

"There 's eleven now striking, sir, and we may as well send the horses back," cried the postilion, sulkily.

"There, sir, you hear what he says; pray don't be late on my account. Good-bye. I hope you 'll have no more disasters. Good-bye."

For a moment he thought to hasten after her, and try to make his peace; but great interests called him back to town, and, besides, he might, in his confusion, only make bad worse. It was a matter of much thought, and so, with a deep sigh, he stepped into the chaise and drove away, with a far heavier heart than he had carried from the porch of the cottage.

"I must have called a wrong witness," muttered he, "there 's no doubt of it; *she* belonged to 'the other side.'"

CHAPTER XXIII.

MALONE IN GOOD COMPANY.

When Georgina returned to the drawing-room, she found her sister seated on a sofa, with Sir Within beside her, and in front of them stood a girl whose appearance certainly answered ill to the high-flown descriptions Sir Gervais had given them of her beauty.

With the evident intention of making a favorable first impression, her grandfather had dressed her up in some faded relics of Mrs. Luttrell's wardrobe; a blue silk dress, flounced and trimmed, reaching to her feet, while a bonnet of some extinct shape shadowed her face and concealed her hair, and a pair of satin boots, so large that they curved up, Turkish fashion, towards the toes, gave her the look rather of some wandering circus performer than of a peasant child.

"Je la trouve affreusement laide!" said Lady Vyner, as her sister came forward and examined her with a quiet and steady stare through her eyeglass.

"She is certainly nothing like the sketch he made, and still less like the description he gave of her," said Georgina, in French. "What do you say, Sir Within?"

"There is something — not exactly beauty — about her," said he, in the same language, "but something that, cultivated and developed, might possibly be attractive. Her eyes have a strange color in them: they are gray, but they are of that gray that gets a tinge of amethyst when excited."

While they thus spoke, the girl had turned from one to the other, listening attentively, and as eagerly watching the expressions of the listeners' faces, to gather what she might of their meaning.

"Your name is Kitty, — Kitty O'Hara, I think?" said Lady Vyner. "A very good name, too, is O'Hara!"

"Yes, my Lady. There is an O'Hara lives at Craig-na-Manna, in his own castle."

"Are you related to him?" asked Georgina, gravely.

"No, my Lady."

"Distantly, perhaps, you might be?"

"Perhaps we might; at all events, he never said so!"

"And you think, probably, it was more for him to own the relationship than for you to claim it?"

The girl was silent, and looked thoughtful; and Lady Vyner said, "I don't think she understood you, Georgy?"

"Yes, I did, my Lady; but I did n't know what to say."

"At all events," said Georgina, "you don't call each other cousins."

The child nodded.

"And yet, Kitty, if I don't mistake greatly, you 'd like well enough to have some grand relations, — fine, rich people, living in their own great castle?"

"Yes, I 'd like that!" said the girl; and her cheeks glowed, while her eyes deepened into the color the old baronet described.

"And if we were to be to you as these same cousins, Kitty," said Lady Vyner, good-naturedly, "do you think you could love us, and be happy with us?"

The girl turned her head and surveyed the room with a quiet, leisurely look, and, though it was full of objects new and strange, she did not let her gaze dwell too long on any one in particular; and in a quiet, steady tone, said, "I 'd like to live here!"

"Yes; but you have only answered half of her Ladyship's question," said Sir Within. "She asked, 'could you love her?'"

The girl turned her eyes full on Georgina, and after a steady stare she looked in Lady Vyner's face, and said, "I could love *you!*" — the emphasis plainly indicating what she meant.

"I think there can be very little mistake there," said Georgina, in French. "I, at least, have not captivated her at first sight."

"*Ma foi*, she is more savage than I thought her," said Sir Within, in the same language.

"No," said she, quickly catching at the sound of the word, "I am not a savage!" And there was a fierce energy in the way she spoke actually startling.

"My dear child," said he, gently, "I did not call you so."

"And if he had," interposed Miss Courtenay, "gentlemen are not accustomed to be rebuked by such as you!"

The girl's face grew scarlet; she clenched her hands together, and the joints cracked as the fingers strained and twisted in her grasp.

"You have much to learn, Kitty," said Lady Vyner; "but

if you are a good child, gentle and obedient, we will try and teach you."

The child courtesied her thanks.

"Take off that odious bonnet, Georgy, and let us see her better."

The girl stared with amazement at hearing her head-dress so criticised, and followed it with her eyes wistfully.

"Yes; she is much better now."

"What splendid hair!" said Sir Within, in French.

"You have got pretty hair, he says," said Georgina.

"This is prettier," said the child, as she lifted the amber beads of her necklace and displayed them proudly.

"They are very pretty, too, and real amber."

"Amber and gold," said the girl, proudly.

"Now she looks like the picture of her," said Lady Vyner, in French; "she, positively, is pretty. The horrid dress disfigured her altogether."

Sir Gervais entered the room hastily at this moment, and whispered a few words in his wife's ear, concluding aloud: "Let her go to Ada; she is in the garden. You can go this way, Kitty," said he, opening one of the French windows; "cross over the grass to that little wooden gate yonder, and the path will bring you to the garden. You 'll find a young lady there who would like to know you."

"May I have my bonnet?" asked she, wistfully.

"No; go without it. You 'll be freer!"

"I must ask you to let me show you this old man. He has submitted me to a cross-examination so sharp and searching for the last half-hour that I really want a little rest."

Whatever absurdity the pretension of dress had thrown around the girl, nothing of the same kind was observable in the appearance of the old man, who, in his long coat of bluish gray frieze, and with his snow-white hair falling on his shoulders, stood before them. His air, too, was thoroughly respectful; but neither abashed by the presence in which he found himself, nor, stranger still for an Irish peasant, at all excited to any show of curiosity by the rich objects about.

"Well, Malone," said Vyner, with the frank, familiar tone

that so well became him, "I believe we have now gone over everything that we have to say to each other; and, at all events, as you will stop here to-day — "

"No, your honor; with your honor's leave, I 'll go off now. It 's best for the child, and, indeed, for myself!" And a heavy sigh followed the last word.

"You are afraid, then, she will fret after you," said Georgina, fixing a full and steady gaze on the old man's face.

"She might, my Lady," said he, calmly.

"Nothing more natural; who would blame her?" broke in Lady Vyner. "But might it not be as well for you to wait and see how she likes her new life here?"

"She is sure to like it, my Lady."

"I suspect she is!" said Georgina, quickly. And the old man turned and looked at her with a keen, sharp glance; it almost seemed to ask, "How do you know this?"

Vyner broke the somewhat awkward pause that ensued by saying, "As I shall be your landlord, Malone, in a few days, you will have many opportunities of communicating with me, and I am sure, until your granddaughter can write with her own hand, either of these ladies will be kind enough to send you news of her."

The old man made a gesture of gratitude, and stood still without speaking. At length he sighed deeply, and seemed engaged in some process of recollection; for he counted over to himself something, marking each event on his fingers.

"I do think, Malone," said Vyner, with much kindness of voice and manner, "it would be well to remain here to-day, at least. You yourself will go back more satisfied as you see in what sort of place and with what people you have left your child."

"No, thank your honor; I 'll go this morning. It is best. There 's only one thing more I have to say; but, to be sure, it 's the great one of all."

"Then it is a matter of money," said Georgina, in a low tone; but, low as it was, the old fellow, who often affected deafness, caught it at once, and with a look of great resentment fixed his eyes on her.

"I half suspect," said Vyner, "we have not forgotten any-

thing. I have told you how she will be treated and looked on, how educated and cared for."

"And how dressed," added Lady Vyner.

"I have, so far as I know, too, provided for the contingency of her wishing to return home again, or for such a wish on the part of her friends; and I have satisfied you that her opinions in matters of religion shall be respected, and that she shall have, whenever it is possible, the advantage of conferring with a priest of her own Church. Now, do you remember anything else we ought to take into account?"

"Yes, your honor," said the old man, resolutely. "I want to know, if it was to happen from any rayson that your honor or the ladies wished to send her back again, after she was maybe two years or three years here, when she was accustomed to be treated like a lady, and felt like one, — I want to know where she 's to go, or who to?"

"There is much good sense in that question," said Sir Within, in French; and he now arose to look closer at the old countryman.

"I think, Malone, we have already provided for that."

"No, your honor. You said how it would be if Kitty wanted to go back herself, or if I sent for her; and how, too, it would be, if, when she was grown up and fit to be married, that she ought to have consent from your honor, or the guardians that your honor wud give her in charge to. But now I want to know how it would be if, after the child was used to fine ways of livin', she was to be sent away — without any fault of hers, maybe, but just because — no matter for what rayson," — here his eyes glanced rapidly at Georgina, — "I 'd like to ax what 's to become of her then?"

"I scarcely think we can go so far as to provide for every casualty in life; but it will, perhaps, satisfy you to know that she 'll have two guardians to watch over her interests. One of them is this gentleman here."

"And who 's the other?" asked Malone, curiously.

"The other? The other is not yet formally declared, but you will be fully satisfied with him; that much I guarantee."

Malone did not give much attention to this speech, his

whole interest seeming now to concentrate in the person of him who was to be the girl's guardian. "Is your honor married?" asked he, at length, of Sir Within.

"I have not the happiness," said the old diplomatist, with a grace of manner that he might have displayed to a sovereign.

"There it is again," sighed Malone; "she 'll have nowhere to go to if she 's turned out. Has his honor a house near this?"

"Yes. I shall be happy to show it to you," said Sir Within, politely.

"I declare, Malone, if I 'm ever in want of a guardian, I 'll look you up. I never heard of your equal in foresight," said Georgina, laughing.

"Would n't I need to be, my Lady? Who has the child to look to barrin' myself? And maybe, then, she would n't have even me. I 'm seventy-eight last April; and his honor there is n't very young, either."

"Trop vrai, ma foi," said Sir Within, trying to laugh gayly, but reddening to his forehead as he turned away.

"You must have more patience than I, Gervais, to prolong this discussion," said Georgina, angrily. "I vow I 'd anticipate the old man's objection, and pack them off, both together, this very morning."

Every syllable of this was overheard by Malone, though he affected not to hear it, and stood a perfect picture of immobility.

Sir Gervais, who up to this was rather amused by the casuistical turn of the peasant's mind, now seemed rather to lose temper, and said, "Such an arrangement as we contemplated, Malone, requires a little exercise of good faith on both sides; if you believe that you cannot extend that trust in us so far as we expect from you, I really think the best and easiest way would be to do as this young lady says, — end our contract at once."

Not in the least startled by the peremptory tone which Vyner had now for the first time used towards him, the old man folded his hands with an air of resignation, and stood without uttering a word.

"Did you hear what Sir Gervais said to you?" asked Georgina, after a pause of some seconds.

"Yes, my Lady."

"And what answer have you to make?" asked she again, more imperatively.

"'T is your Ladyship is right," began Malone, in a voice greatly subdued, and with almost a slight whining intonation through it,—"'t is your Ladyship is right. His honor is too good and too patient with me. But what am I but a poor ignorant laborin'-man, that never had any edication nor larnin' at all? And if I be thinking of more than I ought, it's because I know no better."

"Well, what will you do?" said Vyner, hastily, for there was a servility in the man's manner that revolted him, and he was impatient to conclude.

"I'll tell you what I'll do if your honor lets me," said Malone, resolutely, "I'll go and speak to Kitty. She's cute enough, young as she is; and whatever she says I'll abide by."

"Do so; take your own way altogether, my good man; and be assured that whichever decision you come to will not in any degree affect our future dealings together."

"That is, your honor won't turn me out of my houldin'."

"Nothing of the kind."

"He never suspected you would," said Georgina, but in a very cautious whisper, which, this time, escaped Malone.

"I'll not be ten minutes, your honor," said he, as he moved towards the door.

"Take as much time as you please."

"He'll not part with her, I see that," said Lady Vyner, as the man withdrew.

Georgina gave a saucy laugh, and said, "He never so much as dreamed of taking her away; his whole mind was bent upon a hard bargain; and now that he has got the best terms he could, he'll close the contract."

"You don't believe too implicitly in humanity," said Sir Within, smiling.

"I believe in men only when they are gentlemen," said she; and there was a very gracious glance as she spoke, which totally effaced all unpleasant memory of the past.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A QUIET TALK IN A GARDEN.

MUCH as the magnificence and comfort indoors had astonished Malone, he was far more captivated by the beauty of the garden. Here were a vast variety of objects which he could thoroughly appreciate. The luxuriant vegetation, the fruit-trees bending under their fruit, the profusion of rare and rich flowers, the trim order of the whole, — that neatness which the inexperienced eye has seldom beheld, nor can, even when seeing, credit, — struck him at every step; and then there were plants utterly new and strange to him, — pines and pomegranates, and enormous gourds, streaked and variegated in gorgeous colors, and over and through all a certain pervading odor that distilled a sense of drowsy enjoyment very captivating. Never, perhaps, in his whole life had he so fully brought home to him the glorious prerogative of wealth, that marvellous power that culls from life, one by one, every attribute that is pleasure-giving, and surrounds daily existence with whatever can charm or beguile.

When he heard from the gardener that Sir Gervais seldom or never came there, he almost started, and some vague and shadowy doubt shot across his mind that rich men might not be so triumphantly blessed as he had just believed them.

"Sure," he muttered, "if he does n't see this, he can't enjoy it; and if he sees it so often that he does n't mind, it 's the same thing. I wondher, now, would that be possible, and would there ever come a time to myself when I would n't think this was Paradise?"

He was musing in this wise when a merry burst of childish laughter startled him, and at the same instant a little girl bounded over a melon-frame and ran towards him.

He drew aside, and took off his hat with respectful deference, when suddenly the child stopped, and burst into a ringing laugh, as she said, —

"Why, grandfather, don't you know me?"

Nor even then did he know her, such a marvellous change had been wrought in her by one of Ada's dresses, and a blue ribbon that fastened her hair behind, and fell floating down her back with the rich golden tresses.

"Sure it is n't Kitty?" cried he, shading his eyes with his hand.

"And why would n't it be Kitty?" replied she tartly, and piqued that her own attractions were not above all adventitious aid. "Is it a white frock makes me so grand that ye would n't know me again?"

"May I never," cried he, "but I thought you was a young lady."

"Well, and what 's the differ, I wonder? If I look like one, could n't I be one?"

"Ay, and do it well too!" said he, while his eyes glistened with a look of triumph. "Come here, Kitty darlin'," said he, taking her hand and leading her along at his side, "I want to spake a word to you. Now, Kitty, though you 're only a child, as one may say, you 've more wit in your head nor many a grown woman, and if you had n't, it 's the heavy heart I 'd have this day leavin' you among strangers."

"Don't fret about that, grandfather; it 's an elegant fine place to be in. Wait till I show you the dairy, that 's grander inside than ever I seen a house in Ireland; and if you saw the cow-house, the beasts has straps with buckles round their necks, and boords under their feet, just like Christians, only betther."

"A long sight betther nor Christians!" muttered he, half savagely. Then recovering, he went on: "You see, here 's how it is. 'T was out of a 'conceit' — a sort of fancy — they took you, and out of the same, my honey, they may leave you some fine mornin' when you have got ways that would be hard to give up, and used to twenty things you could n't do without; and I was tellin' them that, and askin' how it would be if that day was to come?"

"Ah," cried she, with an impatient toss of the head, "I wish you had n't put such thoughts into their heads at all. Sure, ain't I here now? Have n't they tuk me away from my home, and where would I go if they turned me out? You want to make it asy for them, grandfather, is n't that it?"

"Faix, I believe you're right, Kitty."

"Sure, I know I am. And why would they send me away if I did n't displease them, and you'll see that I'll not do that."

"Are you sure and certain of that?"

"As sure as I'm here. Don't fret about it, grandfather."

"Ay, but, darlin', what will plase one would n't, maybe, be plasin' to another; there's the mistress and her sister — and they're not a bit like each other — and there's the master and that ould man with the goold chain round his neck — he's your guardian."

"Oh, is he?" cried she. "See what he gave me, — he took it off his watch-chain. He said, 'There's a little sweetheart for you.'" And she drew from her bosom her handkerchief, in which she had carefully rolled up a small figure of a man in armor, of fine gold and delicate workmanship. "And the little girl here — Ada, they call her — tells me that he is far richer than her papa, and has a house ten times grander."

"That's lucky, anyhow," said the old man, musing. "Well, honey, when I found that I could n't do any better, I said I'd go and talk to yourself, and see whether you were set upon stayin' with all your heart, or if you'd like to go back again."

"Is it back to Derryvaragh?"

"Yes; where else?"

"Catch me at it, Peter Malone, that's all! Catch me goin' to eat potatoes and lie on straw, work in the fields and go barefoot, when I can be a lady, and have everything I can think of."

"I wonder will ye ever larn it?"

"Larn what?"

"To be a lady — I mean a raal lady — that nobody, no matter how cute they were, could find you out."

"Give me two years, Peter Malone, just two years — maybe not so much, but I'd like to be sure — and if I don't, I'll promise you to go back to Derryvaragh, and never lave it again."

"Faix, I think you'd win!"

"Sure, I know it."

And there was a fierce energy in her look that said far more than her words.

Oh, Kitty darlin', I wondher will I live to see it?"

Apparently, this consummation was not that which held chief sway over her mind, for she was now busy making a wreath of flowers for her head.

"Won't the gardener be angry, darlin', at your pluckin' the roses and the big pinks?"

"Let him, if he dare. Miss Ada told him awhile ago that I was to go everywhere, and take anything just like herself; and I can eat the fruit, the apples and the pears and the grapes that you see there; but I would n't because Ada did n't," said she, gravely.

"You'll do, Kitty, — you'll do," said the old man; and his eyes swam with tears of affection and joy.

"You begin to think so now, grandfather," said she, archly.

"And so I may go in now and tell them that you'll stay."

"You may go in, Peter Malone, and tell them that I won't go, and that's better."

The old man stepped back, and, turning her round full in front of him, stood in wondering admiration of her for some seconds.

"Well?" said she, pertly, as if interrogating his opinion of her, — "well?"

But his emotion was too strong for words, and the heavy tears coursed after each other down his wrinkled cheeks.

"It's harder for me to leave you, Kitty darlin', than I thought it would be, and I know, too, I'll feel it worse when I go back."

"No, you won't, grandfather," said she, caressingly. "You'll be thinking of me and the fine life I'm leadin' here, and the fine times that's before me."

"Do you think so, honey?" asked he, in a half-sobbing tone, — "do you think so?"

"I know it, grandfather, — I know it; so don't cry any more, and, whenever your heart is low, just think of what's coming. That's what I do. I always begin to think of what's coming!"

"And when that time comes, Kitty, 'Alannah,' will you ever remimber yer ould grandfather, who won't be to 'the fore' to see it?"

"And why won't he be?"

"Because, darlin,' I'm nigh eighty years of age, and I can't expect to see above a year or two, at farthest. Come here and give me a kiss, ma Cushleen! and cut off a bit of your hair for me to have as a keepsake, and put next my heart in my coffin."

"No, grandfather; take this, it will do as well," and she handed him the little golden trinket, — "for I can't cut my hair after hearin' the gentleman sayin' how beautiful it is!"

The old man, however, motioned away the gift with one hand, while he drew the other across his eyes.

"Is there anything you think of now, Kitty?" said he, with an effort to appear calm, "for I must be goin'."

"Give my love to them all beyant," said she, gravely, "and say if there's a thing I could do for them, I'll do it, but don't let them be comin' after me!"

A sickly paleness spread over the old man's face, and his lips trembled as he muttered, "No fear of that! They'll not trouble you! Good-bye!" And he stooped and kissed her.

When he had walked a few paces away, he turned, and, with his hands fervently clasped above his head, uttered a blessing in Irish.

"God speed you, grandfather, and send you safe home!" cried she, and, skipping over a flower-bed, was lost to his view, though he could hear her happy voice as she went away singing.

"The devil a doubt of it," muttered the old man, "them's the ones that bate the world; and if she doesn't come in first in the race, by my soule it isn't the weight of her heart will keep her back!"

"Well, Malone!" cried Sir Gervais, as they met at the garden-gate, "have you been able to make up your mind?"

"Yes, your honor; Kitty says she 'll stay."

Sir Gervais paused for a moment; then said, —

"Because we have been talking the matter over amongst ourselves, Malone, and we have thought that, as possibly your expectations might be greater than were likely to be realized, our best way might be to make you some compensation for the trouble we have given you, and part the same good friends that we met. I therefore came to say, that if you like your present holding, that little farm — "

"No, your honor, no," broke he in, eagerly; "her heart 's in the place now, and it would be as much as her life is worth to tear her away from it."

"If that be so, there 's no more to be said; but remember that we gave you a choice and you took it."

"What does he mean to do?" asked Georgina, as she now came up the path.

"To leave her here," answered Vyner.

"Of course. I never had a doubt of it. My good man, I 'm much mistaken if your granddaughter and I will not understand each other very quickly. What do you think?"

"It is little trouble it will give your Ladyship to know all that 's inside a poor ignorant little child like that!" said he, with an intense servility of manner. "But her heart is true and her conscience clean, and I 'm lavin' you as good a child as ever broke bread this day!"

"So that if the tree does n't bear the fruit it ought, the blame will lie with the gardener; is n't that what you mean?" asked she, keenly.

"God help me! I 'm only a poor man, and your Ladyship is too hard on me," said he, uncovering his snow-white head, and bowing deeply and humbly.

"After all," whispered she, in Vyner's ear, "there has really been nothing determined about the matter in dispute. None of us know what is to be done, if the contingency he spoke of should arise."

They walked away, arm in arm, in close conference together; but when they returned, after a half-hour or so, to the place, Malone was gone. The porter said he had come to the lodge for his bundle, wished him a good-bye, and departed.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TWO PUPILS.

DAYS went over, and the time arrived for the Vyners to leave their Welsh cottage and take up their abode for the winter in their more commodious old family house, when a letter came from Rome, stating that Lady Vyner's mother, Mrs. Courtenay, was very ill there, and begging to see her daughters as soon as might be.

After considerable debate, it was resolved that the children should be left behind with the governess, Sir Within pledging himself to watch over them most attentively, and send constant reports of Ada to her family. Mademoiselle Heinzleman had already spoken very favorably of Kitty, or Kate, as she was henceforth to be called, — not only of her disposition and temper, but of her capacity and her intense desire to learn, — and the Vyners now deemed her presence a most fortunate event. Nor were they so far wrong. Ada was in every quality of gentleness and obedience all that the most anxious love could ask; she had the traits — very distinctive traits are they, too — of those who have been from earliest infancy only conversant with one school of manners, and that the best. All the examples she had seen were such as teach habits of deference, the wish to oblige, the readiness to postpone self-interest, and a general disposition to please without obtrusiveness, — ways which spread a very enjoyable atmosphere over daily life, and gild the current of existence to those with whom the stream runs smoothly.

She was a very pretty child too. She had eyes of deep blue, which seemed deeper for their long black lashes; her hair was of that rich auburn which sets off a fair skin to greatest advantage; her profile was almost faultless in

regularity, and so would have been her full face if an over-shortness of the upper lip had not marred the effect by giving a habit of slightly separating the lips when silent, and thus imparting a look of weakness to her features which the well-formed brow and forehead contradicted.

She was clever, but more timid than clever, and with such a distrust of her ability as to make her abashed at the slightest demand upon it. This timidity had been deepened by solitude — she being an only child — into something like melancholy; and her temperament, when Kate O'Hara first came, was certainly sad-colored.

It was like the working of a charm, the change which now came over her whole nature. Not merely that emulation had taken the place of indolence, and zeal usurped the post of apathy, but she became active, lively, and energetic. The occupations which had used to weary became interesting, and instead of the lassitude that had weighed her down, she seemed to feel a zest and enjoyment in the mere fact of existence. And it is probably the very nearest approach to happiness of which our life here below is capable, when the sunshine of the outer world is felt within our own hearts, and we are glad with the gladness of all around us.

Mademoiselle Heinzleman's great test of all goodness was assiduity. In her appreciation all the cardinal virtues resolved themselves into industry, and she was inclined to believe that Heaven itself might be achieved by early rising and hard work. If she was greatly gratified, then, at the change produced in her pupil, she was proportionately grateful to the cause of it. But Kate had other qualities which soon attracted the governess and drew her towards her. She possessed that intense thirst for knowledge, so marked a trait in the Irish peasant-nature. She had that sense of power so associated with acquirement as the strongest feature in her character, and in this way she had not — at least, she seemed not to have — a predilection for this study or for that; all was new, fascinating, and engaging.

It was as with Aladdin in the mine, all were gems, and she gathered without thinking of their value; so did she pursue, with the same eagerness, whatever was to be learned.

What will not industry, with even moderate capacity, achieve? But hers were faculties of a high order; she had a rapid perception, considerable reasoning power, and a good memory; but above all was the ability she possessed of concentrating her whole thoughts upon the matter before her.

She delighted, too, in praise,—not the common eulogy that she had learned this or that well, but such praise as pointed to some future eminence as the price of all this labor; and when her governess told her of a time when she would be so glad to possess this acquirement or to have mastered that difficulty, she would draw herself up, and with head erect and flashing eye, look a perfect picture of gratified pride.

It would have been difficult for a teacher not to feel pride in such a pupil. It was such a reflected triumph to see how rapidly she could master every task, how easily she met every difficulty; and so it was that the governess, in her report, though laying all due stress on Ada's charming traits of disposition and temper, speaking actually with affection of her guileless gentle nature, grew almost rapturous when she spoke of Kate's capacity and progress. She went into the theme with ardor, and was carried away by it much more than she knew or imagined. It was a sort of defence of herself she was making, all unconsciously,—a defence of her system, which, as applied to Ada, had not been always a success. This correspondence was invariably carried on with Miss Courtenay, who for some time contented herself with merely dwelling on what related to her niece, and only passingly, if at all, spoke of Kate.

At last, pushed as it were by Mademoiselle Heinzleman's insistence, and vexed at a pertinacity which no silence could repress, she wrote a letter so full of reprimand that the governess was actually overwhelmed as she read it.

"I have your four last letters before me," wrote she, "and it would be difficult for a stranger on reading them to declare which of the two pupils under your care was your especial charge, and which a merely adventitious element. Not so if the question were to be, Which of the two engrossed all your interest and engaged all your sympathy? We read, it is true, of dear Ada's temper, her kindness, her generosity, and her gentleness,—traits which we all recognize, and many of which, we surmise, must have been sorely tried, but of

which you can speak with a most fitting and scholastic moderation. Far otherwise, however, does your pen run on when Kate O'Hara is the theme. You are not, perhaps, aware that you are actually eloquent on this subject. You never weary of telling us of her marvellous progress,—how she already begins to speak French; how she imitates those mysterious pothooks your countrymen persist in using as writing; how she plays her scales, and what a talent she has for drawing. Do you forget the while that these are very secondary matters of interest to us all here? Do you forget that in her companionship with my niece our whole object was the spring which might be derived from her healthy peasant-nature and light-heartedness? To convert this child into a miracle of accomplishment could serve no purpose of ours, and assuredly would conduce to no advantage of her own. On this latter point you have only to ask yourself, What will become of all these attainments when she goes back—as she will go back—to her life of poverty and privation? Will her piano make her better company for the pig? Will her French reconcile her to the miseries of a mud cabin?

"She is the child of a poor cottier, a creature so humble that even here in this benighted state we have nothing his equal in indigence; and she will one day or other have to go back to the condition that my brother, with I fear a very mistaken kindness, took her from. You will see, therefore, how misjudging is the interest you are now bestowing. It is, however, the injustice to my niece which more nearly concerns me; and with this object I inform you that if I am not satisfied as to the total change in your system, I shall certainly be prepared to recommend to my brother one of two courses,—a change in Ada's governess, or the dismissal of Ada's companion. It is but fair to you to say I prefer the latter.

"Remember, my dear Mademoiselle Heinzleman, this is a purely confidential communication. I have not confided to my sister either my fears or my hopes. The experiment was one I did not augur well from. It has turned out even worse than I expected. Indeed, if Ada was not the very best and sweetest of natures, she could not but resent the unfair preference shown to one so inferior to her in all but those traits which win favor from a schoolmistress. My mother's health precludes all hope of our soon returning to England; indeed, we have even thought of sending for Ada to come here, and it is the dread of this climate, so pernicious to young people, offers the chief obstacle to the plan. Meanwhile, I feel forced to write what I have done, and to lay before you in all sincerity my complaint and its remedy.

"EVENING.

"I have re-read your letter, and it seems to me that you might very judiciously remark yourself to Sir Gervais on the inexpediency

of any continuance of Kate O'Hara's presence. Her genius, soaring as it does above poor Ada's, makes all emulation impossible. The pilot balloon, that is so soon out of sight, can offer no guidance, — don't forget that! Suppose you said to my brother that there was no longer any necessity to continue the stimulus of emulation, — that it might become a rivalry, perhaps worse. Say something, — anything of this kind, — only send her home again, not forgetting the while that you can do now without injury what, later on, will cost a cruelty.

"I can feel for the pain a teacher may experience in parting with a prize pupil, whose proficiency might one day become a triumph; but remember, my dear mademoiselle, that poor, dear simple Ada, to whom genius is denied, is, or ought to be, your first care here, and that the gifted peasant-girl might turn out to have other qualities of a firework besides the brilliancy.

"I will, so far as in me lies, relieve you from some of the embarrassments that the course I advise might provoke. I will request my brother to desire Mr. M'Kinlay to run down and pay you a few hours' visit, and you can easily explain the situation to him, and suggest what I here point out as the remedy.

"Of course, it is needless to repeat this letter is strictly and essentially confidential, and not to be imparted to any one.

"I might have counselled you to have taken the advice of Sir Within Wardle, of whose kindness and attention we are most sensible, if you had not told me of the extraordinary 'influence' — it is your own word, mademoiselle, or I should not even have ventured to use it in such connection, — the 'influence' this young girl exercises over Sir Within. As the observation so completely passes my power of comprehension, for I really — and I hope without needless stupidity — cannot understand how a girl of her class, bringing up, and age — age, above all — could exert what you designate as 'influence' — I must beg you will be more explicit in your next.

"You are perfectly right in refusing all presents for either of the girls, and I should have thought Sir Within had more tact than to proffer them. I am also very much against you going to Dalradern Castle for Christmas, though Sir Gervais, up to this, does not agree with me. If this girl should not be sent away before the new year, I think you might advantageously remark to my brother that the visit would be a great interruption to all study, and a serious breach of that home discipline it has been your object to impose. And now, my dear mademoiselle, accept all I have here said not only in your confidence, but in your friendship, and even where I appear to you nervously alive to small perils, give me credit for having thought and reflected much over them before I inflicted on you this long letter.

"Discourage your prodigy, check her influence, and believe me, very sincerely your friend,

"GEORGINA COURTENAY.

"P. S. What can Sir W. mean by passing his winter in the Welsh mountains, after giving orders to have his villa near Genoa prepared for his reception? Find out this, particularly if there be a secret in it."

Mademoiselle Heinzleman received this letter as she was taking her half-hour's walk in the gardeu after breakfast, — one of the very few recreations she indulged in, — while her pupils prepared their books and papers for the day.

Anything like remonstrance was so totally new to her that she read the letter with a mingled amazement and anger, and, though she read and re-read, in the hope of finding her first impression was an exaggerated one, the truth was that each perusal only deepened the impression, and made the pain more intense.

It was not that her German pride only was wounded, but her dignity as a teacher, — just as natural an instinct as the pride of birth; and she muttered very mysterious gutturals to herself, as she went, about resigning her trust and retiring. This was, perhaps, too rash a step; at least, it required time to think of. Two hundred a year, and a position surrounded with many advantages! The other alternative was easier: to send away Kate. A pity, perhaps, but, after all, as Miss Courtenay said, possibly a mercy. Who could tell? Mr. M'Kinlay might help her by his counsel. She liked him, and thought well of him. Kate, that was making such progress, — that could already make out some of Schiller's ballads! What a pity it was! And to think of her touch on the piano, so firm and yet so delicate! How tenderly she let the notes drop in one of those simple melodies from Spohr she was learning! Ach Gott! and what taste in drawing!

Again she opened the letter, and at the last page muttered to herself: "I don't remember that I said 'influence.' I'm almost sure I said that she interested Sir Within. I know I meant to say that she pleased him; that he was delighted to hear her sing her little Lied, dance her Tarantella, or

her wild Irish jig, or listen to some of those strange legends, which she tells with a blended seriousness and drollery that is quite captivating. At all events, if I said 'influence,' I can correct the word, and say that Sir Within comes over to see us two or three times a week, and it is plain enough that it is little Kate's gayety attracts him. What sorrow to the dear children if they are not to pass their Christmas at the Castle!"

A light, elastic step on the gravel startled her. It was Kate who was coming; not the Kate we once saw in the old ruins of St. Finbar, but a young lady, with an air calm and collected, with some conscious sense of power, her head high, her look assured, her step firm even in its lightness.

"Sir Within is in the drawing-room, mademoiselle," said she, with a slight courtesy, as she stood before her. "He says that this is St. Gudule's day, and a holiday everywhere, and he hopes you will be kind enough to take us over to the Castle for dinner."

"Nein! No," said she, peremptorily. "'Wir haben keine solche Heilige;' I mean," said she, correcting the harsh speech, "These saints are not in our calendar. I will speak to him myself. You may stay in the garden for a quarter of an hour. I will send Ada to you."

While the young girl fell back, abashed at the refusal, and even more by the manner with which it was done, the governess smoothed her brow as well as she might, to meet the distinguished visitor; but in so doing, as she drew her handkerchief from her pocket, she dropped the letter she had been reading on the walk.

"I wonder why she is so cross with me?" said Kate, as she looked after her; "if there 's a secret in it, I must learn it."

While Kate O'Hara sauntered carelessly along, her foot struck the letter, and it fell open. She stooped and picked it up, and was at once struck by the peculiar odor of jasmine on the paper, which was a favorite with Miss Courtenay. She turned to the address, "Mademoiselle de Heinzleman," — the "de," too, was a courtesy Miss Courtenay affected, — and so Kate stood still, contemplating the document, and weighing it in her hand, as she muttered, "It does really

feel heavy enough to be mischievous." Her training had taught her to respect as inviolable the letter of another; she had over and over marked the deference paid to a seal, and seen even Ada's letters from her playfellows handed to her unbroken, and she knew that to transgress in such a matter ranked in morals with a falsehood. She had no thought, then, of any dereliction, when, in placing the fallen pages together within the envelope, her eye caught the words "Kitty O'Hara," and, lower down, "child of a poor cottier." The temptation, stimulated by a passion full as strong as curiosity, mastered her, and, carrying away the letter into a secluded alley, she read it from end to end. There was much to gratify her vanity in it; there was the admission — and from no favoring witness, either — that she had capacity of a high order, and a zeal to master whatever she desired to learn. But, far above the pleasure these words afforded, was the last paragraph, — that which spoke of her "influence" over Sir Within Wardle. "Could this really be true? Had the little attentions he showed her a deeper significance? Did he really interest himself for her? Was it her lonely, friendless condition touched him? Was it that the same feeling, so harshly expressed by Miss Courtenay, the revulsion that yet awaited her, that moved *him?*" There was an ecstasy in the thought that filled her whole heart with joy. Sir Within was very rich, — a great personage too. The Vyners themselves spoke of him always with a certain deference. What a triumph if she had won him over to befriend her!

These thoughts flew quickly through her mind, and as quickly she bethought her of the letter, and what was now to be done with it. She would have liked much to keep it, to have it by her to read and re-read and study and weigh. This was, of course, impossible. To take it to mademoiselle would be to incur the risk of her suspecting she had read it. In an instant she determined to lay it back again where she had found it, on the walk, and let chance determine what became of it. Her resolution was scarcely carried out, when she heard Mademoiselle Heinzleman's voice calling her.

"I have dropped a letter, Kate. I have mislaid it, or it

has fallen out of my pocket. Come and help me to look for it," said she, in deep confusion.

"Is this it, mademoiselle?" said Kitty, artlessly, as she picked it up from the gravel.

"How lucky, — how very fortunate!" exclaimed she, eagerly, as she clutched it. "There, you may have your holiday to-day, Kate. Go and tell Ada I shall not ask her to learn those verses; or, wait," — she suddenly remembered that Sir Within was still in the drawing-room, — "wait here, and I'll tell her myself."

Kate bowed, and smiled her thanks, and, once again alone, sat down to ruminate on her fortune.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DINNER IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

Sir Within could not persuade mademoiselle to accept his invitation for herself and her pupils to dinner, and was about to take his leave, when Ada suddenly said, "Why not dine with us, Sir Within?"

"Fi! donc, mademoiselle!" broke in the governess. "How could you think of such a thing? Sir Within Wardle sit down to a school-room dinner!"

"But why need it be a school-room dinner, Mademoiselle Heinzleman? Why not tell cook that we mean to have company to-day, and make Rickards wait on us, and tell George to wear his gloves, just as if papa were at home?"

"Oh!" broke in Sir Within, "I have seen quite enough — more than enough — of all that, dear Ada; but if I could be permitted to join your own little daily dinner of the school-room, as you call it, that would really be a treat to me."

"I invite you, then!" said Ada. "Mademoiselle owes me a favor for that wonderful German theme I wrote, and I take this as my reward. We dine at three, Sir Within, and, I warn you, on mutton-broth and mutton something else; but Kate and I will make ourselves as fine as we may, and be as entertaining as possible."

While the two girls scampered off, laughing merrily at the discomfiture of the governess, that respectable lady remained to offer profuse apologies to Sir Within for the liberty, childish though it was, that had been taken with him, and to excuse herself from any imputation of participating in it.

She little knew, indeed, with what honest sincerity he had accepted the proposal. Of the great game of life, as played by fine people, he had seen it to satiety. He was thor-

oughly wearied of all the pleasures of the table, as he was of all the captivations which witty conversers and clever talkers can throw over society. Perhaps, from his personal experience, he knew how artificial such displays are — how studied the *à propos*, how carefully in ambush the impromptu — and that he longed for the hearty, healthful enjoyment of young, fresh, joyous natures, just as one might turn from the oppressive odors of a perfumer's shop to taste with ecstasy the fresh flowers of a garden. It was, therefore, as he expressed it to the governess, a perfect *fête* to him to assist at that little dinner, and he was deeply honored by the invitation.

Mademoiselle was charmed with the old baronet's politeness. It was ceremonious enough even for Germany; he smiled so blandly, and bowed so reverently and often, it was like a memory of the Fatherland just to listen to him; and, indeed, it was reassuring to her to hear from him that he had once been a minister at the court of a Herzog, and had acquired his *moden* in this true and legitimate fashion. And thus did they discuss for hours "æsthetic," and idealism, and sympathy, mysterious affinity, impulsive destiny, together with all the realisms which the Butter-brod life of Germany can bring together, so that when she arose to dress for dinner, she could not help muttering to herself, as she went, that he was "a deeply skilled in the human heart-and-far acquainted with the mind's operations, but not the less on that account a fresh-with-a-youthful sincerity-endowed man."

The dinner, though not served in the school-room, was just as simple as Ada promised; and she laughingly asked Sir Within if he preferred his beer frothed or still, such being the only choice of liquor afforded him.

"Mademoiselle is shocked at the way we treat you," said she, laughing; "but I have told her that your condescension would be ill repaid if we made any attempt to lessen its cost, and it must be a 'rice-pudding day' in your life."

And how charmingly they talked, these two girls! — Ada doing the honors as a hostess, and Kate as the favored friend who aided her to entertain an honored guest. They told him, too, how the fresh bouquet that decked the table

had been made by themselves to mark the sense they had of his presence, and that the coffee had been prepared by their own hands.

"Now, do say, Sir Within, that dining with Royal Highnesses and Supreme Somethings is but a second-rate pleasure compared to an Irish stew in a school-room, and a chat round a fire that has been lighted with Bonnycastle's Algebra. Yes, mademoiselle," Kate said, "I had to make light of simple equations for once! I was thinking of that story of the merchant who lighted his fire with the King's bond when his Majesty deigned to dine with him. I puzzled my head to remember which of our books lay nearest our heart, and I hesitated long between Ollendorff and Bonnycastle."

"And what decided you?" asked Sir Within.

"What so often decides a doubt, — convenience. Bonnycastle had the worst binding, and was easier to burn."

"If you so burn to study algebra, mademoiselle," said the governess, who had misunderstood the whole conversation, "you must first show yourself more *eifrig* — how you call zeal? — for your arithmetic."

"You shall have full liberty, when you pay me a visit, to burn all the volumes on such subjects you find," said Sir Within.

"Oh, I'd go through the whole library," cried Kate, eagerly, "if I could only find one such as Garret O'Moore did."

"I never heard of his fortune."

"Nor I. Do tell it, Kate."

"Mademoiselle has forbidden all my legends," said she, calmly.

"I'm sure," said Sir Within, "she will recall the injunction for this time."

"It is very short," said Kate; and then, with infinite archness, turning to the governess, added, "and it has a moral."

The governess nodded a grave permission, and the other began: —

"There was once on a time a great family in the West of Ireland, called the O'Moores, who by years of extravagance spent everything they had in the world, leaving the last of

the name, a young man, so utterly destitute that he had scarcely food to eat, and not a servant to wait on him. He lived in a lonely old house, of which the furniture had been sold off, bit by bit, and nothing remained but a library of old books, which the neighbors did not care for."

"Algebras and Ollendorffs, I suppose," whispered Sir Within; and she smiled and went on: —

"In despair at not finding a purchaser, and pinched by the cold of the long winter's nights, he used to bring an armful of them every night into his room to make his fire. He had not, naturally, much taste for books or learning, but it grieved him sorely to do this; he felt it like a sort of sacrilege, but he felt the piercing cold more, and so he gave in. Well, one night, as he brought in his store, and was turning over the leaves, — which he always did before setting fire to them, — he came upon a little square volume, with the strangest letters ever he saw; they looked like letters upside down, and gone mad, and some of them were red, and some black, and some golden, and between every page of print there was a sheet of white paper without anything on it. O'Moore examined it well, and at last concluded it must have been some old monkish chronicle, and that the blank pages were left for commentaries on it. At all events, it could have no interest for him, as he could n't read it, and so he put it down on the hearth till he wanted it to burn.

It was close on midnight, and nothing but a few dying embers were on the hearth, and no other light in the dreary room, when he took up the old chronicle, and, tearing it in two, threw one-half on the fire. The moment he did so the flame sprang up bright as silver, lighting up the whole room, so that he could see even the old cobwebs on the ceiling, that had not been seen for years and years, and at the same time a delicious music filled the air, and the sounds of children's voices singing beautifully; but, strangest of all, in the very middle of the bright fire that now filled the whole hearth, there sat a little man with a scarlet cloak on him, and a scarlet hat and a white feather in it, and he smiled very graciously at O'Moore, and beckoned him over to him; but O'Moore was so frightened and so overcome he could n't

stir. At last, as the flames got lower, the little man's gestures grew more energetic, and O'Moore crept down on his knees, and said, —

"'Do you want anything with me, sir?'

"'Yes, Garret,' said the little man, 'I want to be your

friend, and to save you from ruin like the rest of your family. You were wrong to burn that book.'

"'But I could n't read it,' said Garret; 'what use was it to me?'

"'It was your own life, Garret O'Moore,' said the little man, 'and take care that you keep the part you have there,

and study it carefully. It would have been better for you if you had kept the whole of it.'

"And with that the flame sprang brightly up for a second or two, and then went black out, so that O'Moore had to grope about to find tinder to strike a light. He lit the only bit of candle he had, and began to examine the part of the book that remained; and what did he find but on every blank page there was a line — sometimes two — written as if to explain the substance of the printed page, and all in such a way as to show it was somebody's life and adventures, — as, for instance: 'Takes to the sea — goes to America — joins an expedition to the Far West — on the plantations — marries — wife dies — off to China — marries again.' I need n't go on: everything that was ever to happen to him was written there till he was forty-five years of age, the rest was burned; but it was all fortunate, — all, to the very end. He grew to be very rich, and prospered in everything; for whenever he was faint-hearted or depressed, he always said, 'It was n't by being low and weak of heart that I begun this career of good fortune, and I must be stout and of high courage if I mean to go on with it.' And he grew so rich that he bought back all the old acres of the O'Moores, and they have a hand rescuing a book from the flames on their arms till this day."

"And the moral? — where 's the moral?" asked the governess.

"The moral, the moral!" said Kate, dubiously. "Well, I 'm not exactly sure where it is, but I suppose it is this; that it 's far better to go to sea as a sailor than to sit down and burn your father's library."

"I have a notion, my dear Kate, that you yourself would like well to have a peep into destiny, — am I wrong?"

"I would, sir."

"And you, Ada?"

"Why should *she?*" broke in Kate, eagerly; and then, as though shocked at her impetuosity, she went on, in a lower voice, "Ada makes her voyage in a three-decker, *I* am only clinging to a plank."

"No, no, dearest," said Ada, tenderly; "don't say that."

"Mademoiselle is looking at her watch," said Sir Within,

"and I must accept the signal." And though she protested, elaborately, too, that it was a mere habit with her, he arose to ring for his carriage. "I am not going without the sketch you promised me, Ada," said he, — "the pencil sketch of the old fountain."

"Oh, Kate's is infinitely better. I am ashamed to see mine after it."

"Why not let me have both?"

"Yes," said the governess, "that will be best. I'll go and fetch them."

Ada stood for a moment irresolute, and then, muttering, "Mine is really too bad," hastened out of the room after Mademoiselle Heinzleman.

"You are less merry than usual, Kate," said Sir Within, as he took her hand and looked at her with interest. "What is the reason?"

A faint, scarce perceptible motion of her brow was all she made in answer.

"Have you not been well?"

"Yes, sir. I am quite well."

"Have you had news that has distressed you?"

"Where from?" asked she, hurriedly.

"From your friends, — from home."

"Don't you know, sir, that I have neither?"

"I meant, my dear child, — I meant to say, that perhaps you had heard or learned something that gave you pain."

"Yes, sir," broke she in; "that is it. Oh, if I could tell you — "

"Why not write it to me, dear child?"

"My writing is coarse and large, and I misspell words; and, besides, it is such a slow way to tell what one's heart is full of — and then I'd do it so badly," faltered she out with pain.

"Suppose, then, I were to settle some early day for you all to come over to Dalradern; you could surely find a moment to tell me then?"

"Yes, sir, — yes," cried she; and, seizing his hand, she kissed it passionately three or four times.

"Here they are," said Ada, merrily, — "here they are! And if Kate's does ample justice to your beautiful fountain,

mine has the merit of showing how ugly it might have been. Is n't this hideous?"

After a few little pleasant commonplaces, Sir Within turned to Mademoiselle Heinzleman, and said: "I have rather an interesting book at Dalradern; at least, it would certainly have its interest for you, mademoiselle. It is a copy of 'Clavigo' with Herder's marginal suggestions. Goethe had sent it to him for his opinion, and Herder returned it marked and annotated. You will do me an infinite favor to accept it."

"Ach, Gott!" said the governess, perfectly overwhelmed with the thought of such a treasure.

"Well, then, if the weather be fine on Tuesday, mademoiselle, will you and my young friends here come over and dine with me? We shall say three o'clock for dinner, so that you need not be late on the road. My carriage will be here to fetch you at any hour you appoint."

A joyous burst of delight from Ada and a glance of intense gratitude from Kate accompanied the more formal acceptance of the governess; and if Sir Within had but heard one tithe of the flattering things that were said of him, as he drove away, even his heart, seared as it was, would have been touched.

Kate, indeed, said least; but when Ada, turning abruptly to her, asked, "Don't you love him?" a slight color tinged her cheek as she said, "I think he 's very kind and very generous and very —"

"Go on, dear, — go on," cried Ada, throwing her arm around her, — "finish; and very what?"

"I was going to say an impertinence," whispered she, "and I 'll not."

"Nine o'clock, young ladies, and still in the drawing-room!" exclaimed the governess, in a tone of reproach. "These are habits of dissipation, indeed, — come away. Ach, Gott! der Clavigo!" muttered she, with clasped hands; and the girls were hardly able to restrain a burst of laughter at the fervor of her voice and manner.

CHAPTER XXVII.

KITTY.

THE wished-for Tuesday came at last and, with a fortune not always so favoring, brought with it a glorious morning, — one of those bright, sharp, clear days, with a deep blue sky and frosty air, and with that sense of elasticity in the atmosphere which imparts itself to the spirits, and makes mere existence enjoyment. The girls were in ecstasy; they had set their hearts so much on this visit, that they would not let themselves trust to the signs of the weather on the night before, but were constantly running out to ask George, the gardener, if that circle round the moon meant anything? — why were the stars so blue? — and why did they twinkle so much? — and was it a sign of fine weather that the river should be heard so clearly? Rickards, too, was importuned to consult the barometer, and impart his experiences of what might be expected from its indications. The gardener augured favorably, was pronounced intelligent, and tipped by Ada in secret. Rickards shook his head at the aspect of the mercury, and was called a "conceited old ass" for his pains. Not either of them treated with different measure than is meted by the public to those great organs of information which are supposed to be their guides, but are just as often their flatterers, for the little world of the family is marvellously like the great world of the nation.

"What a splendid day, Kate! How beautiful the waterfall will look, coming down in showers of diamonds, and how crisp and sharp the copper beech and the big ilex-trees over it! Oh, winter, if this be winter, is really the time for scenery! What makes you so grave, dear? I am wild with spirits to-day."

"And so should I if I were you."

"How can you say that?" said Ada, as she threw her arm around the other's waist. "How can you, Kate, when you know how much cleverer you are, and quicker at everything, — how you leave me behind at all I have been working at for years?"

"And never to need that same cleverness is worth it all, I am told!"

"How so? I don't understand you."

"I mean, that you are better off, — better dealt with by Fortune to be a born lady than I, if I had all the gifts and all the powers you would bestow upon me."

"This is one of your dark days, as you call them," said Ada, reproachfully; "and you mean to make it one of mine, too, and I was *so* happy."

"This, perhaps, is another of my gifts," said she, with a mocking laugh; "and yet I was brought here to make you merry and light-hearted! Yes, dear, I overheard Mr. Grenfell tell your papa that his plan was a mistake, and that all 'low-bred ones' — that was the name he gave us — lost the little spirit they had when you fed them, and only grew lazy."

"Oh, Kate, for shame!"

"The shame is not mine; it was *he* said it."

"How sad you make me by saying these things!"

"Well, but we must own, Ada, he was right! I was — no, I won't say happier, but fifty times as merry and light-hearted before I came here; and though gathering brushwood is n't as picturesque as making a bouquet, I am almost sure I sang over the one, and only sighed over the other."

Ada turned away her head and wiped the tears from her cheeks.

"Is n't it a hopeful thing to try and make people happy?"

"But papa surely wished, and he believed that you would be happy," said Ada, with something almost reproachful in her manner.

"All because he had n't read that little German fable of the Two Fairies, — the one who always did something and failed, and the other who always promised and promised, watering the little plant of Hope, as he calls it, and making believe that the fruit would be, one day, so sweet and so

luscious as no lips had ever tasted before. And it 's strange, Ada," added she, in a graver tone, — "it 's strange, but when I was out upon the mountains watching the goats rambling all day alone in the deep heather, how I used to think and think! O dear, what wonderful things did I not think would one day come to pass, — how rich I should be, how great, and, best of all, how beautiful! How kings and great people would flatter me, and make me grand presents; and how haughty I should be to some, and how gracious to others, — perhaps very humble people; and how I 'd amaze every one with all I knew, and they 'd say, 'Where did she learn this? How did she ever come to know that?"

"And would that be happiness, Kate?"

"Would it not?"

"Then why not have the same dreams now?"

"Because I cannot, — because they won't come, — because life is too full, — because, as we eat before we are hungry, and lie down before we are tired, one 's thoughts never go high enough to soar above the pleasures that are around them. At least, I suppose that 's the reason. But I don't care whether it is or not; there 's the carriage, — I hear it coming. And now for such a jolly day in that glorious old garden, with the fountains and the statues, and

> 'All the fine things in rock-work and crockery,
> That make of poor Nature a solemn old mockery.'

Do you know the rest?"

"No, I don't. I never heard it."

"It goes on, a something about —

> 'Flowers the gardener ne'er had in his Eden,
> And dells so secluded, they ne'er saw the sun,
> And sweet summer-houses so pleasant to read in,
> With bright little jets-d'eau of eau-de-Cologne.'

Is n't that a Snob's Paradise? — that 's what it 's called, Ada." And away she went, singing a "Tyrol, tra la, la lira!" with a voice that seemed to ring with joy.

Ada called to her to come back; but she never heeded, and fled down the garden and was soon lost to view. Meanwhile the carriage had reached the door, and as Ada rushed

forward to greet it, she stepped back with dismay, for, instead of Sir Within's spruce britschka, it was an old post-chaise, from which descended the well wrapped-up figure of Mr. M'Kinlay.

"Delighted to see you, Miss Ada; how you've grown since I was here, — quite a young woman, I declare!" The last words were in soliloquy; for Ada, not aware that he had seen her, had betaken herself to flight to acquaint mademoiselle of his arrival.

"Glad to see you again, sir, in these parts," said Rickards, as he caught up the smallest item of the luggage by way of assisting the traveller. "You had a pleasant journey, I hope, sir?"

"So-so, Rickards, — only so-so. It's not the time of year one would choose to come down amongst the Welsh mountains; bitterly cold it was this morning early."

"We'll soon warm you, sir; come into the dining-room. You haven't had breakfast, I'm sure."

"Nothing — not as much as a cup of tea — since four o'clock yesterday."

"Dear me, sir, I don't know how you bear it. It's what I remarked to Sir Gervais. I said, 'There's Mr. M'Kinlay, sir,' said I, 'he goes through more than any young gentleman in the grouse season.'"

"Well, I'm not so very old, Rickards, — eh?"

"Old! I should think not, sir, — in the very prime of life; and I declare, of an evening, sir, with your white waistcoat on, I'd not guess you to be more than, — let me see —"

"Never mind the figure. Ah, this is comfortable; capital old room, and a good old-fashioned fireplace."

While the lawyer held his half-frozen hands to the fire, Rickards drew a little table close to the hearth, and, with the dexterity of his calling, arranged the breakfast-things. "A hot steak in one moment, sir, and a devilled kidney or two. Excuse me, sir, but I'd say a little mulled claret would be better than tea; mulled, sir, with just one table-spoonful of old brandy in it, — Mr. Grenfell's receipt."

"No man should know better, Rickards."

"Ah, sir, always sharp, — always ready you are, to be

sure!" And Rickards had to wipe his eyes as he laughed at the repartee.

"And how do you get on here, Rickards?" said M'Kinlay, in a tone evidently meant to invite perfect confidence, and as evidently so interpreted; for, though the door was closed, Rickards went over and laid his hand on it, to assure himself of the fact, and then returned to the fireplace.

"Pretty well, sir, pretty well. The governess will be meddling — these sort of people can't keep from it — about the house expenses, and so on; but I don't stand it, nohow. I just say, 'This is the way we always do, mam'sel. It 's just thirty-eight years I 'm with the master's father and himself. Is n't that a pictur' of a steak, Mr. M'Kinlay? Did you ever see sweeter fat than that, and the gravy in it, sir? Mrs. Byles knows *you*, sir, and does her best. You remember that game-pie, sir, the last time you was here?"

"I think I do, and you told her what I said of it; but I don't like what you say of the governess. She is meddlesome, — interferes, eh?"

"Everywhere, sir, wherever she can. With George about the hothouse plants and the melon frames, with Mrs. Byles about the preserves, a thing my Lady never so much as spoke of; and t' other day, sir, what d' ye think she does, but comes and says to me, 'Mr. Rickards, you have a cellar-book, have n't you?' 'Yes, ma'am,' says I; 'and if the young ladies wants it in the school-room to larn out of, I 'll bring it in with pleasure. Was n't that pretty home, sir, eh?"

"And what did she say to that?"

"She whisked about this way," — here Mr. Rickards made a bold pirouette, — "and said something in high Dutch that I feel sure was n't a blessing."

"Tell me one thing, Rickards," said the lawyer, in a lower tone, and with the air of a complete confidante. "What 's this little game she 's playing about that Irish girl, writing to my Lady that she 's a genius, and she can do this, that, and t' other, and that you 've only to show her a book, and she knows it from cover to cover?"

"And don't you see what it is, sir?" said Rickards, with one eye knowingly closed; "don't you see it, sir?"

"No, Rickards, I do not."

"It's all the way that little sarpent has of comin' round her. Of all the creatures ever I seen, I never knew her equal for cunning. It ain't any use knowing she's a fox, — not a bit of it, sir, — she'll get round you all the same. It's not an easy thing to get to the blind side of Mrs. Byles, I promise you. She's a very knowledgeable woman, lived eleven years under a man-cook at Lord Wandsford's, and knows jellies, and made French dishes as well as Monsieur Honoré himself. Well, sir, that imp there winds her round her finger like a piece of packthread. She goes and says, 'Byles,' — she does n't as much as Mrs. Byles her, the way my Lady would, — but 'Byles,' says she, 'if ever I come to be a great lady and very rich, I'll have you to keep my house, and you shall have your own nice sittin'-room, and your own maid to wait on you, and a hundred a year settled on you for life.' I vow it's a fact, sir, wherever she heard of such a thing, but said 'settled on you for life;' and then, sir, she'll sit down and help her with the strawberry jam, or the brandy-peaches, or whatever it is, and Mrs. Byles says there would n't be her equal in all England, if she only took to be a still-room maid."

"And can she humbug Mr. Rickards? Tell me that," asked the lawyer, with the leer of an old cross-examiner.

"Well, I do think, sir, she can't do that. It's not every one as could."

"No, Rickards; you and I know how to sleep with one eye open. But what does she mean by all this cunning, — what does she intend by it?"

"There's what I can't come at, nohow, sir; for, as I say, what's the good of plotting when you have everything at your hand? She has n't no need for it, Mr. M'Kinlay. She has the same treatment here as Miss Ada herself, — it was the master's orders."

"It puzzles me, Rickards; I own it puzzles me," said the lawyer, as, with his hands deep in his pockets, he took a turn or two in the room.

"They say, sir, it's the way of them Irish," said Rickards, with the air of a man enunciating a profound senti-

ment; but M'Kinlay either did not hear, or did not value the remark, for, after a pause, he said, —

"It's just possible, after all, Rickards, that it's only a way she has. Don't you think so?"

"I do not, sir," replied he, stoutly. "If there was n't more than that in it, she would n't go on as I have seen her do, when she thought she was all alone."

"How so? What do you mean?"

"Well, you see, sir, there's a laurel hedge in the garden, that goes along by the wall where the peach-trees are, and that's her favorite walk, and I've watched her when she was there by herself, and it was as good as any play to see her."

"In what respect?"

"She'd be making believe all sorts of things to herself, — how that she was a fine lady showing the grounds to a party of visitors, telling them how she intended to build something here and throw down something there, what trees she'd plant in one place, and what an opening for a view she'd make in another. You'd not believe your ears if you heard how glibly she'd run on about plants and shrubs and flowers. And then, suddenly, she'd change, and pretend to call her maid, and tell her to fetch her another shawl or her gloves; or she'd say, 'Tell George I shall not ride to-day; perhaps I'll drive out in the evening.' And that's the way she'd go on till she heard the governess coming; and then, just as quick as lightning, you'd hear her in her own voice again, as artless as any young creature you ever listened to."

"I see, — I see," said M'Kinlay, with a sententious air and look, as though he read the whole case, and saw her entire disposition revealed before him like a plan. "A shrewd minx in her own way, but a very small way it is. Now, Rickards, perhaps you'd tell Miss Heinzleman that I'm here, — of course, not a word about what we've been talking over."

"You could n't think it, sir."

"Not for a moment, Rickards. I could trust to your discretion like my own."

When Mr. M'Kinlay was left alone, he drew forth some

letters from his pocket, and sought out one in a small envelope, the address of which was in a lady's writing. It was a very brief note from Miss Courtenay to himself, expressing her wish that he could find it convenient to run down, if only for a day, to Wales, and counsel Mademoiselle Heinzleman on a point of some difficulty respecting one of her pupils. The letter was evidently written in terms to be shown to a third party, and implied a case in which the writer's interest was deep and strong, but wherein she implicitly trusted to the good judgment of her friend, Mr. M'Kinlay, for the result.

"You will hear," wrote she, "from Mademoiselle Heinzleman the scruples she has communicated to myself, and learn from her that all the advantages derivable from my brother-in-law's project have been already realized, but that henceforth difficulties alone may be apprehended, so that your consideration will be drawn at once to the question whether this companionship is further necessary, or indeed advisable."

She went on to state that if Sir Gervais had not told her Mr. M'Kinlay would be obliged to go down to the cottage for certain law papers he required, she would have scarcely ventured on imposing the present charge upon him; but that she felt assured, in the great regard he had always expressed for the family, of his ready forgiveness.

A small loose slip, marked "Strictly private and confidential," was enclosed within the note, the words of which ran thus:

"You will see that you must imply to Mademoiselle H. that she has written to me in the terms and the spirit of *my* letter to *her*, and in this way pledge her to whatever course you mean to adopt. This will be easy, for she is a fool.

"I cannot believe that all the interest she assumes to take in K. is prompted by the girl's qualities, or her aptitude to learn, and I gravely suspect she has my brother-in-law's instructions on this head. This plot, for plot it is, I am determined to thwart, and at any cost. The girl must be got rid of, sent to a school, or, if no better way offer, sent home again. See that you manage this in such a way as will not compromise yourself, nor endanger you in the esteem of

"G. C."

This last line he re-read before he enclosed the slip in his pocket-book, and muttered to himself the words, "endanger you in the esteem of Georgina Courtenay."

"I wonder what she means by all this?" muttered he, as he folded the loose slip and placed it within the recess of his pocket-book. "The whole scheme of educating this girl was never a very wise one, but it need not have called up such formidable animosity as this. Ah, mademoiselle, I am charmed to see you looking so well; this mountain air agrees with you," said he, as the governess entered. "I have come down to search for some documents Sir Gervais tells me I shall find in his desk here, and will ask you to let me be your guest for twenty-four hours."

Mademoiselle professed the pleasure his visit would confer, and in an interchange of compliments some time was passed; at length, Mr. M'Kinlay, as if suddenly remembering himself, said, "By the way, here is a note I have just received from Miss Courtenay; I think you may as well read it yourself."

The lawyer watched her face keenly as she read over the letter, and saw clearly enough, in the puzzled expression of her features, that she was trying to recall what she could have written in her last letter to Rome.

"Sonderbar, es ist sonderbar: it is strange, very strange," muttered she, evidently lost in doubt, "for in my letter of this morning, from Lady Vyner, she says that we shall probably soon be sent for to Italy, for that her mother has a great longing to see Ada; and yet there is no hint whatever about Kate."

"Does she mention that she expects Miss O'Hara to accompany you?" asked he.

"She does not say so; her words are, 'Do not feel startled if my next letter will call you to us, for her grandmother is most anxious to see Ada;' and then she goes on to say what different routes there are, and where Sir Gervais could meet us."

"I think I understand the reserve," said Mr. M'Kinlay, with an air of much wisdom; "her Ladyship addresses herself to one question solely, and leaves all outside of it to be dealt with by others. It is for us — for you, made-

moiselle, and I — to think of what is to be done with Miss O'Hara."

"What is there to be done but take her with us? — without, indeed, you were to send her home again," said she, with some agitation in her voice.

"That is the whole question, mademoiselle; we must think over it carefully, and, first of all, I must examine certain papers here, which will explain what are the legal claims of this young lady, and who are her guardians; for I remember, though Mr. Grenfell was to have acted, and, indeed, his name was written in pencil, Sir Gervais changed his mind, and thought of another trustee. For all these matters I shall want a little time, and perhaps it will not be asking too great a favor if I were to beg to let me have my whole day to myself in the library, and the churlish privilege of being alone."

The governess acceded politely to his proposal, not sorry, perhaps, to have a short interval to herself for consideration over the question before her, and still better pleased, too, that the girls were not destined to lose the long-wished-for delight of a day at Dalradern.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SIR WITHIN "AT HOME."

If the two young girls whose visit Sir Within Wardle was expecting had been princesses of a royal house, he could scarcely have made more preparations for their reception. Who knows if he did not, indeed, feign to himself that his castle was on that morning to be honored by the presence of those who move among lesser humanities as suns do among inferior orbs? It would have certainly been one of those illusions natural to such a man; he loved that great world, and he loved all that revived it in his memory; and so, when he gave orders that all the state furniture of the castle should be uncovered, the handsomest rooms thrown open, and the servants in their dress liveries, the probability is that the *fête* he was giving was an offering secretly dedicated to himself.

In the old courtyard, beautiful plants — magnolias, camellias, and rare geraniums — were arranged, regardless that the nipping cold of a sharp winter's day was to consign so many of them to an early death; and over the fountain and the statues around it, beautiful orchids were draped, — delicate tendrils torn from the genial air of the conservatory, to waste a few hours of beauty ere they drooped forever.

Sir Within heard the remonstrances of his afflicted gardener with the bland dignity he would have listened to a diplomatic "reclamation;" and then instantly assured him that his representations should have due weight on the next similar occasion, but, for the present, his commands were absolute. The comments of a household disturbed on a pretext so humble may be easily imagined. The vested interests of major-domo and butler and housekeeper are not institutions to be lightly dealt with; and many, indeed, were

the unflattering commentaries bestowed on the intelligence and understanding of him who had turned the house out of the windows for a couple of "school-girls." But guesses that actually rose to the impertinence of impeachment of his sanity were uttered, when the old Baronet came down-stairs wearing his ribbon and his star.

And it was thus attired that he received them as they drove into the court, and alighted at the foot of the grand staircase.

"You see, young ladies," said he, with a courtly smile, "that I deem the honor of your visit no small distinction. That old river-god yonder and myself have put on our smartest coats; and it is only to be hoped neither of us will be the worse for our 'Bath.'"

Ada smiled graciously and bowed her thanks; but Kate, with a sparkle in her eye, muttered, in his hearing too, "How neatly said!" — a little compliment that fluttered the old ma , bringing back days when a happy *mot* was a success only second to a victory.

"As you have never been here before, you must allow me to be your 'Cicerone;' and I'll be a more merciful one than Mrs. Simcox, my housekeeper, who really would not spare you one of my ancestors since the Conquest. These grim people, then, at either side of us, are Withins or Wardles; nine generations of excellent mortals are gazing on us; that dark one yonder, Sir Hugh, was standard-bearer to Henry the Second; and that fair-faced damsel yonder was maid of honor to Queen Elizabeth, and betrothed to her cousin, Sir Walter Raleigh, whom she threw off in a fit of jealousy; the massive ring that she wears on her finger is described in the chronicle, as an 'auncient seale of Sir Walter with his armes.'"

"So that," said Kate, "we may infer that at the time of the portrait she was yet betrothed."

Sir Within was pleased at a remark that seemed to show interest in his description; and henceforth, unconsciously indeed, directed most of his attention to her.

"We had not many warriors amongst us," continued he. "Most of my ancestors were statesmen or penmen. The thin, hard-visaged man yonder, however, was killed at Det-

tingen; that sweet-faced girl — she looks a mere girl — was his wife."

"His wife! I thought she was his daughter," said Ada, with some disappointment in her voice.

"Why not his wife?" interposed Kate; "he looks a very gallant gentleman."

Sir Within smiled, and turned on her a look of most meaning admiration.

"I perceive," said he, in a low tone, "that neither wrinkles nor a gray beard can hide chivalry from *your* eyes. He was, indeed, a gallant gentleman. Mademoiselle," said he, turning to the governess, "you will, I hope, pardon all this display of family pretension, the more, since it is the last of the race inflicts it."

A faint sigh — so faint that if Kate, who uttered it, had not been beside him, he could not have heard it — fell on the old Baronet's ear, and, in a flutter of strange emotion, he passed rapidly on, and gained the landing-place. From room to room they strolled leisurely on; pictures, statues, antique cabinets, and rare china, arresting attention at every moment. There were, indeed, objects to have attracted more critical observers; but in their eager delight at all they saw, their fresh enthusiasm, their frank, outspoken enjoyment, Sir Within reaped a satisfaction far and away beyond all the most finished connoisseurship would have yielded him.

He showed them his armory, — mailed suits of every time and country, from the rudely shaped corselets of Northern Europe to the chased and inlaid workmanship of Milan and Seville; and with these were weapons of Eastern fashion, a scimitar whose scabbard was of gold, and a helmet of solid silver amongst them; and, last of all, he introduced them into a small low-ceilinged chamber, with a massive door of iron concealed behind one of oak. This he called his "Gem-room;" and here were gathered together a variety of beautiful things, ranging from ancient coins and medals to the most costly ornaments in jewellery; jewelled watches, bonbon boxes of the time of Louis XIV., enamelled miniatures in frames of brilliants, and decorations of various foreign orders, which, though not at liberty to wear, he

treasured as relics of infinite worth. Kate hung over these like one entranced. The costly splendor seemed so completely to have captivated her that she heard scarcely a word around her, and appeared like one fascinated by an object too engrossing to admit a thought, save of itself.

"Shall I own that I like those grand landscapes we saw in the second drawing-room better than all these gorgeous things?" said Ada. "That beautiful Salvator Rosa, with the warm sunset on the sea-shore, and the fishermen drying their nets, — may I go back and look at it?"

"By all means," said Sir Within. "Remember that all here is at your disposal. I want, first of all, to show mademoiselle my library, and then, while I am giving some orders to my household, you shall be free of me, — free to ramble about where you like. Will you come with us, Kate?" said he, as he prepared to leave the room.

"Not if I may remain here. I 'd like to pass days in this little chamber."

"Remain, then, of course; and now, mademoiselle, if you will accompany me, I will show you my books."

Scarcely had the door closed, and Kate found herself alone, than she opened one of the glass cases in which some of the costliest trinkets lay. There was a splendid cameo brooch of Madame de Valois, with her crest, in diamonds, at top. This Kate gazed at long and thoughtfully, and at last fastened on her breast, walking to the glass to see its effect. She half started as she looked; and, whether in astonishment at seeing herself the wearer of such magnificence, or that some other and far deeper sentiment worked within her, her eyes became intensely brilliant, and her cheek crimson. She hurried back, and drew forth a massive necklace of emeralds and brilliants. It was labelled "A present from the Emperor to Marie Antoinette on the birth of the Dauphin." She clasped it round her throat, her fingers trembling with excitement, and her heart beating almost audibly. "Oh!" cried she, as she looked at herself again in the mirror; and how eloquent was the cry, — the whole outburst of a nature carried away by intense delight and the sentiment of an all-engrossing self-admiration; for, indeed, she did look surpassingly lovely, the momentary

Golden Dreams.

excitement combining with the lustre of the jewels to light up her whole face into a radiant and splendid beauty.

She took out, next, a large fan actually weighted with precious stones; and, opening this, she seated herself in front of the glass, to survey herself at her ease. Lying back languidly in the deep old chair, the hand which held the fan indolently drooped over the arm of the chair, while with the other she played with the massive drop of the emerald necklace, she looked exceedingly beautiful. Her own ecstasy had heightened her color, and given a brilliant depth to the expression of her eyes, while a faint, scarcely detectable quiver in her lip showed how intense was her enjoyment of the moment. Even as she gazed, a gentle dreamy sentiment stole over her, — visions Heaven knows of what future triumphs, of days when others should offer their homage to that loveliness, when sculptors would mould and poets sing that beauty; for in its power upon herself she knew that it was Beauty, and so, as she looked, her eyelids drooped, her breathing grew longer and longer, her cheek, save in one pink cloud, became pale, and she fell off asleep. Once or twice her lips murmured a word or two, but too faintly to be caught. She smiled, too, that sweet smile of happy sleep, when softly creeping thoughts steal over the mind, as the light air of evening steals across a lake.

For nearly an hour did she lie thus, when Sir Within came in search of her. His habitual light step and cautious gait never disturbed her; and there he stood, gazing on her, amazed, almost enraptured. "Where was there a Titian or a Raphael like that!" was his first thought; for, with the instinct of his life, it was to Art he at once referred her. "Was there ever drawing or color could compare to it!" Through the stained-glass window one ray of golden glory pierced and fell upon her hair and brow, and he remembered how he had seen the same "effect" in a "Memling," but still immeasurably inferior to this. "What would he not have given that Danneker or Canova could have seen her thus and modelled her! Greek art itself had nothing finer in form, and as to her face, she was infinitely more beautiful than anything the antique presented. How was it that in all his hitherto admiration of her he had never before recognized

such surpassing beauty? Was it that excitement disturbed the calm loveliness, and gave too much mobility to these traits? or was it that, in her versatile, capricious way, she had never given him time for admiration? As for the gems, he did not remark them for a long while; and when he did, it was to feel how much more *she* adorned *them* than they contributed to her loveliness.

"I must bring Ada here," muttered he to himself. "How she will be charmed with the picture!" He turned to steal away, and then, with the thoughtful instinct of his order, he moved noiselessly across the room, and turned the looking-glass to the wall. It was a small trait, but in it there spoke the old diplomatist. On gaining the drawing-room he heard that the governess and Ada had gone out to see the conservatory; so Sir Within hurried back to the Gem-room, not fully determined whether to awaken Kate or suffer her to sleep on. Remembering, suddenly, that if discovered, all jewelled and bedecked, the young girl would feel overcome with a sense of shame, he resolved not to disturb her. Still, he wished to take a last look, and stole noiselessly back to the chamber.

Her position had changed since he left the room, the fan had fallen from her hand to the floor, and by a slight, very slight motion of the eyelids, he could mark that her sleep was no longer untroubled. "Poor girl," muttered he, "I must not leave her to dream of sorrow;" and, laying his hand softly on the back of hers, he said, in a low whisper, "Kate, were you dreaming, my child?"

She raised her eyelids slowly, lazily, and looked calmly at him, without a word.

"What was your dream, Kate?" said he, gently, as he bent over her.

"Was it a dream?" murmured she, softly. "I wish it had not been a dream."

"And what was it, then?" said he, as, taking a chair, he sat down beside her, — "tell me of it all."

"I thought a great queen, who had no child of her own, had adopted me, and said I should be her daughter, and in proof of it she took a beautiful collar from her throat and fastened it on mine."

"You see, so much is true," said he, pointing to the massive emerald drop that hung upon her neck.

Kate's cheek flushed a deep crimson as her eyes glanced rapidly over the room, and her mind seemed in an instant to recover itself. "I hope you are not angry with me," stammered she, in deep confusion. "I know I have been very foolish, — will you forgive me?" As she came to the last words, she dropped upon her knees, and, bending forward, hid her head between his hands.

"My sweet child, there is not anything to forgive. As to those trinkets, I never believed they were so handsome till I saw them on you."

"It was wrong, — very wrong; but I was alone, and I thought no one would ever see me. If I was sure you had forgiven me — "

"Be sure, my dear child," said he, as he smoothed back her golden hair, caressing the beautiful head with his wasted fingers; "and now that I have assured you of this, tell me what it was you wished to speak of to me. You had a trouble, you said, — what was it, Kate?"

"May I tell you of it?" asked she, lifting her eyes for the first time towards him, and gazing upwards through her tears.

"To be sure you may, child, and with the certainty that you speak to one who loves you."

"But I do not know how I can tell it, — that is, how you are to believe what I shall tell you, when I am not able to say why and how I know the truth of what I shall say."

"More likely is it, child, I shall not ask that question, but take your word for it all."

"Yes, that is true; it is what you would do. I ought to have seen that," muttered she, half aloud. "Are we certain to be alone here? Can I tell you now?"

"Certainly. They are off to see the gardens. None will interrupt us: say on."

"Mind," said she, eagerly, "you are not to ask me anything."

"I agree. Go on."

"At the same time you shall be free to find out from others whether I have misled you or not."

"Go on, my dear child, and do not torment yourself with needless cares. I want to hear what it is that grieves you, and if I can remove your sorrow."

"You can at least counsel me — guide me."

"It is my right and my duty to do so. I am one of your guardians, Kate," said he, encouragingly.

"Do you remember the morning I came from Ireland, the morning of my arrival at the Cottage?"

"Perfectly."

"Do you remember my grandfather hesitating whether he would let me stay, till some promise was given him that I should not be sent away out of a whim, or a fancy, or at least some pledge as to what should be done with me?"

"I remember it all."

"Well, he was right to have foreseen it. The time *has* come. Mind your promise — do not question me — but I know that they mean to send me — I cannot — I will not call it home," cried she, fiercely. "Home means shelter — friends — safety. Which of these does it offer *me?*"

"Be calm, my dear child; be calm, and tell me all that you know. What reason have they for this change?"

"Ada is to go to Italy, to see her grandmother, who is ill. I am no longer wanted, and to be sent away."

"This is very unlike them. It is incredible."

"I knew you would say so," said she, with a heightened color and a sparkling eye. "*They* of course could do no wrong, but perhaps I can convince you. You know Mr. M'Kinlay, — he is now at the Cottage, — he has come down about this. Oh!" burst she out with a wild cry, while the tears ran down her cheeks, — "oh, how bold my sorrow makes me, that I can speak this way to you! But save me! oh, save me from this degradation! It is not the poverty of that life I dread, so much as the taunts upon me for my failure; the daily scoffs I shall have to meet from those who hoped to build their fortunes on my success. Tell me, then, where I may go to earn my daily bread, so it be not there. I could be a servant. I have seen girls as young as me at service. I could take care of little children, and could teach them too. Will you help me? Will you help me," cried she, sobbing, "and see if I will not deserve it?"

"Be comforted, my poor child. I have told you already you have a right to my assistance, and you shall have it."

She bent down and kissed his hand, and pressed her cheek upon it.

"Tell me, Kate, do you desire to go abroad with Ada?"

"Not now," said she, in a faint voice. "I did, but I do so no longer."

"And on no account to return to Ireland."

"On none," said she, resolutely.

"Then I will think the matter over. I will send for Mr. M'Kinlay to-morrow, and doubtless he will make some communication to me."

"But do not forget, sir, that you must not betray *me*."

"I will take care of that, Kate; but come, my dear child, bathe these eyes of yours, and come into the air. They will wonder, besides, if they do not see you. Let us go and find them. Your heart may be at rest now. Is it not so?"

"I have your promise, sir?"

"You have, child."

"Oh! am I not happy again!" said she, throwing back her long hair upon her neck, and turning towards him her eyes beaming with gratitude and bright with triumph. "I have spent two nights of misery, but they are well repaid by the joy I feel now."

"There. You look like yourself already," said he. "Come, and we'll search for them."

"What am I thinking of?" cried she, suddenly. "I was forgetting these;" and she unclasped the necklace, and took off the brooch, depositing them carefully in their places.

"You shall wear them again one of these days, Kate," said he, with a look of pensive meaning.

"They only served me to build castles with," said she, gayly, "and the words you have spoken will help me to raise much finer ones. I am ready now, sir."

"Of all the days of your life," whispered Ada to Kate, as they drove home that evening, "was this the happiest?"

"It was," said the other, thoughtfully.

"And mine, too. I had not one dark thought till I saw evening coming on, and felt how soon it was to end. But I

have such happy news for you, dear Kate, only I am not at liberty to tell it, — something that is going to happen, — somewhere we are about to go."

"Do not tell me more, or I shall become too curious to hear all."

"But you would be so glad, so overjoyed to hear it."

"One can always wait patiently for good tidings, the wise people say. Where did you get your violets in midwinter?"

"Where *you* got your roses, Kate," said the other, laughing. "I never saw such pink cheeks as you had when you came into the garden."

"I had fallen asleep," said Kate, blushing slightly. "Whenever I am very, very happy, I grow sleepy."

CHAPTER XXIX.

MR. M'KINLAY IS PUZZLED.

MR. M'KINLAY was at his breakfast the next day when he received the following letter from Sir Gervais Vyner: —

"ROME, PALAZZO ALTIERI.

"MY DEAR MR. M'KINLAY, — Lady Vyner's mother insists on seeing Ada out here, and will not listen to anything, either on the score of the season or the long journey. I cannot myself venture to be absent for more than a few days at a time; and I must entreat of you to give mademoiselle and my daughter a safe convoy as far as Marseilles, where I shall meet you. I know well how very inconvenient it may prove to you, just as term is about to open, so pray make me deeply your debtor for the service *in all ways.* My sister-in-law informs me — but so vaguely that I cannot appreciate the reasons — that Mademoiselle H. does not advise Miss O'Hara should accompany them. It will be for you to learn the grounds of this counsel, and if you concur with them to make a suitable arrangement for that young lady's maintenance and education in England, unless, indeed, her friends require her to return home. To whatever you decide, let money be no obstacle. There are good schools at Brighton, I believe. If her friends prefer a French education, Madame Gosselin's, Rue Neuve, St. Augustin, Paris, is well spoken of. See Sir Within Wardle on the subject, who, besides being her guardian, is well qualified to direct your steps.

"I cannot tell you how much I am provoked by what I must call this failure in a favorite project, nor is my annoyance the less that I am not permitted to know how, when, or why the failure has been occasioned. All that Miss Courtenay will tell me is, 'She must not come out to Italy,' and that I shall be the first to agree to the wisdom of this decision when I shall hear the reasons for it. Of course all this is between ourselves, and with Sir Within you will limit yourself to the fact that her education will be more carefully provided for by remaining north of the Alps, — a truth he will, I am certain, recognize.

"Be sure, however, to get to the bottom of this — I may call it — mystery, for up to this I have regarded Ada's progress in learning and great improvement in spirits as entirely owing to this very companionship.

"Drop me a line to say if you can start on Monday or Tuesday, and at the Pavilion Hotel you will either find me on your arrival or a note to say when to expect me. Tell Sir Within from me, that I will accept any trouble he shall take with Miss O'H. as a direct personal favor. I am not at all satisfied with the part we are taking towards this girl; nor shall I be easy until I hear from you that all is arranged to her own liking, and the perfect satisfaction of her family. I think, indeed, you shall write to Mr. L., at Arran; his concurrence ought to be secured, as a formality; and he'll not refuse it, if not linked to something troublesome or inconvenient.

"I shall be curious to hear your personal report of Miss O'Hara, so take care to fit yourself for a very searching cross-examination from

"Yours faithfully,

"Gervais Vyner.

"I hear that the people have just thrown down the walls of my new lodge in Derryvaragh, and vowed that they'll not permit any one to build there. Are they mad? Can they not see that a proprietor, if he should ever come there, must be of use to them, and that all the benefit would be *theirs?* Grenfell laughs at me, and says he predicted it all. Perhaps he did: at all events, I shall not be deterred from going on, though neither of my Irish experiences have as yet redounded to my vainglory.

"I have not the shadow of a reason for suspecting it, still you would confer a favor on me if you could assure me, of your own knowledge, that nothing weightier than a caprice has induced mademoiselle to recommend that Miss O'H. should not come out here with my daughter.

"All of this letter is to be regarded private and confidential."

Scarcely had M'Kinlay finished the reading of this letter, than a servant presented him with a small note, sealed with a very large impress of the Wardle arms, and bearing a conspicuous "W. W." on the outer corner. Its contents ran thus:

"My dear Mr. M'Kinlay, — Will you allow me to profit by the fortunate accident of your presence in these regions to bespeak the honor and pleasure of your company at a *tête-à-tête* dinner with me to-day? My carriage will await your orders; and if perfectly in

accordance with your convenience, I would beg that they may be to take you over here by an early hour — say four o'clock — as I am desirous of obtaining the benefit of your advice.

"I am very sincerely yours,

"WITHIN WARDLE."

"How provoking!" cried Mr. M'Kinlay; "and I meant to have caught the night-mail at Wrexham."

Now Mr. M'Kinlay was not either provoked or disappointed. It had never been his intention to have left the Cottage till the day after; and as to a dinner invitation to Dalradern, and with "the contingent remainder" of a consultation, it was in every respect the direct opposite of all that is provoking. Here he was alone. None heard him as he said these words. This hypocrisy was not addressed to any surrounders. It was the soliloquy of a man who liked self-flattery; and, strange as it may seem, there are scores of people who mix these sweet little draughts for themselves and toss them off in secrecy, like solitary drinkers, and then go out into the world refreshed and stimulated by their dram.

"I cannot take his agency, if that's what he is at," said Mr. M'Kinlay, as he stood with his back to the fire and fingered the seals of his watch; "I am overworked already, sorely overworked. Clients nowadays, I find, have got the habit of employing their lawyers in a variety of ways quite foreign to their callings." This was a hit at Sir Gervais for his request to take Ada abroad. "A practice highly to be condemned, and, in fact, to be put down. It is not dignified; and I doubt if even it be profitable," — his tone was now strong and severe. "A fine old place, Dalradern," muttered he, as his eyes fell upon a little engraving of the castle at the top of the note, — such vignettes were rarer at that day than at the present, — "I think, really, I will give myself a bit of a holiday and dine with him. I thought him a bit of a fop — an old fop, too — when I met him here; but he may 'cut up' better under his own roof."

"Rickards," said he, as that bland personage entered to remove the breakfast-things, "I am not going to dine here to-day."

"Lor, sir! You a'n't a-going so soon?"

"No. To-morrow, perhaps — indeed, I should say to-morrow certainly; but to-day I must dine at Dalradern."

"Well, sir, you 'll tell me when you comes home if he 's better than Mrs. Byles for his side-dishes; for I 'll never believe it, sir, till I have it from a knowledgeable gentleman like yourself. Not that I think, sir, they will play off any of their new-fangled tricks on you, — putting cheese into the soup, and powdered sugar over the peas."

"I have seen both in Paris," said M'Kinlay, gravely.

"And frogs too, sir, and snails; and Jacob, that was out in Italy with the saddle-horses, says he seen fifteen shillings given for a hedgehog, when lamb got too big."

"Let Mademoiselle Heinzleman know that I should be glad to speak to her," said the lawyer, who, feeling that he was going to dine out, could afford to be distant.

"Yes, sir, I 'll tell her;" and Rickards stirred the fire, and drew down a blind here, and drew up another there, and fidgeted about in that professionally desultory manner his order so well understand. When he got to the door, however, he stepped back, and in a low confidential whisper said, "It 's the 'ock, sir, the 'ock, at Dalradern, that beats us; eighty-odd years in bottle, and worth three guineas a flask." He sighed as he went out, for the confession cost him dear. It was like a Government whip admitting that his party must be beaten on the next division!

Mr. M'Kinlay was deep in a second perusal of Sir Gervais Vyner's letter when Mademoiselle Heinzleman entered. "I have a few lines from Sir Gervais here, mademoiselle," said he, pompously, for the invitation to Dalradern was still fresh in his mind. "He wishes me, if it be at all possible, to accompany you and Miss Vyner as far as, let me see" — and he opened the letter — "as far as Marseilles. I own, with whatever pride I should accept the charge, however charmed I should naturally feel at the prospect of a journey in such company — "

"Es macht nichts. I mean, sare," said she, impetuously, "with Franz, the courier, we can travel very well all alone."

"If you will permit me, mademoiselle," said he, haughtily, "to finish my phrase, you will find that, notwithstanding my

many and pressing engagements, and the incessant demands which the opening of term makes upon my time, it is my intention not to refuse this — this, I shall call it favor — for it is favor — to my respected client. Can you be ready by Monday?"

"We are Wednesday now! Yes; but of Mademoiselle Kate, what of her? Does she come with us?"

"I opine not," said he, gravely.

"And where she go to?" said she, with an eagerness which occasionally marred the accuracy of her expression.

"Sir Gervais has suggested that we may take one of two courses, mademoiselle," said he; and probably something in the phrase reminded M'Kinlay of a well-known statesman, for he unconsciously extended an arm, and with the other lifted his coat-skirt behind him, "or, it is even possible, adopt a third."

"This means, she is not to come with us, sir."

Mr. M'Kinlay bowed his concurrence. "You see, mademoiselle," said he, authoritatively, "it was a mistake from the beginning, and though I warned Sir Gervais that it must be a mistake, he would have his way; he thought she would be a means of creating emulation."

"So she has, sir."

"I mean, wholesome emulation; the generous rivalry — the — the — in fact, that she would excite Miss Vyner to a more vigorous prosecution of her studies, without that discouragement that follows a conscious — what shall I call it — not inferiority?"

"Yes, inferiority."

"This, I am aware, mademoiselle, was your view; the letter I hold here from Miss Courtenay shows me the very painful impression your opinion has produced; nor am I astonished at the warmth — and there is warmth — with which she observes: 'Mademoiselle H. is under a delusion if she imagines that my brother-in-law was about to establish a nursery for prodigies. If the pigeon turns out to be an eagle, the sooner it is out of the dovecot the better.' Very neatly and very smartly put. 'If the pigeon —'"

"Enough of the pigeon, sare. Where is she to go? who will take her in charge?"

"I have not fully decided on the point, mademoiselle, but by this evening I hope to have determined upon it; for the present I have only to apprise you that Miss O'Hara is not to go to Italy, and that whatever arrangement should be necessary for her — either to remain in England, or to return to her family — will be made as promptly as possible."

"And who will take her in charge, sare?" said she, repeating the former question.

Mr. M'Kinlay laid his hand over the region of his heart, and bowed; but whether he meant that he himself would undertake the guardianship of the young lady, or that the matter was a secret enclosed in his own breast, is not at all easy to say.

"May I speak to her about this?"

"Not until I shall see you again; but you may take all such measures as may prepare her for her sudden departure."

Mr. M'Kinlay was, throughout the brief interview, more despotic than gallant. He was not quite satisfied that the mission was one in perfect accordance with his high professional dignity, and so to relieve himself from any self-reproach, he threw a dash of severity through his condescension.

"I suppose," said he, superbly, — "I suppose she has clothes?"

Mademoiselle stared at this, but did not reply.

"I am somewhat unaccustomed, as you may perceive, mademoiselle, to these sort of affairs; I know nothing of young ladies' wardrobes. I simply asked, was she in a position to travel, if called on, at a brief notice?"

"My poor Kate! my poor Kate!" was all that the governess could utter.

"I must say, mademoiselle," said he, pompously, "that, looking to what she originally came from, and taking into account the care and cost bestowed upon her, I do not perceive this to be a case that calls for any deep commiseration."

"Poor child! poor child!" stammered she out; and, unable to control her emotion, she arose and left the room.

"Rickards was right; that artful minx had won them all over. It is high time to send her back to her own country,

and, from the brief experience I have had of it, I 'll venture to say all her captivations there will not make many victims. Three o'clock already," said he, with surprise, "and I had meant to be at Dalradern early." He rung and ordered the carriage. It had been at the door for above an hour. Strange how the morning should have slipped over; had it been real business, what a deal he could have transacted in the time; but these little "peddling negotiations," so he called them, ran away with a man's time before he was aware of it. As he passed through the hall, he saw through a partly opened door the two girls, — they were seated at a table, with their heads bent over a map.

"Yes," said Ada, "this is the way papa mentions; here is Marseilles, and here, if the sea be rough, is the road we shall have to travel, all along the coast by Nice and Genoa. Oh, don't you wish it may be bad weather, Kate?"

M'Kinlay bent his head, but could not catch the words she spoke.

"And I used to fancy you would like it all more than ever I did myself," said Ada, in a tone of reproach.

"It is your lot to enjoy everything, and to have everything to enjoy," said Kate; "and mine is — no matter what it is — let us have a stroll in the garden."

M'Kinlay had just time to move on ere they arose, and, passing out, he got into the carriage and drove away.

CHAPTER XXX.

SCANDAL.

It was half-past four as Mr. M'Kinlay drove into the court-yard at Dalradern. Sir Within's note had said four o'clock, an early dinner, and Sir Within himself could be seen, at an oriel window, watch in hand, as the carriage passed under the arched entrance. Now, though it was part of Mr. M'Kinlay's usual tactics never to "cheapen himself," he felt he might, by possibility, have erred on the opposite side on this occasion, and he prepared to make some excuses for his delay, the letters he had read, the replies he was forced to make, and such like.

The old Baronet heard these apologies with a most polished urbanity; he bowed a continual acquiescence, and then ordered dinner.

"I had hoped for a little daylight, Mr. M'Kinlay," said he, "to have shown you some of my pictures, which are only worth seeing when they have got sun on them. Are you fond of the arts?"

"Passionately, Sir Within; devotedly, if a man so ignorant may dare to say so."

"Then I must only hope for better fortune on another occasion, and that you will give me an entire morning, if you will not graciously make me a visit of some days."

"Oh, sir."

"I think," continued he, — "I think I could requite you. My Van Eyks are accounted the best of any private collection; and one, at least, of my Albert Durers will bear comparison with any in the Munich Gallery."

M'Kinlay muttered something that sounded as if he were firmly persuaded of the fact.

"I know," added Sir Within, "that this sounds a little boastful; but when I shall have told you how I came by this

picture, — it is called the Queen's Martyrdom, and represents the Queen Beatrice of Bohemia on a balcony, while her lover is going to the scaffold; the King, her husband, has ordered her to throw to him the garland or wreath which was the privilege of nobles to wear in their last moments, — and, I say, when I tell you the history of the picture, you will, perhaps, acquit me of vainglory; and also, when you see it, you will render me a greater service by deciding whether the headsman has not been painted by Cranach. How I wish we had a little daylight, that I might show it to you!"

How grateful was M'Kinlay to the sun for his setting on that evening; never was darkness more welcome, even to him who prayed for night — or Blucher; and, secretly vowing to himself that no casualty should ever catch him there before candlelight, he listened with a bland attention, and pledged his word to any amount of connoisseurship required of him. Still, he hoped that this might not be "the case" — the especial case — on which Sir Within had summoned him to give counsel; for, besides being absurd, it would be worse, — it would be unprofitable. It was a pleasant interruption to this "art conversation" when dinner was announced. Now did Mr. M'Kinlay find himself more at home when appealed to for his judgment on brown sherry, and the appropriate period at which "Amontillado" could be introduced; but he soon discovered he was in the presence of a master. Dinner-giving was the science of his craft, and Sir Within belonged to that especial school who have always maintained that Brillat Savarin is more to be relied upon than Grotius, and M. Ude a far abler ally than Puffendorf. It was the old envoy's pleasure on this occasion to put forth much of his strength; both the dinner and the wine were exquisite, and when the entertainment closed with some choice "Hermitage," which had been an Imperial present, the lawyer declared that it was not a dinner to which he had been invited but a banquet.

"You must run down in your next vacation, my dear Mr. M'Kinlay, and give me a week. I don't know if you are a sportsman?"

"Not in the least, sir. I neither shoot, ride, nor fish."

"Nor do I; and yet I like a country life, as a sort of interlude in existence."

"With a house like this, Sir Within, what life can compare with it?"

"One can, at least, have tranquillity," sighed Sir Within, with an air that made it difficult to say whether he considered it a blessing or the reverse.

"There ought to be a good neighborhood, too, I should say. I passed some handsome places as I came along."

"Yes, there are people on every hand, excellent people, I have not a doubt; but they neither suit me, nor *I them.* Their ways are not mine, nor are their ideas, their instincts, nor their prejudices. The world, my dear Mr. M'Kinlay, is unfortunately wider than a Welsh county, though they will not believe it here."

"You mean, then, Sir Within, that they are local, and narrow-minded in their notions?"

"I don't like to say that, any more than I like to hear myself called a libertine; but I suppose, after all, it is what we both come to." The air of self-accusation made the old envoy perfectly triumphant; and as he passed his hand across his brow and smiled blandly, he seemed to be recalling to mind innumerable successes of the past. "To say truth, diplomacy is not the school for *dévots.*"

"I should think not, indeed, sir," said M'Kinlay.

"And that is what these worthy folk cannot or will not see. Wounds and scars are the necessary incidents of a soldier's life; but people will not admit that there are moral injuries which form the accidents of a minister's life, and to which he must expose himself as fearlessly as any soldier that ever marched to battle. What do these excellent creatures here — who have never experienced a more exciting scene than a cattle-show, nor faced a more captivating incident than a bishop's visitation — know of the trials, the seductions — the irresistible seductions — of the great world? Ah, Mr. M'Kinlay, I could lay bare a very strange chapter of humanity, were I to tell even one-fourth of my own experiences."

"An instructive one, too, I should say, sir."

"In one sense, yes; certainly instructive. You see, Mr.

M'Kinlay, with respect to life it is thus: Men in your profession become conversant with all the material embarrassments and difficulties of families; they know of that crushing bond or that ruinous mortgage, of the secret loan at fifty per cent or the drain of hush money to stop a disclosure, just as the doctor knows of the threatened paralysis or the spreading aneurism; but we men of the world — men of the world *par excellence* — read humanity in its moral aspect; we study its conflicts, its trials, its weakness, and its fall, — I say fall, because such is the one and inevitable end of every struggle."

"This is a sad view, a very sad view," said M'Kinlay, who, probably to fortify himself against the depression he felt, drank freely of strong Burgundy.

"Not so in one respect. It makes us more tolerant, more charitable. There is nothing ascetic in our judgment of people; we deplore, but we forgive."

"Fine, sir, very fine, — a noble sentiment!" said the lawyer, whose utterance was not by any means so accurate as it had been an hour before.

"Of that relentless persecution of women, for instance, such as you practise it here in England, the great world knows positively nothing. In your blind vindictiveness you think of nothing but penalties, and you seem to walk over the battlefield of life with no other object or care than to search for the wounded and hold them up to shame and torture. Is it not so?"

"I am sure you are right. We are all fal—fal—li—ble, not a doubt of it," muttered M'Kinlay to himself.

"And remember," continued Sir Within, "it is precisely the higher organizations, the more finely attuned temperaments that are most exposed, and which from the very excellence of their nature demand our deepest care and solicitude. With what pains, for instance, would you put together the smashed fragments of a bit of rare Sèvres, concealing the junctures and hiding the flaws, while you would not waste a moment on a piece of vulgar crockery."

"Pitch it out o' window at once!" said M'Kinlay, with an almost savage energy.

"So it is. It is with this precious material, finely formed,

beautiful in shape, and exquisite in color, the world has to deal; and how natural that it should treat it with every solicitude and every tenderness! But the analogy holds further. Every connoisseur will tell you that the cracked or fissured porcelain is scarcely diminished in value by its fracture; that when skilfully repaired it actually is almost, if not altogether, worth what it was before."

M'Kinlay nodded; he was not quite clear how the conversation had turned upon porcelain, but the wine was exquisite, and he was content.

"These opinions of mine meet little mercy down here, Mr. M'Kinlay; my neighbors call them Frenchified immoralities, and fifty other hard names; and as for myself, they do not scruple to aver that I am an old rake, come back to live on the recollection of his vices. I except, of course, our friends the Vyners, — they judge, and they treat me differently; they are a charming family."

"Charming!" echoed the lawyer, and seeming by his action to drink their health to himself.

"You know the old line, 'He jests at wounds that never felt a scar;' and so have I ever found that it is only amongst those who have suffered one meets true sympathy. What is this curious story" — here he dropped into a low, confidential voice — "about Miss C.? It is a bygone nowadays; but how was it? She was to have married a man who had a wife living! or she did marry him, and discovered it as they were leaving the church? I forget exactly how it went, — I mean the story, — for I know nothing as to the fact."

M'Kinlay listened, and through the dull fog of his besotted faculties a faint flickering of light seemed struggling to pierce. The misanthrope at Arran, — the once friend, now banished forever, — the name that never was to be uttered, — the mystery to be kept from all, — and then Georgina's own sudden outburst of passion on the evening they parted, when he blundered out something about a reparation to Luttrell. All this, at first confusedly, but by degrees more clearly, passed in review before him, and he thought he had dropped upon a very black page of family history. Though the wine of which he had drunk freely had addled, it had not over-

come him, and, with the old instincts of his calling, he remembered how all-important it is, when extracting evidence, to appear in full possession of all the facts.

"How, in the name of wonder, Sir Within," said he, after a long pause, — "how did it ever chance that this story reached you?"

"Mr. M'Kinlay, my profession, like your own, has its secret sources of information, and, like you, we hear a great deal, and we believe very little of it."

"In the present case," said M'Kinlay, growing clearer every minute, "I take it you believe nothing."

"How old is Miss O'Hara?" asked Sir Within, quietly.

"Oh, Sir Within, you surely don't mean to — "

"To what, Mr. M'Kinlay, — what is it that I cannot possibly intend?" said he, smiling.

"You would not imply that — that there was anything there?" said he, blundering into an ambiguity that might not commit him irretrievably.

"Have n't I told you, my dear Mr. M'Kinlay," said he, with an air of easy familiarity, "that if I am somewhat sceptical, I am very charitable? I can believe a great deal, but I can forgive everything."

"And you really do believe this?" asked M'Kinlay.

"Something of it; about as much as Mr. M'Kinlay believes. Kate O'Hara is — let me see," muttered he, half aloud; "I was at Stuttgard; it was the winter Prince Paul died; we had a court mourning, and there were no festivities. The Legations received a few intimates, and we exchanged all the contents of our letters, — that was sixteen or seventeen years ago; the young lady, I take it, is not far from fifteen."

"Good heavens, Sir Within, you want to establish a distinct link between this story and the age of the young girl!"

"That is too legal a view, Mr. M'Kinlay; we diplomatists deal in another fashion, — we speculate, we never specify. We always act as if everything were possible, and nothing certain; and in our very uncertainty lies our greatest security."

"At all events, you don't believe one word of this story?"

"When a gentleman so intimately connected with all the secret details of a family history as you are, instead of showing me where and how I am in error, limits himself to an appeal to my incredulity, my reply is, his case is a weak one. She is a most promising creature; she was here yesterday, and I declare I feel half ashamed of myself for thinking her more attractive than my dear old favorite, Ada. What are you going to do about her?"

The suddenness of this question startled M'Kinlay not much, if at all. "Did the old Baronet know of the Vyners' plans? — was he, in reality, more deeply in their confidence than himself?" — was the lawyer's first thought. It was clear enough he knew something, whatever that something might mean. To fence with such a master of his weapon would be a lamentable blunder, and M'Kinlay determined on frankness.

"It is the very subject on which I want to consult you, Sir Within. The case is a nice one, and requires nice treatment. The Vyners have determined she is not to go out to Italy."

"Do they give their reason?"

"No, not exactly a reason. They think — that is, Miss Courtenay thinks — all this is, of course, in strict confidence, Sir Within?"

The old minister bowed an acquiescence, with his hand on his heart.

"As I was observing, then," resumed M'Kinlay, "Miss Courtenay thinks that the united education scheme has not been a success; that Miss O'Hara has contrived somehow to usurp more than her share; that from natural quickness, perhaps, in learning, a greater aptitude for acquirement, she has not merely outstripped, but discouraged Miss Vyner — "

The incredulous surprise that sat on the old Baronet's face stopped M'Kinlay in his explanation, and he said, "You don't appear to believe in this, Sir Within?"

"Don't you think, sir," said the old envoy, "that sitting here *tête-à-tête* as we do now, we could afford to be candid and frank with each other? Does it not strike you that you and I are very like men who could trust each other?"

There was a fine shade of flattery in the collocation that

touched the lawyer. It was not every day that he saw himself "brigaded" in such company, and he reddened slightly as he accepted the compliment.

"Let us, then," resumed the old minister, "let us leave to one side all mention of these young ladies' peculiar talents and capacities; come to the practical fact that, for reasons into which we are not to inquire, they are to be separated. What do you mean to do by Miss O'Hara?"

Mr. M'Kinlay paused for a few seconds, and then, with the air of one who could not subdue himself to any caution, said: "Whatever you suggest, Sir Within, — anything that you advise. You see, sir," said he, turning down the corner of Vyner's letter, and handing it to him to read, this is what he says: 'Tell Sir Within from me, that I will accept any trouble he shall take with Miss O'H. as a direct personal favor.'"

Sir Within bowed. It was not the first time he had been shown a "strictly confidential despatch" that meant nothing.

"I think — that is, I suspect — I apprehend the situation," said he. "The Vyners want to stand in the *statu quo ante;* they have made a mistake, and they see it. Now what does Mr. M'Kinlay suggest?"

"I'd send her back, Sir Within."

"Back! Where? To whom?"

"To her friends."

"To her friends! My dear M'Kinlay, I thought we had disposed of all that part of the case. Let us be frank, — it *does* save so much time; for friends, read Mr. Luttrell. Now, what if he say, 'No; you have taken her away, and by your teaching and training unfitted her for such a life as she must lead here; I cannot receive her'?"

"I did not mean Mr. Luttrell; I really spoke of the girl's family —"

"You are a treasure of discretion, sir," said Sir Within; "but permit me to observe that the excess of caution often delays a negotiation. *You* say that she cannot go to Italy, and *I* say she can as little return to Ireland, — at least, without Mr. Luttrell's acquiescence. Now for the third course?"

"This school Sir Gervais speaks of in Paris," said

M'Kinlay, fumbling for the passage in the letter, for he was now so confused and puzzled that he was very far from feeling calm. "Here is the address, — Madame Gosselin, Rue Neuve St. Augustin, Paris. Sir Gervais thought that — with, of course, your approval — this would be the best course we could take. She would be well treated, well educated, cared for, and eventually qualified to be a governess, — if she should not chance to marry."

"Yes, yes," said Sir Within, slowly, as he pondered over the other's words, "there is much in what you say, and the remarkable fact is that *they do*, very often, make admirable wives."

Who were the "they" he referred to, as a category, M'Kinlay did not dare to inquire, but assented by a smile and a bow.

"Curious it is," said the old man, reflectively, "to mark how generations alternate, as if it were decreed that the world should not make any distinct progress, but oscillate between vice and virtue, virtue and vice; the respectable father and the scampish son being the counterpoise for the rakish mamma and the discreet daughter."

To what such a reflection could be thought to apply, Mr. M'Kinlay had not the vaguest conception; but it is only fair to add that his faculties were never, throughout the interview, at their clearest.

"My chief difficulty is this, sir," said the lawyer, rising to an effort that might show he had an opinion and a will of his own: "Sir Gervais requests me to convey his daughter as far as Marseilles; he names an early day to meet us there, so that, really, there is very little time — I may say no time, if we must start by Monday next."

Sir Within made no reply, and the other went on: —

"Suppose I take this girl over to Paris with us, and the school should be full, and no vacancy to be had? Suppose they might object — I have heard of such things — to receive as a pupil one who had not made any preliminary inquiries."

"Your position might become one of great embarrassment, Mr. M'Kinlay, and to relieve you, so far as in me lies, I would propose that, until you have taken the necessary steps to insure Miss O'Hara's reception, she should remain

under the charge of my housekeeper here, Mrs. Simcox. She is a most excellent person, and kindness itself. When you have satisfied yourself by seeing Madame Gosselin at Paris, as to all matters of detail, I shall very probably have had time to receive a reply to the letter I will write to my co-trustee, Mr. Luttrell, and everything can be thus arranged in all due form."

"I like all of your plans, sir, but the last step. I have confessed to you that Sir Gervais Vyner had strictly enjoined me not to mention Mr. Luttrell's name."

"You also mentioned to me, if I mistake not, that the young girl's friends, whoever they might be supposed to be, were to be consulted as to any future arrangements regarding her. Now, do you seriously mean to tell me that you are going to address yourself to the old peasant who assumed to be her grandfather, and who frankly owned he could n't read?"

"I do think, Sir Within, that old Malone — that is the man's name — ought to be informed, and, indeed, consulted as to any step we take."

"A model of discreet reserve you certainly are," said Sir Within, smiling graciously. "You will write to him, therefore, and say that Miss Kate O'Hara is, for the time being, under the roof of one of her guardians, Sir Within Wardle, preparatory to her being sent to a school at Paris. You may, if you think it advisable, ask him for a formal acquiescence to our plan, and, if he should desire it, add, he may come over here and see her. I suspect, Mr. M'Kinlay, we cannot possibly be called on to carry out the illusion of relationship beyond this."

"But he is her grandfather, I assure you he is."

"I believe whatever Mr. M'Kinlay asks me to believe. With the inner convictions which jar against my credulity, you shall have no cause of complaint, sir; they are, and they shall be, inoperative. To prove this, I will beg of you to enclose ten pounds on my part to this old peasant, in case he should like to come over here."

"I am sure Sir Gervais will be deeply obliged by all your kindness in this matter."

"It is my pleasure and my duty both."

"What a rare piece of fortune it was for her, that made you her guardian!"

"Only one of them, remember, and that I am now acting, perforce, without my colleague. I own, Mr. M'Kinlay, I am red tapist enough not to like all this usurped authority, but you have tied me up to secrecy."

"Not I, Sir Within. It was Sir Gervais who insisted on this."

"I respect his wishes, for perhaps I appreciate their necessity. You see some sort of objection to my plan, Mr. M'Kinlay?" said the old diplomatist, with a cunning twinkle of the eye. "What is it?"

"None, sir; none whatever," said the lawyer, rapidly.

"Yes, yes, you do; be candid, my dear Mr. M'Kinlay. What we say to each other here will never figure in a Blue Book."

"I did not see a positive objection, Sir Within; I only saw what might be an embarrassment."

"In what shape?"

"I am completely in your hands, Sir Within Wardle; but such is my confidence in you, I will not withhold anything. Here is the difficulty I speak of; Miss Courtenay, who never favored the project about this girl, likes it now less than ever, and I do not feel quite certain that she will be satisfied with any arrangement short of sending her back to the obscurity she came from."

"I can understand and appreciate that wish on her part; but then there is no need that I should suspect it, Mr. M'Kinlay. The habits of my profession have taught me to bear many things in mind without seeming to act upon the knowledge. Now, the shelter that I propose to afford this young lady need not excite any mistrust. You will tell Sir Gervais that the arrangement met with your approval; that it was, in your opinion, the best of the alternatives that offered; and that Sir Within Wardle has on the present occasion a double happiness afforded him, — he obliges friends whom he values highly, and he consults his own personal gratification."

In the last few words the old envoy had resumed a tone familiar to him in the days when he dictated despatches to a

secretary, and sent off formal documents to be read aloud to dignitaries great and potent as himself; and Mr. M'Kinlay was duly impressed thereat.

"In all that relates to Mr. Luttrell I am to rely upon you, sir," said Sir Within; and Mr. M'Kinlay bowed his acquiescence. "I am certain that you smile at my excess of formality," continued the old minister. "These particularities are second nature to us;" and it was clear as he said "*us*," that he meant an order whose ways and habits it would be a heresy to dispute. "If you will not take more wine, let us go into the drawing-room. A drawing-room without ladies, Mr. M'Kinlay," said he, with a sigh; "but, perhaps, one of these days — who knows? — we may be fortunate enough to receive you here more gracefully."

Mr. M'Kinlay, in any ordinary presence, would have responded by one of those little jocose pleasantries which are supposed to be fitting on such occasions; he had tact enough, however, to perceive that Sir Within would not have been the man for a familiarity of this sort, so he merely smiled, and bowed a polite concurrence with the speech.

"It will be as well, perhaps, if I wrote a few lines to Mademoiselle Heinzleman, and also to Miss O'Hara herself; and if you will excuse me for a few minutes, I will do so."

The old minister despatched his two notes very speedily, and, with profuse assurances of his "highest considerations," he took leave of the lawyer, and sat down to ruminate over their late conversation, and the step he had just taken.

Mr. M'Kinlay, too, meditated as he drove homewards, but not with all that clearness of intellect he could usually bestow upon a knotty point. Like most men in his predicament, to be puzzled was to be angered, and so did he inveigh to himself against "that crotchety old humbug, with his mare's nest of a secret marriage." Not but there was a "something somewhere," which he, M'Kinlay, would certainly investigate before he was many weeks older. "Miss Georgina's manner to me used to undergo very strange vacillations, — very strange ones, indeed. Yes, there was something 'in it,' — surely, something."

While Kate O'Hara was still sleeping the next morning, Ada hurried into her room, and threw her arms around her, sobbing bitterly, as the hot tears ran down her cheeks, "Oh, Kate, my own dear, darling Kate, what is this dreadful thing I have just heard? Lisette has just told me that she is not to pack your clothes, — that you are not coming with me abroad."

Kate raised herself on one arm, and pushed back her hair from her brow, her large eyes wearing for an instant the meaningless look of one suddenly awakened from sleep.

"Do you hear me, — do you know what I am saying, dearest?" asked Ada, as she kissed her, and drew her towards her.

"Tell it me again," said she, in a low, distinct voice.

"Lisette says that mademoiselle has orders — from whom I cannot say — that you are to remain in England, to go to a school, or to live with a governess, or to return to Ireland, or something; but whatever it is that we are to be separated;" and again her grief burst forth and choked her words.

"I knew this would come one day," said Kate, slowly, but without any touch of emotion. "It was a caprice that took me, and it is a caprice that deserts me."

"Oh, don't say that, Kate, of my own dear papa, who loves you almost as he loves me!"

"I can have nothing but words of gratitude for him, Ada, and for your mother."

"You mean, then —"

"No matter what I mean, my sweet Ada. It may be, after all, a mercy. Who is to say whether, after another year of this sort of life, its delicious happiness should have so grown into my nature that it would tear my very heart-strings to free myself from its coils? Even now there were days when I forgot I was a peasant girl, without home or friends or fortune."

"Oh, Kate, you will break my heart if you speak this way!"

"Well, then, to talk more cheerfully. Will not that pretty hat yonder, with the long blue feather, look wondrous picturesque, as I follow the goats up the steep sides of Inche-

gora? and will not that gauzy scarf be a rare muffle as I gather the seaweed below the cliffs of Bengore?"

"Kate, Kate!" sobbed Ada, "how cruel you are! You know, too, that dear papa does not mean this. It is not to hardship and privation he would send you."

"But there are reverses, Ada, a hundred times worse than any change of food or dress. There are changes of condition that seem to rend one's very identity. Here I had respect, attention, deference, and now I go Heaven knows where, to render these tributes to Heaven knows whom. Tell me of yourself, my sweet Ada. It is a far brighter theme to dwell on."

"No, no; not if I must part with you," said she, sobbing; "but you will write to me, my own darling Kate! We shall write to each other continually till we meet again?"

"If I may, — if I be permitted," said Kate, gravely.

"What do you — what can you mean?" cried Ada, wildly. "You speak as though some secret enemy were at work to injure you here, where you have found none but friends who love you."

"Don't you know, my dear Ada, that love, like money, has a graduated coinage, and that what would be a trifle to the rich man would make the wealth of a poor one? The love your friends bear me is meted out by station; mind, dearest, I'm not complaining of this. Let us talk of Italy, rather; how happy you ought to be there!"

"If I but had you, my own dearest —"

"There, I hear mademoiselle coming Bathe your eyes, dear Ada; or, better still, run away before she sees you."

Ada took this last counsel; but scarcely had she left by one door, than mademoiselle entered by another.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DERRYVARAGH.

A DREARY day of December it was, and the rain was pouring heavily, pitilessly down the dark gorge of Derryvaragh. The roar of mountain rivulets, swollen to torrents, filled the air, and the crashing sounds of falling timber blended with the noise of troubled waters. Beautiful as that landscape would be on a day of bright sunshine, it seemed now the dreariest scene the eye could rest on. The clouds lay low on the mountain-sides, thickening the gloom that spread around, while yellow currents of water crossed and recrossed on every side, rending the earth, and laying bare the roots of tall trees.

From a window in O'Rorke's inn, O'Rorke himself and old Malone watched the devastation and ruin of the flood; for even there, in that wild region forgotten of men, there were little patches of cultivation, — potato-gardens and small fields of oats or rye, — but through which now the turbid water tore madly, not leaving a trace of vegetation as it went.

"And so you saw the last of it?" said O'Rorke, as he lit his pipe and sat down at the window.

"I did; there was n't one stone on another as I came by. The walls were shaky enough before, and all the mortar washed out of them, so that when the stream came down in force, all fell down with a crash like thunder; and when I turned round there was nothing standing as high as your knee, and in five minutes even that was swept away, and now it's as bare as this floore."

"Now, mind my words, Peter Malone; as sure as you stand there, all the newspapers will be full of 'Another Outrage — More Irish Barbarism and Stupidity.' That will be the heading in big letters; and then underneath it will go on: 'The beautiful lodge that Sir Gervais Vyner had

recently built in the Gap of Derryvaragh was last night razed to the ground by a party of people who seemed determined that Ireland should never rise out of the misery into which the ignorance of her natives have placed her.' That 's what they 'll say, and then the 'Times' will take it up, and we 'll have the old story about benefactor on one side, and brutality on the other; and how, for five hundred years and more, England was trying to civilize us, and that we 're as great savages now — ay, or worse — than at first."

Malone clasped his worn hands together, and muttered a deep curse in Irish below his breath.

"And all our own fault," continued O'Rorke, oratorically. "'Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow.' I said that on Essex Bridge to the Lord-Lieutenant himself; and look at me now — is it here, or is it this way, a patriot ought to be?"

"Is n't it the same with us all?" said Malone, sternly. "Did n't they take my grandchild away from me — the light of my eyes — and then desart her?"

"No such thing, — she 's better off than ever she was. She 's living with a man that never was in Ireland, and mind what I say, Peter Malone, them 's the only kind of English you ever get any good out of."

"What do you mane?"

"I mane that when one or two of us go over there, we 're sure to be thought cute and intelligint; and the Saxon says, 'Is n't it wonderful what a clever people they are?' But if he comes here himself, and sees nothing but misery and starvation, he cries out, 'They 're hopeless craytures, — they live with the pig.'"

"And why would n't we if we had one?"

"Well, well, well," muttered the other, who never minded nor heeded the interruption, "maybe the time is coming, maybe the great day is near. Don't you know the song of the 'Shamroge in my Hat'?"

"I ne'er heerd it."

"''T is little I care for Emancipation,
'T is little I want such laws as that;
What I ask is, Ould Ireland to be a nation,
And myself with a shamroge in my hat.'"

"I wonder will the letter come to-day?" said the old man, with a weary sigh; "my heart is heavy waiting for it."

"If she sent you a ten-pound note, Peter Malone, whenever she wrote, there would be some sense and reason in your wishing for a letter; but, so well as I remember the one scrap of letter that she sent you, there was neither money nor money's worth in it."

"It was betther than goold to my heart," said Malone, with a deep feeling in his voice and look.

"Well, there, it's coming now; there's Patsey holding up a letter in his hand. Do you see him at the ford, there?"

"I don't see him, my eyes are so weak; but are ye sure of it, Tim O'Rorke? Don't decave me, for the love of the Blessed Virgin."

"I'm not deceiving you; there is the boy coming along as fast as he can."

"Ay, but the letter?"

"He flourished it a minute ago, this way, for he saw me at the window."

"Open the window, and maybe he'd show it again," said the old man, trembling with eagerness.

"Faix! I'll not let the rain in. It's a nice day to have the windows open. You're eaten up with your selfishness, Peter Malone."

"Maybe I am, maybe I am," muttered the old peasant, as he sat down, and hid his face between his hands.

"And who knows where the letter will be from? Maybe it's Vyner is going to turn you out of your holding."

"So he may," sighed the other, meekly.

"Maybe it's the agents eallin' on you to pay up for the time you were in it. Do you think that would be convanient, eh?"

"I don't care if they did."

"I would n't wonder if it was trouble you were getting in about throwing down the walls of the Lodge. The police, they say, made a report about it."

"So they may; let them do their worst."

"Go round to the back. Do you think I'll open the

front doore of a day like this?" screamed out O'Rorke to the messenger, who now stood without.

While he went to unbar the door, old Malone dropped on his knees, and with clasped hands and uplifted eyes mut-

tered a few words of prayer; they were in Irish, but their intense passion and fervor were but increased by the strong-sounding syllables of that strange tongue.

"There it is — from herself," said O'Rorke, throwing down the letter on the table. "Her own handwriting: 'Mr. Peter Malone to the care of Mr. O'Rorke, Vinegar Hill, Cush-ma-greena, Ireland.'"

"The heavens be your bed, for the good news, Tim O'Rorke! May the Virgin watch over you for the glad heart you 've given me this day."

"Wait till we see the inside of it, first. Give it to me till I open it." But the old man could not part with it so easily, but held it pressed hard to his lips.

"Give it here," said the other, snatching it rudely; "maybe you'll not be so fond of it when you know the contents."

The old man rocked to and fro in his agitation as O'Rorke broke the seal; the very sound of the wax, as it smashed, seemed to send a pang through him, as he saw the rough unfeeling way the other handled that precious thing.

"It's long enough, anyhow, Peter — one, two, three pages," said he, turning them leisurely over. "Am I to read it all?"

"Every word of it, Tim O'Rorke."

"Here goes then: —

"'March 27, 18—. DALRADERN CASTLE, N. WALES.

"'MY DEAR OLD GRANDFATHER, — I sit down to write you a very long letter — '"

"God bless her! God bless the darlin'!" said the old man, interrupting; "show me the words, Tim, — show them to me."

"Indeed I will not do any such thing. It 's just as much as I'll do is to read it out — 'a very long letter, and I hope and trust it will serve for a very long time, and save me, besides, from the annoyance of your friend and secretary, Mr. O'Rorke.' Listen to this, Peter Malone, — 'from your secretary, Mr. O'Rorke, who, I suppose, having no treason to occupy him, is good enough to bestow his leisure upon me.' Did you ever hear more impudence than that in all your born days? Did you believe she'd be bowld enough to insult the man that condescended to serve her?"

"She's young, she's young, Tim. Would you have her as wise as you and me? The crayture."

"I'd have her with a civil tongue in her head. I'd have her respect and regard and rev'rance her superiors. And I'm one of them."

"Go on; read more," muttered the old man.

"It's not so easy, with a throat on fire, and a tongue swelled with passion. I tell you, Peter Malone, I know that girl well; and what's more, she never deceived me. It's like yesterday to me, the day she stood up here to my own face, and said, 'I wish I never set foot in your house, Tim O'Rorke.' Yes, there's the very words she used."

"Was n't she a child, a poor little child?" said Malone, in a humble, almost supplicating voice.

"She was a child in years, but she had the daring of a woman, that no man would ever frighten."

"Read on, avick, read on, and God bless you," said the other, wiping away the big drops that stood on his brow.

O'Rorke read on: "'I know, grandfather, it is very natural you should like to hear of me—'"

A deep sigh and low muttered prayer broke here from the old man.

"'—to hear of me; but when once assured that I was well and happy, I hoped and believed you would cease to make such inquiries as fill O'R.'s letters—'"

"What does she mean?" broke in Malone.

"Listen, and maybe you'll hear;" and he read:—

"'—For it cannot possibly be a matter of interest to you to hear that I read books you never saw, speak with people you never met, and talk of things, places, and persons that are all just as strange to you as if you were walking on a different earth from this.'"

"Read that again."

"I will not. 'T is as much as I can to say it once. Listen:—

"'You ask, Am I happy? and I answer, If I am not, is it in your power to make me so? You want to know, Do I like the life I lead? and I ask you, If it should be that I did not like it, do you think I'd like to go back to rags, misery, and starvation? Do you believe that I can forget the cold, cutting wind, and the rain, and the snow-drift of Strathmore, or that I don't remember the long days I shivered on the cliffs of Kilmacreenon? They all come back to me, grandfather, in my dreams, and many a morning I

awake, sobbing over miseries that, no matter what may be my fortune, have left a dark spot on my heart for life.' "

"The darlin' jewel! I hope not," muttered Malone, as his lips trembled with emotion. "Read on, O'Rorke."

"'Take it for granted, that you need never fret about me.' That's true, anyhow, Peter; and she means it to say, 'Don't bother yourself about one that will never trouble her head about *you!*' "

"Go on with the readin'," grumbled out Malone.

"'Though I cannot answer one-fourth of your questions, I will tell you so much; I am better off here than at Sir G. V.'s. I am my own mistress; and, better still, the mistress of all here. Sir Within leaves everything at my orders. I drive out, and dress, and ride, and walk, just as I please. We see no company whatever, but there is so much to do, I am never lonely. I have masters if I wish for them, — sometimes I do, — and I learn many things, such as riding, driving, &c., which people never do well if they only have picked up by chance opportunity. You ask, What is to be the end of all this? or, as Mr. O'Rorke says, What will ye make of it? I reply, I don't know, and I don't much trouble my head about it; because I *do* know, Peter Malone, that if I am not interrupted and interfered with, all will go well with me, though certainly I can neither tell how or where or why. Another thing is equally clear: neither of us, dear grandfather, can be of much use to the other.' "

"What's that?" cried the old man; "read it again."

" 'Neither of us can be of much use to the other.' That's plain talking, anyhow, Peter. She's a young lady that makes herself understood, I must say that!"

"I never 'dragged' on her for a farthin'," said Malone, with a mournful sigh.

"Lucky for you, Peter; lucky for you!"

"Nor I would n't, if I was starvin'," said he, with a fierce energy.

"Lucky for you, I say again!"

"You mane that she would n't help me, Tim O'Rorke. You mane that she'd turn her back on her ould grandfather. That's as it may be. God knows best what's in people's hearts. I can't tell, nor you either; but this I can tell, and

I can swear to it, — that for all the good she could do me, — ten, ay, fifty times told,— I'd not disgrace her, nor bring her to the shame of saying, 'That ould man there in the ragged frieze coat and the patched shoes, that's my mother's father.'"

"If it's to your humility you're trusting, Peter, my man," said the other, scoffingly, "you've made a great mistake in your granddaughter; but let us finish the reading. Where was it I left off? Yes, here, 'Neither of us of much use to the other. You want to know what intercourse exists between the Vyners and myself —' The Vyners! Ain't we grand!" cried O'Rorke. "The Vyners! I wonder she don't say, 'between the Vyners and the O'Haras.'"

"Go on, will you?" said Malone, impatiently.

"'— it is soon told, — there is none; and what's more, Sir Within no longer hears from or writes to them. Although, therefore, my own connection with this family has ceased, there is no reason why this should influence yours; and I would, above all things, avoid, if I were you, letting *my* fortunes interfere with *your* own. You can, and with truth, declare that you had nothing whatever to do with any step I have taken; that I went my own way, and never asked you for the road. My guardian, Sir Within, wrote, it is true, to Mr. Luttrell of Arran, but received no answer. It will be my duty to write to him in a few days, and not improbably with the same result.

"'You seem anxious to know if I have grown tall, and whether I am still like what I was as a child. I believe I may say Yes to both questions; but I shall send you, one of these days, a sketch from a picture of me, which the painter will this year exhibit at the Academy. It is called a great likeness. And, last of all, you ask after my soul. I am sorry, dear grandfather, that I cannot be as certain of giving you as precise intelligence on this point as I have done on some others. It may satisfy you, however, perhaps, if I say I have not become a Protestant —'"

"God bless her for that!" said Malone, fervently.

"'— although our excellent housekeeper here, Mrs. Simcox, assures me that such a change would be greatly to my advantage, in this world and in that to come; but if her

knowledge of the former is the measure of what she knows of the latter, I shall require other counsel before I read my recantation.' "

"What does she mean by that?" asked Malone.

"'T is another way of saying 'I won't play a card till I see the money down on the table.' "

"How can that be? Which of us knows what's going to happen here or in the next world?"

"Maybe the Protestants does! Perhaps that's the reason they're always so dark and downcast now."

Malone shook his head in despair; the problem was too much for him, and he said, "Read on."

" 'That I am not without the consolations of the Church you will be glad to hear, as I tell you that a French priest, the Abbé Gerard, dines here every Sunday, and sings with me in the evening.' "

"Sings with her. What makes them sing?"

"Religion, of coorse," said O'Rorke, with a grin of derision. "Listen to me, Peter Malone," cried he, in a stern voice; "when people is well off in the world, they no more think of going to Heaven the way you and I do than they'd think of travellin' a journey on a low-backed car."

"Go on with the reading," muttered Malone.

"I have read enough of it, Peter Malone. You are cute enough to see by this time what a fine-hearted, generous, loving creature you have for a granddaughter. At all events, the dose you've taken now ought to be enough for a day. So put up the physic,"—here he handed him the letter,—"and whenever you feel in want of a little more, come back, and I'll measure it out for you!"

"You're a hard man, you're a hard man, Mr. O'Rorke," said the old fellow, as he kissed the letter twice fervently, and then placed it in his bosom.

"I'm a hard man because I read you out her own words, just as she wrote them."

"You're a hard man, or you'd not want to crush one as old and feeble as me;" and so saying, he went his way.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. M'KINLAY IN ITALY.

As there are periods in life, quiet and trauquil periods, in which the mind reverts to the past and dwells on bygones; so in story-telling there are little intervals in which a brief retrospect is pardonable, and it is to one of these I would now ask my reader's attention.

There was not anything very eventful in Mr. M'Kinlay's journey across Europe with Ada and her governess. They met with no other adventures than occur to all travellers by land or by water; but on arriving at Marseilles, a letter from Lady Vyner apprised them that Sir Gervais was slightly indisposed, and requested Mr. M'Kinlay would complete his kindness by giving them his company and protection as far as Genoa, at a short distance from which city, and in one of those little sheltered nooks of the Riviera, they had now established themselves in a villa.

It is but truthful to own that the lawyer did not comply with this request either willingly or gracefully. He never liked the Continent, he was an indifferent linguist, he detested the cookery, and fancied that the wines poisoned him. Mademoiselle Heinzleman, too, was fussy, meddling, and officious, presuming, at least he thought so, on being in an element more her own. And as for Ada, grief at separating from Kate had made her so indifferent and apathetic that she neither enjoyed the journey or took any interest in the new scenes and objects around her. Mr. M'Kinlay, therefore, was in no mood to proceed farther; he was tired of it all. But, besides this, he was not quite certain that he had done the right thing by placing Kate O'Hara at Dalradern; or that in so doing he had carried out the very vague instructions of Miss Courtenay. Not that the lawyer

saw his way at all in the whole affair. The absurd suspicion of the old envoy about some secret contract or marriage or some mysterious boud, he could afford to deride; but, unhappily, he could not as easily forget, and some doubts — very ungenerous and ungallant doubts they were — would cross his mind, that Miss Georgina Courtenay's favor to himself, in some way or other, depended on the changeful fortunes of some other "issue," of which he knew nothing. "She means to accept me if she can get nothing better," was the phrase that he found on his lips when he awoke, and heard himself muttering as he dropped off asleep at night; and, after all, the consideration was not either reassuring or flattering. Middle-aged gentlemen, even with incipient baldness and indolent "proclivities," do not fancy being consigned to the category of last resorts. They fancy — Heaven help them! — that they have their claims on regard, esteem, and something stronger too; and doubtless the delusion has its influence in fighting off, for a year or two, the inevitable admission that they have dropped out of the "van" into that veteran battalion which furnishes no more guards of honor at the Temple of Venus, nor even a sentinel at the gate. Very ungallant little sums in arithmetic, too, used he to work about Georgina's age; and it would seem strange to younger men, the anxiety he felt to give her a year or two more than she had a right to. "I 'm not sure she 's not nearer thirty-five than thirty-two," muttered he, ill-naturedly, to himself. "Rickards said one night she was older than her sister, though the old rascal took care to come and tell me in the morning that it was a mistake." And then, by subtracting this thirty-five from another arbitrary sum, he obtained a result, apparently satisfactory, being, as he termed it, the proper difference of age between man and wife. Why will not men, in their zeal for truth, take "evidence for the defence" occasionally, and ask a woman's opinion on this subject?

They arrived, at last, at the Villa Balbi, a grand old palace on the seaside, where ruin and splendor were blended up together, and statues and fountains and frescos struggled for the mastery over a rank growth of vegetation, that seemed to threaten enclosing the whole place in a leafy

embrace. Into the deep arches that supported the terrace, the blue Mediterranean flowed with that noiseless motion of this all but tideless sea. All was silent as they drove up to the gate, for they had not been expected before the morrow. Scarcely was the door opened than Ada sprung out and disappeared up the stairs, followed, as well as she might, by the governess. Mr. M'Kiulay was then left alone, or at least with no other companionship than some three or four servants, whose attempts at English were by no means successful.

"Ah, Miller, I 'm glad to see *your* face at last," said the lawyer, as Sir Gervais's valet pushed his way through the crowd; "how are all here?"

"Sir Gervais has had a bad night, sir, and we were expecting the doctor every moment. Indeed, when I heard your carriage, I thought it was he had come."

"Not seriously ill, I hope?"

"Not that, perhaps, sir; but the doctor calls it a very slow fever, and requiring great care and perfect quiet. He is not to know when Miss Ada arrives."

"And the ladies, are they well?"

"My Lady 's greatly tired and fatigued, sir, of course; but Miss Courtenay is well. She was just giving directions about your room, sir. She said, 'If Mr. M'Kinlay should be afraid of this fever, you can take him down to the fattore's house, and make him up a room there.'"

"Is it a fever, then, Miller, — a real fever?"

"They call it so, sir."

"This is all that 's wanting," muttered M'Kinlay to himself. "I only need to catch some confounded disorder, now, to make this the most happy exploit of my whole life! Where is this house you speak of?"

"At the foot of the hill, sir, where you saw the clump of evergreen oaks."

"Why, it was a dirty-looking hovel, with Indian corn hung all over it."

"Well, sir, it ain't very clean to look at, but it 's not so bad inside, and you can be sure of a comfortable bed."

"I don't see why I am to stop at all. I have seen Miss Ada safe to her own door; I really cannot perceive that any-

thing more is required of me," said he to himself, as he walked up and down the terrace.

"You 'd like to eat something, perhaps, sir? Supper is ready whenever you wish it."

"Yes, I 'll eat a morsel; I was very hungry half an hour ago, but all this tidings of illness and infection has driven away my appetite. A vast, roomy old place this appears," said he, as he followed the servant across a hall spacious as a public square, into a *salon* large enough to be a church.

"We have five like this, sir; and on the other floor there is one still larger and loftier."

"How long are you here?" said the lawyer, abruptly, for he was not at all in love with the mansion.

"We shall be two months here on Tuesday, and her Ladyship likes it so much, Sir Gervais means to buy it."

"Well, I hope I shall not be much more than two hours in it. Let me have something to eat, and order fresh horses at the post."

"You 'll see my Lady, I suppose, sir?"

"Of course, if she can receive me; but I will just send up a line on my card to say that my departure at once is imperatively necessary."

Few as the words were that were required to convey this message, Mr. M'Kinlay could scarcely write them in a legible way. He was nervously afraid of an illness; but the thought of a foreign malady — a fever of some outlandish type — was a terror as great as the attack of a savage animal, of whose instinct and ways he knew nothing. All the speculations which had filled his head as he came along the road were routed at once. Love-making and marriage were all very well, but they might be purchased too dearly. A dowry that was only to be won by facing a fever, was a sorry speculation. No! he would have none of such dangerous ambitions. He had gone through enough already, — he had braved shipwreck; and if needs were that he must resign the agency, better that than resign life itself.

Not even the appetizing supper that was now spread before him could dispel these gloomy thoughts. He was half afraid to eat, and he could not be sure that wine was safe under the present circumstances.

"My Lady hopes to see you in the morning, sir," said the valet. "She has just lain down, having been up last night with Sir Gervais."

"I am extremely sorry. I am greatly distressed! But it is impossible for me to defer my departure. I will explain it all by a letter. Just unstrap that writing-desk, and I will write a few lines. You ordered the horses, I hope?"

"Yes, sir; they will be at the door by ten o'clock."

"Miss Courtenay knows I am here, I suppose?" said M'Kinlay, in a tone of well-put-on indifference, as he opened his writing-desk and arranged his papers.

"I don't know, indeed, sir; but she has the governess in her room with her, and perhaps she has heard it from her."

Mr. M'Kinlay bit his lip with impatience; he was vexed and he was angry. Nor, altogether, was it unreasonable; he had come a long journey, at considerable inconvenience, and at a time he could be ill spared from his clients; he had undergone fatigue and annoyance, — the sort of annoyance which, to men who dislike the Continent, is not a trifling matter, — and here he was now, about to set out again without so much as a word of thanks, not even a word of acknowledgment. What were they, or what was he, to justify such treatment? This was the somewhat irritating query to which all his self-examination reverted. "Am I a lackey?" cried he, as he threw down his pen in a passionate outburst that completely overcame him. "I suppose they think I am a lackey!" and he pushed back from the table in disgust.

"Miss Courtenay, sir, would be pleased to see you in the drawing-room, sir, whenever it was convenient," said a thin-looking damsel of unmistakably English mould.

"I will wait upon her now," said Mr. M'Kinlay, with the severe accents of an injured and indignant man. In fact, he spoke like one whose coming might be supposed to evoke sentiments of trepidation, if not of awe; and yet, after he had uttered the words, he fussed and pottered amongst his papers, arranging and settling and undoing in a way that to any shrewder observer than the Abigail would have discovered a mind not by any means so bent upon peremptory action as he had assumed to bespeak.

"Will you show me the way?" said he, at last, as he locked up the writing-desk, and now followed her through room after room, till the girl stopped at a door and knocked gently. No answer was returned, and she repeated the summons, on which the maid opened the door, saying, "If you 'll step inside, sir, I 'll tell my mistress you are here;" and Mr. M'Kinlay entered into what his first footstep informed him was a lady's boudoir. It was a small room, opening on a terrace by two windows, which were thrown wide, filling the chamber with the odor of orange-flowers to a degree positively oppressive. An alabaster lamp was the only light, and served merely to throw a sort of faint sunset-glow over the room, which seemed filled with cabinet pictures and statuettes, and had an easel in one corner with an unfinished sketch, in oils, upon it. The perfume of orange and magnolia was so overcoming that the lawyer moved out upon the terrace, which descended, by a flight of marble steps, into the sea. He sat down on these to inhale the fresh night air, for already his head was beginning to feel confused and addled by the strong odors.

He had not been many minutes there, when he heard the rustle of a lady's dress close to him, and before he could arise, Miss Courtenay moved forward and sat down beside him.

"How are you, Mr. M'Kinlay?" said she, giving him her hand cordially. "I have come to thank you for all your care of Ada, and your kindness to us all."

These very simple words were delivered with a most winning grace of look and manner. No wonder if he forgot all his irritation of a few moments before; no wonder if, in the very unexpectedness of this pleasure, he felt somewhat confused; and it but needed that starlight hour, that perfumed air, that murmuring sea, and the light gauzy veil which, in Genoese mode, Georgina wore in her hair, and which now floated carelessly half across his arm, to make Mr. M'Kinlay think this one of the happiest moments of his life.

After a few questions about the journey and its incidents, she went on to tell him of themselves, in that tone of easy confidence people use with their nearest friends. "It was a

somewhat sad house," she said, "he had come to. Gervais" — she called him Gervais — "had caught one of those low fevers of the country, and her mother was still very poorly. Her sister, however, had benefited by the climate, and this it was that decided them on remaining abroad. You knew, of course, that Gervais intends to buy this villa?"

"No; he had not heard of it."

"Nor that he had given up his seat in the House, and retired from public life?"

"Nor that, either, had he heard."

"Well, of course he means to tell you all now that he has got you out here. You will be such a comfort to him, Mr. M'Kinlay; he was longing to see an old friend again."

Mr. M'Kinlay's ears tingled with delight, and his heart throbbed high with hope; but he could only mutter out something that sounded like acknowledgment.

"He has so much to ask you about, besides," she went on. "Mamma wants him to let his Wiltshire house for some years, and so retrench a little, for you know he has been rather extravagant lately."

"I have ventured on an occasional remonstrance myself, though not without feeling what a liberty I was taking."

"A liberty! Surely, my dear Mr. M'Kinlay, the kind solicitude of friendship is not a liberty. Then there have been some mines, — lead or copper, I forget which, and I don't well remember whether in South Wales or Sardinia, — but they have not turned out well."

"Very badly, indeed, Miss Courtenay; the shares are at thirty-two, and falling still."

"Yes; he will have to talk over all these things with you; but not for some days, of course, for he is very weak and low."

"You don't seem to know, then," said he, with a smile, "that I am going off to-night; my horses are ordered for ten o'clock."

"Impossible! Why, we have not seen you yet; surely, Mr. M'Kinlay, you couldn't leave this without seeing Gervais and my sister?" There was a reproachful tenderness in her look, and mingled expression of wounded sensibility

and shame at its being confessed, that gave some trouble to the lawyer's heart; for there rankled in that crafty old heart some memories of the conversation at Dalradern; and, in his distrustfulness, he would ask himself, "What does this mean?"

"Come, Mr. M'Kinlay, say this is only a threat; do confess it was only meant to terrify."

"Oh, Miss Georgina, you cannot attach such interest to my presence here as to speak of my departure in terms like these!"

"I don't know how others think of these things," said she, with a sort of pouting air; "but, for my own part, I cling very closely to old friendships."

Had Mr. M'Kinlay been some twenty years younger, he would, doubtless, have seized on the moment to make a declaration. The conjuncture promised well, and he would not have lost it; but Mr. M'Kinlay had arrived at the time of life in which men are more prone to speculate on the consequences of failure than on the results of success, and when they never address them to jump over the narrowest ditch without a thought of the terrible splashing they shall get if they fall in, and, worse even than the wetting, the unsympathizing comments of a malicious public.

"What is Mr. M'Kinlay pondering over so deeply?" said Georgina, as she turned her eyes full upon him; and very effective eyes they were at such a range.

"I can scarcely tell; that is, I don't well know how to tell," said he, trying to screw up his courage.

"Mr. M'Kinlay has a secret, I'm certain," said she, with a winning coquetry she was quite mistress of.

That look she gave — it was a long-dwelling look, as though she had half forgotten to take away her eyes, for ladies will sometimes fire after the enemy has struck — was too much for Mr. M'Kinlay; he forgot all his prudential reserves, and said, —

"Has not every one his secret, Miss Courtenay?"

"I suppose so," said she, carelessly.

"Has not Miss Courtenay got one?" said he, leaning forward, and trying to catch her eyes; but she had dropped them too suddenly for him.

"Not that I 'm aware of," said she; and if he had been gifted with a nice ear, he would have perceived that a slight vibration marked the words as they fell.

"By the way," said M'Kinlay, — a most unlucky *à propos*, — "have I your perfect approval in my arrangement for that young Irish lady — or girl, — Miss O'Hara?"

Now the words, "by the way," had so completely touched her to the quick that for an instant her face became crimson.

"If you will, first of all, tell me what the arrangements are," said she, with a forced calm, "perhaps I may be able to say if I like them."

"Has mademoiselle not told you anything?"

"Mademoiselle has told me, simply, that Mr. M'Kinlay assumed the whole responsibility of the case, and neither counselled with her nor divulged his intentions."

"Ah, that was not quite fair; I really must say that mademoiselle did not represent me as I think I merit. It was a sort of case perfectly new to me. It was not very easy to see one's way. I could not make out whether you would all be better pleased by some costly arrangement for the girl, or by having her sent straight back to where she came from. The mystery that hung over —" He paused and stammered; he had said what he had not intended, and he blundered in his attempt to recall it. "I mean," added he, "that mystery that the old diplomatist insists on connecting with her."

"As how?" said Georgina, in a low, soft voice, intensely insinuating in its cadence, — "as how?"

"It 's not very easy to say how, so much of what he said was vague, so much hypocritical; and, indeed, so much that seemed —" He stopped, confused, and puzzled how to go on.

"So that you had a long conversation together on this topic?"

"An entire evening. I dined with him alone, and we spoke of very little else as we sat over our wine."

"I wish you could remember what he said. Don't you think you could recall some, at least, of it?"

"I can't say that I could, and for this reason: that he kept always interpolating little traits of what he knew of life, and all his vast and varied experiences of human nature. These sort of men are rather given to this."

"Are they?" asked she; and it was not easy to say whether her accents implied a simple curiosity or a dreamy indifference. Mr. M'Kinlay accepted them in the former sense, and with some pomposity continued, —

"Yes; I have frequently remarked this tone in them, as well as the tendency to see twice as much in everything as it really contains."

"Indeed!" said she; and now her voice unmistakably indicated one who listened with eager attention to the words of wisdom. "Did he show this tendency on the occasion you speak of?"

"Markedly, most markedly. It is very strange that I cannot give you a more accurate account of our interview; but he addled my head about pictures and early art; and then, though always temperate, his wine was exquisite. In fact, I carried away a most confused impression of all that took place between us."

"You remember, however, the arrangements that were settled on. What were they?"

"The great point of all, the one you insisted on, I was, I may say, peremptory upon."

"Which was that?"

"That she could not come abroad; as I said to Sir Within: 'We must negotiate on this basis; here is Miss Courtenay's letter, these are her words;' and I showed him the turn-down — only the turn-down — of your note."

Had there been light enough to remark it, Mr. M'Kinlay would have seen that Miss Courtenay's face became deadly pale, and her lips trembled with repressed anger.

"Well, and then?" said she, with a faint voice.

"He cut the Gordian knot at once, my dear Miss Courtenay," continued he, in a sort of sprightly tone; "he said, 'There need be no difficulty in the matter. I can act here *ex officio;*' he meant by that he was her guardian. 'I will write to her,' said he; 'and if she prefers to remain here —'"

"Remain where?" gasped she out, with a great effort to seem calm and composed.

"At Dalradern Castle, at his own house; 'if she likes this better than a Paris pension or an Irish cabin, it is quite at her service.'"

"But, of course, you replied the thing was impossible; such an arrangement could n't be, — it would be indelicate, improper, indecent?"

"I did n't say all that; but I hinted that as Sir Within was a bachelor, there were difficulties — "

"Difficulties, sir! What do you mean by difficulties? Is it possible that one evening's companionship with a person hardened by a long life of 'libertinage' can have so warped your moral sense as to render you blind to so obvious a shame as this?"

"He said his housekeeper — "

"His housekeeper! Am I to believe, sir, that you listened to all this with the patience with which you repeat it now, and that no feeling of propriety roused you to an indignant rejection of such a scheme? Was his claret or his Burgundy so insinuating as this?"

"When he said housekeeper — "

"Pray, sir, do not push my endurance beyond all limits. I have given a very wide margin for the influence of Sir Within's machinations; but bear in mind that the magnetism of his wit and his wine has not extended to me."

"If you want to imply, Miss Courtenay, that I was not in a condition to judge of — "

"Mr. M'Kinlay, I say nothing at any time by implication. People are prone to call me too outspoken. What I say and what I mean to say is this, that I cannot imagine a person of your intelligence calmly listening to and concurring in such a project."

"I am free to own I disliked it, and I distrusted it; the few words that your brother's butler, Rickards, said about this girl's craft and subtlety, the artful way she got round people, the study she made of the tempers and tastes of those about her — "

"And with all this before you, with this knowledge fresh as it was in your mind, you quietly sit down to agree to a plan which opens to these very qualities a most dangerous field of exercise. What do you mean by it? What do you intend? I can't suppose," said she, with a sneer, "you contemplated her being Lady Wardle?"

"I certainly did not," said he, with a sickly smile.

"Well, sir, you have placed yourself in a position for malevolent people to impute worse to you. Will you just tell me, who ever heard of such a thing? Is there any

country, any society ever tolerated it? This girl is close on sixteen."

"He asked particularly about her age," said M'Kinlay, who was now so confused that he knew not well what he said.

And, simple as the words were, they seemed to pierce to her very heart, for she sprang to her feet, and in a voice trembling with passion said, —

"I sincerely trust that you manage the material questions confided to you with more ability and tact than you do matters of social interest, and I can only say, sir, it is the last occasion of this kind on which you will be troubled with any commission from me."

"I believed I was strictly carrying out your intentions. You said she must not come abroad."

"But I never said —" She stopped, and the crimson flush rose on her face and covered her whole forehead. "Now mind me, Mr. M'Kinlay, and remember, I do not intend that you should twice mistake my meaning; my wish was, and is, that this girl should go back to the place, the people, and the condition from which my brother, in a very ill-judging hour, took her. I believed, and I believe, that her presence in any the most remote connection with our family is fraught with inconvenience, or worse, — do you understand me so far?"

"I do," said he, slowly.

"Well, with this strong conviction on my mind, I desire that she should be sent home again; and I tell Mr. M'Kinlay now, that any favor he cares for or values at my hands depends on the success with which he carries out this wish."

"But how is this possible? What can I do?"

"That is for your consideration, sir; you entangled the skein, you must try if you cannot undo it. Lawyers, I have always heard, have resources at their command common mortals never have dreamed of. You may discover that Sir Within has no right to exercise this guardianship. You might find out," she smiled dubiously as she uttered the words, "that the girl's friends disapproved of this protection, — very humble people occasionally are right-minded on these points, — you might find — how can I tell what your in-

genuity could not find — excellent reasons that she should go back to Ireland and to the obscurity she should never have quitted. I don't doubt it may be hard to do this; but until I learn that it is impossible, I will never consent to withdraw from Mr. M'Kinlay that confidence with which his character and his abilities have ever inspired me."

"If the desire to win your favor, Miss Courtenay — "

"No, no, Mr. M'Kinlay, that is not enough! We women are very practical, if we are not very logical; we ask for success from those who aspire to our good esteem."

"To meet a difficulty, the first thing is to see where is the hitch!" said he, thoughtfully.

"I don't believe that I apprehend you here. What is it that you mean?"

"I mean, Miss Courtenay, that it is only by learning very accurately what are the reasons for this girl's removal — what urgent necessity, in fact, requires it — that I shall be likely to hit upon the means to effect it."

"Suppose it to be a caprice, — a mere caprice!"

"In that case I should be powerless."

"I don't mean an actual caprice," said she, hurriedly, for she saw her error; "but a sort of apprehension that this initial mistake of my brother's would lead to worse. Great unhappiness has been caused to families by these connections; the Irish are a very vindictive people, sir; if they thought, as they might think, some years hence, that we should have discovered our blunder before — In short, sir, I will not turn special pleader to show what I wish and I insist on."

"Do you think if I were to remain here to-morrow, Sir Gervais would be able to see me?"

"It is most improbable; I am certain the doctors would not consent to it."

"Nor even the next day, perhaps?"

"Just as unlikely; everything like business is strictly forbidden to him."

"Then I do not see why I should not start at once, — now!"

"If I am to accept this as zeal to serve me," said she, in a very sweet accent, "I thank you sincerely."

"Ah, Miss Courtenay, could you only guess with what ardor I would apply myself to win your favor! If you had known how the very faintest promise of that favor —"

"Mr. M'Kinlay," said she, stopping him, and bestowing a very captivating smile on him, — "Mr. M'Kinlay belongs to a profession that never stipulates for its reward!"

"Enough, my dear Miss Courtenay," said he; and in his enthusiasm he actually seized her hand and kissed it.

"Good-bye," said she, with a sort of maidenly impatience; "let me hear from you soon." And she left him.

That same night saw Mr. M'Kinlay wearily rumbling along the same way he had lately travelled, very tired and very road-sick; but still there burned in his heart a small flame of hope, a tiny light, indeed, not unlike one of the little lamps which from time to time he saw on the wayside, throwing their sickly glare over some humble shrine.

Ah, M'Kinlay! if you could but have seen the hurried impatience with which a cambric handkerchief was employed to efface, as it were, all trace of that rapturous embrace, it might have rescued you from some vain fancies, even though it made the road all the wearier and drearier.

A very few words more will complete our account of a retrospect that has already grown longer than we wished. Mr. M'Kinlay's first care on reaching town was to address a very carefully worded and respectful letter to Sir Within Wardle, stating that as the Vyner family had not fully approved of what he, M'K., had done with regard to the arrangements for Miss O'Hara, he hoped Sir Within would graciously name an early day to receive him, and explain what were the plans which they had fixed on for this young person, and by what means they purposed to relieve him from a charge which could not be other than embarrassing.

The following was the reply he received by return of post: —

"DEAR SIR, — Sir Within Wardle has handed me your note, and directed me to answer it. Perhaps this fact alone, and of itself, will be a sufficient reply. It will at least serve to show that, while I am honored by his entire confidence, I am not the cause of any such embarrassment as you feelingly deplore.

"Sir Within sees nothing in his present arrangements which calls for the advice you are so kind as to offer, nor does he feel warranted in giving you the inconvenience of a journey whose results would be unprofitable. Apart from this discussion, a visit from you would be always acceptable.

"Believe me, dear sir, with every sense of esteem and respect, yours,

"KATE O'HARA."

This short epistle, written in a bold but well-formed handwriting, and sealed with the initials of the writer, M'Kinlay forwarded by the night-mail to Miss Courtenay, and in due course received the following three lines: —

"DEAR SIR, — It will not be necessary in future to impose any further trouble on you in this matter. Sir Within Wardle, the young lady, and yourself are all admirable representatives of the orders you severally pertain to.

"And I am, your faithful servant,

"GEORGINA COURTENAY."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SIR WITHIN AND HIS WARD.

How time has slipped over since we were last here, in the midst of the Welsh mountains! It is more than a year, but still wonderfully little has gone on in that interval. The larch-trees at Dalradern have added some palms to their stature, but the venerable oaks and elms disdain to show by change the influence of so brief a period, and, in the same way, it is in Kate alone — that plant of rapid growth — that we have much alteration to mark.

What a change has been wrought in her! It is not merely that she has grown into a tall and graceful girl, but that one by one the little traits of her peasant origin have faded away, and she looks, and seems, and carries herself with all the air of a high-born beauty. In her lofty brow, her calm features, her manner, in which a quiet dignity blends with a girlish grace, and, above all, in her voice, singularly sweet-toned as it was, might be read every sign of that station men distinctively call the "best."

Masters and professors of every kind had surrounded her; but she had a sort of indolent activity in her disposition, which tended little to the work of learning, while her quickness enabled her to pick up smatterings of many things. But, as she said herself, Sir Within was her best teacher. The old minister's tact, his social readiness, his instinctive seizure of the nice points of every situation, — these were the gifts that had a special attraction for her; and while she was envying him the charm of a manner that could captivate all, from the highest to the humblest, she had actually acquired the gift and made it her own,

To recognize in her the traits on which he most prided himself, to see in that lovely girl his pupil in the arts of

society, to mark in her a copyist of himself in the little tricks of manner and effect, was the greatest of all flatteries; aud he never wearied of watching her repeating himself before him in a form so captivating and so graceful.

Although he had lost — and it was a loss he deplored — the friendly intercourse of the Vyners, and although the neighborhood more strictly than ever quarantined him now, no representations nor remonstrances could prevail upon him to send Kate to a school, or to place her under other protection than his own. Innumerable were the governesses who had come down to take charge of her; none, however, remained long. Some alleged it was the solitude that oppressed them; others averred that their pupil would submit to no discipline but such as she liked, and that not alone the studies she would pursue, but even the hours she would devote to them, should be at her own choosing.

And one or two took higher ground, and declared that the establishment which contained an old bachelor and a very beautiful ward was not in a position to confront the criticisms of the world.

To such as have not known or met with the class Sir Within pertained to, it will perhaps seem incredible that the old rake actually felt flattered by this attack on his reputation. All that he had ever known of life was passed amongst people of admirable manners and very lax morals. They were the best bred, the best informed, the best dressed, and the pleasantest in the universe. Nowhere was life so easy and agreeable as in their company; every one was kind, considerate, and obliging; not a hard word was ever dropped. Who could be uncharitable where all was tolerated? Who could be severe where everything was pardoned?

It was by a very easy induction that he was led to believe that a certain laxity on the score of morals was an essential element of good breeding, and that nothing was so low in tone as that "eternal scrutiny," as he called it, into one's neighbors' habits, which would make of a gentleman very little other than a detective.

When he heard, therefore, that a certain Mademoiselle La Grange had taken her departure on these exceptional grounds, he actually chuckled with delighted vanity.

"So, *ma mie*," — this was his pet name for Kate, — "they tell me that mademoiselle has gone off this morning," said he, "no longer able to tolerate a house where there is no mistress."

"The note she left behind her went fully into the matter," said Kate. "It was not alone that you were unmarried, but that you were a very well-known monster of vice."

"Vrai! vrai!" cried he, with ecstasy; "monstre épouvantable!"

"And, to confirm it, she added that no one came here; that the neighbors avoided the house, as the abode of a plague; and even sight-seers would not gratify the craving of their curiosity at the cost of their propriety."

"Did she say all that?"

"Yes; she said it very neatly too, — as prettily and as tersely as such impertinence can be put in nice French."

"And this is the ninth departure, is it not, *ma mie*, on these high grounds of morality?"

"No, sir; only the fifth. Two alleged loneliness, one accused the damp, and one protested against *my* temper!"

"What had you done, then?"

"Everything that was cross and ill-natured. It was the unlucky week that Cid Hamet staked himself."

"I remember; there were two days you would not come down to dinner on pretence of headache, and you told me, afterwards, it was all ill-humor."

"Because I always tell you everything," said she, with a smile so captivatingly beautiful that it lit up her face as the sun lights up a landscape.

"I am sorry, too," said he, after a short silence, "that mademoiselle should have gone away at this moment, for I am expecting visitors."

"Visitors, sir?"

"Yes, child; two distant, very distant relatives of mine are coming to-day, — less, indeed, to see me, than the place I live in. They are my heirs, *ma mie;* and the world says, no sort of people are less palatable to the man in possession, and, I take it, the world is right in the matter. When one thinks how he dislikes the man who keeps the newspaper too long at the club, it may be imagined how he is hated who

keeps another out of an estate; and the sense of being so hated engenders something that is not friendship!"

"I think I can understand that feeling!" said she, thoughtfully.

"Every one knows," continued he, "that when he is gone, the objects which he has loved and cherished — I mean the material objects, for I am talking as an old bachelor — will survive to give pleasure to others; but somehow he fancies — at least, *I* fancy — that the new incumbent will not know the full luxury of the shade under that sycamore where we sat yesterday to watch the fish in the pond; that he 'll never appreciate that Claude as I do, when I let a fresh blaze of sunlight on the opposite wall, and see it in a soft reflected light; and as to the delight of riding through these old wooded alleys as I feel it, he 'll not have *you* for a companion, — eh, *ma belle et bonne?*"

She turned away her head. Was it shame or sorrow, or both? Who knows? "What are your friends like?" asked she, suddenly.

"They are very like each other, and not like anything or any one else I ever met. They are, first of all, descendants of an old Huguenot family of excellent blood. Their ancestors settled here, and, like most others, they prospered. One became a peer, but died without an heir, and the title became extinct. The present head of the house is this person I expect here to-day, with his son. He is a banker, as his son is. They are very rich, and very eager to be richer. Report says that they are not very generous or free-handed. My own experience can neither refute nor confirm the rumor. Their London house was very handsome when I saw it, and when I dined there everything bespoke the habits of wealth; but they had a sort of air of business in their reception, a look of doing something that was to redound to the bank, that I did n't like. The company, too, was of that mixed character that showed they were less familiars than clients."

"How intensely acute to detect all this at once!"

"I am nothing, *ma mie*, positively nothing, if I am not *fin*. It is the spirit of my old calling that survives in me. Nay, I even thought, in the distributions of the host's attentions to his friends, I could name the men who stood with a

goodly balance to their account, and point out those who were being what is called accommodated."

"Oh, this is too much!" said she, laughing; but there was nothing in her tone or look that implied a shade of incredulity.

"Well, you are to see them both to-day; they will be here to dinner." He said this with a half-suppressed sigh, for the visit promised him very little that was agreeable.

He was, essentially, a man of conventionalities, and there were some difficulties in the present case that embarrassed him. First, he should be unable to have any dinner company to meet his visitors. He had long ceased to have intercourse with his country neighbors, and, of course,

none would think of "calling" on his friends. This was provoking enough, but a greater trouble remained behind it. Kate's presence! How was he to account for that? Who was she? Why was she there? Who and what and where were her friends? Would not the Ladarelles at once connect the estrangement in which he lived from all society with the fact of this girl being beneath his roof? Would they not at once jump to the conclusion, It is this scandal has deterred all from visiting him? Now, it is just possible that something in this allegation against his morality might have tickled the morbid vanity of the old rake, who loved to think that youth and vice were convertible terms, and he even smirked as he imagined himself called on for his defence. Still, in his element of gentleman, there survived the shame of the part that would be assigned to Kate by such an imputation, and it is but justice to him to say that he felt this acutely. Had there been time for such an arrangement, he would have procured a governess, and sent her away to some seaside spot. As it was, he thought of taking the Vyners' cottage, and placing her there under the charge of Mrs. Simcox. This would have been easy, as the cottage had been advertised to let for some time back; but, as ill luck would have it, some one had just arrived there, whether as friend or tenant none knew.

It was true, he might keep her unseen for the few days the visit would last. The Castle was ample enough to secure a retreat which should be inviolable; but there were difficulties, too, about this, not easily to be met.

He could not implicitly rely on the discretion of servants, especially of servants who found themselves in the presence of the coming heir, of him who should be "king hereafter;" and again, he was not quite sure how she herself would meet a proposition that assigned her to so equivocal a position. She was very proud, and on one or two occasions he had seen her display a spirit that no old gentleman of his stamp would possibly expose himself to from a young girl, if he could help it. There was, then, nothing left but to present her as his ward, a word so wide in acceptance that he trusted it might defy scrutiny; and with this resolve, though not without misgivings, he went about giving his orders and directing the arrangements to receive his guests.

Even this office had its shade of sadness. Pleasant as it is at ordinary times to prepare for those who come to enliven solitude or break a monotony which even of itself savors of gloom, the task is not so agreeable if undertaken for those who come to inspect what will be their own hereafter; what, even as they survey, they seem half inclined to grasp; what, while they look at, they speculate on the changes they will effect in, thinking of that day when he who now does the honors shall have left the stage, and they themselves become the actors.

Kate, however, accompanied him everywhere, aiding by her counsels, and assisting by her suggestions, and serving in this way to dispel much of that depression which the task imposed. It was as they both were returning from one of the gardens, that a keeper came forward with a dead pheasant in his hand.

"A hen! Michael, a hen!" cried Sir Within, with displeasure.

"Yes, sir, and a very fine one. It was the gentleman who has just come to Dinasllyn shot her this morning. I met him coming up here to excuse himself to you, and say how sorry he was. He gave me this card and hoped you'd not be displeased at it."

"What's the name? I've not got my glass, Kate."

"Mr. George Grenfell, sir, Dover Street."

"Grenfell, Grenfell, — never heard of any Grenfells but Cox and Grenfell, the Piccadilly people, eh?"

Kate gave no answer, but still held the card, with her eyes fixed upon it.

"Sad thing to shoot a hen, — very sad thing, — and a remarkably fine bird; quite young, quite young," muttered Sir Within to himself. "Could hardly be the game sauce Grenfell, I think, eh, Kate? This apology smacks of the gentleman. What was he like, Michael?"

"A fine-looking man, sir, standing as tall as me; and about thirty-six or thirty-eight, perhaps. He had a nice spaniel with him, sir, one of the Woburn breed; I know 'em well."

"I'm sorry he shot that hen. Ain't you, Kate?"

But Kate was deep in thought, and did not hear him.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SIR WITHIN'S GUESTS.

A SHORT, somewhat plump, dark-eyed young man, with a low but wide forehead, and a well-formed but rather thick-lipped mouth, lay in his dressing-gown on the sofa, smoking, and at intervals conversing with a smart-looking valet. These were Mr. Adolphus Ladarelle, and his man Fisk. The time, a little past midnight; the place, a bedroom in Dalradern Castle.

"The governor gone to bed yet, Fisk?"

"No, sir; he 's still talking with the old gent. They seemed to have had high words of it awhile ago, but they 've got quiet again."

"The governor came down expressly for that! He likes a bit of a breeze, too, and I believe it does him good."

"Well, indeed, I think you 're right, sir; I never seed him in such health as after that trial where Mr. Hythe, the cashier, was sentenced to fourteen years. It was just like putting so much to the master's own life."

Whether the prospect of such longevity was so agreeable to the young gentleman I cannot say, but he winced a little under the remark, and said, half moodily: "This old cove here ought to be thinking of that same journey. It 's slow work waiting for the death of a man after he passes seventy-four or five. The assurance offices know that much."

"It 's to be all yours, Master Dolly, ain't it?" asked the man, in a coaxing sort of tone.

"Every stone of it, and every stick that the old boy does n't manage to cut down in the meanwhile."

"You 'll never live here, Master Dolly? You 'd not stand this lonesome place a week!"

"I don't think I should, Tom. I might come down for the shooting, and bring some fellows with me, or I might run down for a few weeks 'on the sly.' By the way, have you found out who she is?"

"No, sir; they're as close as wax. Mrs. Simcox, I see, knows all about it, but she won't say a word beyond the 'young lady as is my master's ward.'"

"Is she French or English?"

"Can't say, sir; but I suspect she's French."

"Is she his daughter?"

"At times I do think she is; but she ain't like him, sir, not a bit!"

"But why can't you find out where she came from when she came here, who and what her friends, if she has any?"

"It's clear impossible, sir. They has all got orders to know nothing, and it's nothing they know."

"Did you try them with a 'tip,' Tom?"

"No use, sir. In a town house you can always do that; but these savages — they are just savages — in the country think they are bound to their masters, body and soul."

"What a mistake, Tom!" said the other, with a twinkle of the eye.

"Well, sir, it's a mistake when a man does not love his master;" and Mr. Fisk turned away, and drew his hand across his eyes.

The grin upon young Mr. Ladarelle's face was not a very flattering commentary on this show of feeling, but he did not speak for some minutes. At last he said, "He presented her to my governor as Mademoiselle O'Hara, saying, 'My ward;' and she received us as calmly as if she owned the place. That's what puzzles me, Tom, — her cool self-possession."

"It ain't nat'ral, sir; it ain't, indeed!"

"It's the sort of manner a man's wife might have, and not even that if she were very young. It was as good as a play to see how she treated the governor, as if he had never been here before, and that everything was new to him!"

Mr. Fisk rubbed his hands and laughed heartily at this joke.

"And as for myself, she scarcely condescended to acknowledge me."

"Warn't that too imperent, sir?"

"It was not gracious, at all events, but we 'll know more of each other before the week is over. You 'll see."

"That 's pretty sartin, sir."

"Not but I 'd rather you could have found out something like a clew to her, first of all."

"Well, indeed, sir, there was n't no way of doin' it. I even went down to the stable-yard, and saw her own boxes. She has two as neat nags as ever you 'd see in the Park, and I tried it on with her groom, — Bill Richey they call him, — and there was nothing to be done, sir. He had just one answer for everything; and when I said, 'Can she ride?' 'Ride! why would n't she?' 'Has she these two for her own use?' says I. 'Why would n't she?' says the fellow again. 'So I suppose,' says I, 'she 's got lots of tin?' 'Why would n't she have lots of it?' said he, in the same voice. I don't know whether he was more rogue or fool, sir, but it was no good saying any more to him."

Young Ladarelle arose, and with his hands thrust low in his pockets, and his head slightly bent forward, walked the room in deep thought. "Cool as he is, he 'd scarcely have presented her to the governor if there was a screw loose," muttered he; "he 's too much a man of the world for that. And yet, what can it be?"

"There must be something in it, that 's certain, sir; for none of the neighbors visit here, and Sir Within don't go out anywhere."

"How did you learn that?"

"From the gardener, sir. He was saying what a cruel shame it was to see the fruit rotting under the trees; and that last September he gave a basketful of pine-apples to the pigs, for that none of the people round would take presents when Sir Within sent them. 'That 's all on account of her,' says I, with a wink, for I thought I had him landed. 'I don't well know,' says he, 'what it 's on account of, but here 's the master comin' up, and maybe he 'll tell you!' And I had just time to cut away before he seen me."

"All that we know, then, is that there 's a mystery in it. Well," muttered he, "I could n't ask a prettier skein to unravel. She is very beautiful! Are they late or early here, Tom?" asked he, after a pause.

"They be just as they please, sir. The housekeeper told me there's breakfast from ten to one every morning, and dinner is served for six people every day, though only them two selves sits down to it; but the old gent says, *per*haps some one might drop in. He says that every day of the year, sir; but they never drop in. Maybe he knows why!"

"Call me at eleven or twelve, — I don't care if it be one; for the day will be long enough here, after that."

"They tell me it's a very pretty place, sir, and plenty to see."

"I know every inch of it. I used to be here after my Rugby half, and I don't want to recall those days, I promise you."

"They've got some nice saddle-horses, too, sir."

"So they may; and they may ride them too."

"And the lake is alive with carp, I hear."

"I'll not diminish their number; I'll promise them so much. I must stay here as long as the governor does, which, fortunately for me, cannot be many days; but tobacco and patience will see me through it."

"I always said it, sir: 'When Master Dolly comes to his fortune, it's not an old jail he'll sit down to pass his life in!'"

"It's one of the finest and oldest places in the kingdom," said the young man, angrily, "though, perhaps, a London cad might prefer Charing Cross to it."

"No other orders, sir?" said Mr. Fisk, curtly.

"No; you may go. Call me at nine, — d' ye hear, — at nine; and I'll breakfast at ten." And now was Mr. Adolphus Ladarelle alone with his own thoughts.

Though he had rebuked so promptly and so sharply the flippant impertinence of his servant, the young gentleman was by no means persuaded that a sojourn at Dalradern was likely to prove lively or agreeable. He thought Sir Within a bore, and he felt — very unmistakably felt — that the old Baronet regarded himself as a snob. The very way in which the old diplomatist seasoned his talk for his guests, the mode in which he brought all things to the meridian of Piccadilly, showed clearly the estimation in which he held

them; and though the elder Ladarelle, whose head carried weightier cares, had no room for such thoughts, the young man brooded over and disliked them.

"By what reprisals should he resent this covert impertinence?" was the question that very often recurred to him. Should he affect to undervalue the place, and all the art treasures? Should he throw out dark hints of how much these tasteful toys might realize at a sale? Should he speculate vaguely on what the Castle would become, if, instead of a show-house, it were to be made what he would call habitable? Or, last of all, what tone should he assume towards mademoiselle, — should he slight her, or make love to her? In these self-discussions he fell asleep at last.

Long before any of his guests were awake the next morning, Sir Within had called for his writing-desk. It was a passion of his to ask for his writing-materials before he was up. It smacked of old times, when, remembering something that might very well have been forgotten, he would dash off a few smart lines to a minister or a secretary, "with reference to the brief conversation with which your Excellency honored me yesterday." He was an adept in little notes; he knew how to throw off those small evasive terms which pass for epigrams, and give a sort of glitter to a style that was about as real as a theatrical costume.

He had suddenly bethought him of a case for the exercise of his high gift. It was to address a few neat lines to his recently arrived neighbor at the Cottage, and ask him that day to dinner. To convert that gentleman's polite attention in sending up to the Castle the pheasant he had shot by mistake, into an excuse for the liberty of inviting him without a previous exchange of visits, constituted exactly the amount of difficulty he could surmount. It was a low wall, and he could leap it splendidly. It must be owned that he succeeded. His note was courteous without familiarity. It was a faint foreshadowing of the pleasure the writer had promised himself in the acquaintance of one so thoroughly imbued with the nicest notions of good breeding.

"I hope," he wrote in conclusion, "you will not, by refusing me this honor, rebuke the liberty by which I have presumed to aspire to it;" and with this he signed himself,

with every sense of his most distinguished consideration, "Within Wildrington Wardle."

The reply was prompt, — a most cordial acceptance. Sir Within scanned the terms of the note, the handwriting, the paper, the signature, and the seal. He was satisfied with everything. The writer was, unquestionably, a man of the world, and, in the old envoy's estimation, that meant all, or nearly all that one could desire in friend or acquaintance; one, in short, who knew how to subordinate passions, feelings, emotions, all selfishness, and all personal objects to the laws of a well-regulated conventionality; and who neither did, nor attempted to do, anything but what society had done already, and declared might be done again.

How far Mr. George Grenfell realized this high estimate it is not our purpose to inquire; we turn, rather, to what we are far more sure of, the delight with which he read Sir Within's invitation.

Grenfell was well known about town to members of two or three good clubs, where he had a certain amount of influence with very young men. He was an excellent whist-player, and very useful on a wine committee; an admirable judge of a horse, though not remarkable as a rider. He knew everybody, but, somehow, he went nowhere. There were people — very good people, too, as the world calls them — would gladly have had his society at their tables in town, or in their houses at Christmas; but Grenfell saw that, if once launched amongst these, he must abandon all ambition of everything higher; extrication would be impossible; and so, with a self-denial which only a high purpose ever inspires, he refused invitations here, and rejected advances there, waiting on for the time when the great world would awaken to the conviction of his merits, and say, This is the very man we wanted!

Now, the great world was not so prompt in making this discovery as it might have been, and Mr. Grenfell was getting on in years, and not fully as hopeful as when his hair had been thicker and his beard bushier. He had begun, not exactly to sulk, but what the French call to *bouder*, — a sort of male pouting, — and he thought of going abroad or going into Parliament, or doing something or other which

would give him a new start in life; and it was to ruminate over these plans he had written to his friend Vyner, to say, "Let me or lend me — I don't care which — your Welsh Cottage, for a month or two;" and by return of post came the answer, saying, "It is yours as long as you like it;" and thus was he there.

Sir Within's note pleased him much. The old envoy was, it is true, a bygone, and a thing of the past; still he was one of those Brahmins whose priesthood always is accredited, and Grenfell knew that to walk into the Travellers' arm in arm with him would be a great step in advance; for there was no set or knot of men so unapproachable by the outsiders as that small clique of religionists who scourge themselves with red tape, and worship the great god "F. O.!"

In asking for the Cottage, Grenfell had said, "I should like to have an introduction of some sort to your quondam neighbor, Wardle, who, though too profligate for his neighbors, will not, I apprehend, endanger my morals. Let me have, therefore, a few lines to accredit me, as one likely to suit his humor." To this Vyner replied, not very clearly: "The intimacy they had used to have with Sir Within had ceased; they held no correspondence now. It was a long story, and would not be worth the telling, nor very intelligible, perhaps, when told; but it was enough to say, that even should they meet now, personally, it was by no means sure if they would recognize or address each other. You will use this knowledge for your guidance in case you ever come to know him, and which I hope you may, for he is a very delightful acquaintance, and full of those attentions which render a neighborhood pleasant. I do not say so that you may repeat it; but simply as an admission of what is due, — that I deeply regret our estrangement, though I am not certain that it was avoidable." This, which Grenfell deemed somewhat contradictory, served, at all events, to show that he could not make Sir Within's acquaintance through this channel, and he was overjoyed when another and a more direct opening presented itself.

"The hen pheasant I thought would do it," muttered Grenfell, as he read the note. "A punster would say, I had shot up into his acquaintance."

CHAPTER XXXV.

A WALK BEFORE DINNER.

Poor Sir Within! What a change is all this for you! Instead of that pleasant little pottering about from terrace to garden, and from garden to gallery; now in ecstasy over some grand effect of light on a favorite picture, some rich promise of beauty in an opening flower, or, better than either, a chance peep at the fair "ward" as she flitted past, a vision of beauty she well knew how to exaggerate by infrequency, — for it was her especial habit to be rarely, if ever, seen of a morning — now he had to devote himself to his guest, the elder Ladarelle, and not even in the office of cicerone or guide over the grounds and the woods, but as the apologist of this, and the explainer of that. It had been settled by law that a certain sum should be expended each year on the demesne at the wise discretion of the life tenant, and now came the moment in which this same wisdom was to be arraigned, and all its tasteful exercise brought to the cold and terrible test of what is called permanency. The rock-work grottos, the temples, the rustic bridges, and cane pagodas, — all that Horace Walpoleism, in fact, by which the area of domesticity can be so enlarged as to embrace the field, the garden and the shrubbery,— all this, with its varied luxury and elegance and beauty and bad taste, was so repugnant to the mind of the old banker that he regarded the whole as a tawdry and tasteless extravagance. Structures in stone and iron he could understand. He wanted permanency; and though the old envoy, with a little faint jest, begged to insinuate that he asked more than was supposed to be accorded by the laws of nature, the stern intelligence of the other rejected the pleasantry, and vaguely hinted at a "bill in equity."

"None of these, sir, not one of them would be 'allowed,'" was the phrase he repeated again and again. "The discretionary power vested in *you* to-day, or in *me*, as it might be to-morrow — "

"I ask pardon," broke in the minister; "it is not my present intention to impose the burden upon you so soon. I hope still to live a little longer, with the kind permission of my friends and successors."

"Humph!" muttered the other and turned away his head.

"There was an arrangement, however, which I submitted to you four years ago. I am ready — not very willingly, perhaps but still ready — to return to it."

"You mean, to commute the life-interest into a sum for immediate surrender of the estate? I remember, we did discuss it formerly. Your demand was, I think, sixty thousand pounds, — equal to very close on six years' income."

"Yes; that was the sum fixed on."

"Well, suppose we were to entertain the question now. What proposal are you prepared to make, Sir Within?"

"I am ready to repeat my former offer, sir."

"Made four years and five months ago?"

"Precisely," said Sir Within, coloring deeply.

"Four years and a half, Sir Within, at your age or at mine, are a very considerable space of time."

"I do not deny it, sir; but I feel in the enjoyment of excellent health. I rise at the same hour, and eat my meals as heartily as I did then; with every regret for the inconvenience I'm occasioning, I still profess to believe that my chances of life are pretty much as they were."

"Actuaries are the only people to entertain these points. Indeed, friends should not discuss them."

"Our friendship has stood the test of very delicate details so beautifully this morning, that I see no reason why we should not take all the benefit we can get out of it."

The fine sarcasm with which he spoke was thoroughly understood, though unnoticed, by the other, who went on, —

"When I mentioned actuaries, I merely meant to say that demands of this kind are not arbitrary or capricious, — that they are based on laws established by long and abstruse calculations."

"Perhaps it is my fancy to imagine myself an exceptional case," said Sir Within, with a faint smile.

"They would take little count of this. They would say, 'Here is a man aged —'" He paused for the other to fill up the blank.

"Let us say one hundred," said Sir Within, bowing.

"Who has lived long in warm climates —"

"Participating freely in the dissipations of his class and order," said Sir Within, throwing back his head, and looking as though, with all the daring of this avowal, he defied scrutiny.

"They'd not say forty thousand. I have my doubts if they'd give you five-and-thirty," said the banker, curtly.

"And under these circumstances, I should consider it my duty to break off the negotiation, and retire from the conference."

"Let us suppose, for talk' sake, the arrangement possible. I conclude you would not insist upon that other matter, — the settlement clause, I mean. You remember that Sir Hugh Rivers decided it was not to be maintained in law?"

"The Attorney-General, with due submission, sir, never saw the original document; he saw the draft, which was subsequently cancelled, and if there be any point upon which I will waive nothing, — positively nothing, — it is this."

"When a man insists so positively on his right to make a settlement, it is no unfair presumption to infer that he means to marry."

"The supposition might certainly be entertained," said the old envoy, bowing with the courtesy he would have observed in a ministerial conference.

"For *that*," — and the banker laid a most marked and peculiar emphasis on the word, — "for that, most assuredly, I was not prepared."

"Nor can I say," continued the other, "that I deemed it any part of my duty to submit such a possibility to your consideration."

"Perhaps not, Sir Within; there was no absolute reason why you should. You are, of course, the only judge of what concerns your own interests, or — or —"

"Or happiness?"

"I did n't say happiness, simply because I thought it was the very consideration that you were about to omit."

Sir Within smiled very blandly; he arranged the frill of his shirt, — he wore a frilled shirt, — and, taking forth a splendidly jewelled box, he offered a pinch to his companion. It was the diplomatic mode of saying that a conference was closed; but Mr. Ladarelle did not understand this nicety.

"After all, Sir Within, neither you nor I are men who can affect to defy the world. What the world thinks and says of us, we cannot undervalue."

"The world, at *my* age, is the six, perhaps eight, people I could get to dine with me."

"No, no, sir, don't say that — you can't say that. The world is to you, as to all men who have taken a large part in public affairs, the wide circle of those who bring to their judgment on their fellow-men a vast acquaintance with motives and interests and reasons; and besides all these, with conventionalities and decorums. They form the jury who decide on, not alone the good morals of their contemporaries, but on their good taste."

"Perhaps it might be my fortune to offer them a most undeniable proof of mine," said the old man, intentionally mistaking what the other had said.

"Take care, Sir Within! Take care. You might be like that case at Guildford t'other day, where the judge said, 'There is nothing so serious in the indictment against you as your own defence.'"

"I believe you said you never took snuff," said the envoy, tapping the gorgeous box he still held in his fingers "That clump of oaks you see yonder," continued he, pointing with his finger, "shuts out one of the most beautiful bits of landscape I ever saw, and I have only waited for your presence here, to decide on cutting them down."

"I will not consent to fell timber, sir, for the sake of landscape. I am certain Adolphus would agree with me."

They now walked on, side by side, in silence. How beautiful that wood alley was! How calmly sweet the leafy shade, how deliciously the blackbird carolled from its depths, and how soft the smooth turf beneath their feet, and yet how little they heeded or cared for it all! The banker

spoke first: "If you had been prepared to propose terms on which it was possible to treat, Sir Within, my son, I know, — as for myself, the plan has no attractions for me, — but my son, I know, would have felt disposed to meet you; but when you start on the basis that an interval of five years, or something akin to it, makes no inroad whatever on a man's life, and then, possibly aided by that theory, hint at the likelihood of having to charge the estate with settlement —"

"My dear Mr. Ladarelle, forgive my interrupting you. All this is very painful, and what is worse, unprofitable. I remember a remark of the charming old Duke of Anhalt to his neighboring sovereign, the Prince of Hohen Alttingen: 'My dear Prince,' said he, 'whatever our ministers can and ought to discuss together, will always prove a most unseemly topic for us;' so be assured, sir, that what our lawyers can wrangle over, we will do much better if we leave to them."

"You know best, I am certain, sir. I feel it is your province to understand these cases; but I own it would never have occurred to me to take a stupid old German potentate as an authority on a matter of business. May I ask what is that edifice yonder, like a piece of confectionery?"

"It is my aviary, which I shall be proud to show you."

"Excuse me, I know nothing about birds."

"I shall not insist, for it is the season when they lose their plumage."

"By Jove! sir, if this system of expense be carried on, I suspect that some of ourselves will be just as devoid of feathers. That gimcrack cost, I should say, seven or eight hundred pounds?"

"You have guessed too low! It will, when finished — for the frescos are not completed — amount to very close on two thousand."

"For linnets and piping bullfinches!"

"Pardon me, sir; for nothing of the kind, — for the blue sparrows of Java, for the crimson owl of Ceylon, for the azure-winged mocking-bird, and the scarlet bustard."

"Let us see what the master will say to this fine catalogue, when it is presented to him as part of works of permanent

value — that's the phrase, sir, permanent and substantial improvements — which scarcely contemplated cockatoos and canaries. And what do I see yonder? Is that the Lord Mayor's state barge, that you have bought in at second hand!"

"This is a little gondola, — a caprice of my ward's, sir, and not to be questioned in any way."

It was the first time since they met that any allusion to Kate had been dropped between them, and already the old envoy's voice showed by its vibration that the theme was one not to be lightly adverted to.

"The young lady's tastes, it would seem, incline to splendor; but possibly her fortune warrants it."

"I am certain that her tastes befit her condition," said the other, with a tone of open defiance.

"I have no doubt of it, not the least doubt of it; I would only observe that a person so very attractive — "

"Well, sir, go on; finish what you were about to say."

"Certainly not, Sir Within, when the expression with which you hear me declares that I am taking too great a liberty."

"It is too late for apology, sir. You have already transgressed."

"I never intended an apology, Sir Within, for I took care not to incur what might require one. When I saw, or fancied I saw, that my remarks, well meant as they were, might not be as acceptable as I desired, I forbore from completing them; that is all."

"And you did well, sir!" said the other haughtily, while, with a proud wave of his hand, he seemed to say the subject must be dropped.

"I mean to return to town to-morrow," said Mr. Ladarelle, after a pause; "but my son, with your kind permission, will be a burden on your hospitality for a few days longer."

"I am proud to have his company," said the old minister, with a courteous bow; but the other, not noticing it, went on: "He wants to see that mill. Hoare says, that without some arrangement about the supply of water, he must insist upon an abatement; that your Neptunes and Dryads and

river-gods consume far more than goes over his wheel; and though, perhaps, it 's a little premature on our part to enter upon this matter, yet, as the man has a lease renewable at his pleasure — "

" With your gracious leave, it is on a question of wine, and not of water, I will ask your opinion. I have got some very old Steinberger, which I propose to have your judgment on; and as I hear the first bell ringing, probably we have not much time to lose. This is the shortest way back to the house."

The banker made no reply; he plodded on moodily towards the Castle, and mounted the stairs to his dressing-room, neither pleased with his host nor himself, nor, indeed, with the rest of the world.

It is very probable that Sir Within retired to dress for dinner far more deeply wounded and far more irritated by this interview than his guest. With persons as plain spoken as Mr. Ladarelle, Sir Within had held very little intercourse in life. He had always played the game with those of the most refined and the most susceptible politeness, — men who would no more have committed a rudeness than a murder; and it was no mean trial of his nerves to be told, not merely that he was old, but that he was of that age in which life was something more than precarious. The ex-envoy felt, in fact, as he might have felt had some one ordered his carriage before the time he himself had told his coachman to come; thus intimating, it is possible, from reasons not entered upon or discussed, that he might think proper to leave earlier than he had contemplated. He changed color so often that he had to supply a little extra rouge to his cheek; and his nerves were so shaken that he could not descend to the drawing-room without a little dram of Maraschino and ether.

He found Kate alone in the drawing-room as he entered. She was most becomingly dressed, and wore a sprig of lily-of-the-valley in her hair, which became her vastly.

" How well you look, *ma mie*," said he, as he surveyed her through his glass; " and how glad I should be if our guests were more deserving of us both. *You*, however, cannot help being beautiful."

"And you *will* be witty, whether you like it or not, my dear guardian," said she, with a bewitching smile.

"C'est plus fort que moi! Kate. The old Duc de Nevers said to me, when I was a very young man, '*Mon cher* Wardle, always talk your very best, no matter what the theme or with whom. Never give yourself the indolent habit of careless expression. There is no such thing in conversation as *dishabille*.'"

"Indeed, sir!"

"Yes, *ma chère;* to be epigrammatic, your faculties must be always in exercise. To let off those brilliant fireworks which astonish the world as wit, the match must be kept ever alight, the hand ready."

"Mr. George Grenfell!" said the servant, throwing wide the door; and after about two seconds' interval that former acquaintance of our reader entered the room, and was met by Sir Within with a blended polish and cordiality.

"This is a kindness, Mr. Grenfell, that promises well for our future neighborhood. I am most grateful to you for accepting my short-time invitation. My ward, Mademoiselle O'Hara."

He introduced her as he had done to the Ladarelles the day before, as mademoiselle; why, it would not have been so easy to say, — perhaps to mystify, perhaps to avoid a difficulty, perhaps to create one; for Sir Within was a diplomatist, and one of these reasons to such a man is own brother of the other.

Grenfell was evidently struck by her beauty; but there was something besides admiration in his gaze: he was surprised and more than surprised; the traits were not altogether new to him, though the expression — lofty, haughty even — unquestionably was. As for Kate, she had seen too few faces in life to have forgotten any one of them. They were like the books she had read, too remarkable not to be remembered. She knew him, and knew well the very hour and the very spot in which first she saw him.

Either Grenfell had not heard the name O'Hara well, or had not connected it with the past; very possible he had not heard it ever before, for it suggested nothing to him; still her features continued to puzzle him. Through all, how-

ever, was he enough man of the world to conceal any show of this; and as he sat down beside the sofa where she sat, opened the usual commonplaces of first acquaintance. He spoke of the country and its charming scenery, especially around Dalradern, which was all new to him; "for I am ashamed," added he, "to own I know more of Switzerland than I do of Wales. Perhaps in this mademoiselle is a defaulter like myself?"

Here was a question adroitly insinuated, to induce what might lead to some disclosure as to whence she came or where she had been.

"I am very fond of mountains," said she, as if mistaking his question.

"Ladies are the less selfish in their love of scenery," resumed he, with a little smile, "that they do not connect mountains with grouse-shooting. Now, I'm afraid a man, in his admiration for the hillside and the heather, has some lurking dreams about deer-stalking, and in the highland 'tarn' his thoughts invariably run on ten-pound trout."

"That is the practical side by which men assert their superiority, I believe; but perhaps they mistake, occasionally: I suspect they do, at least."

"You mean that women have the quality also?"

"I fancy that women are not so prone to parade this egotism," said she, with a slight flashing of the eye.

"That may mean something very severe," said he, laughing.

"In which case I could not have said what I intended."

Though this was said apologetically, there was a saucy defiance in her look that declared anything rather than apology.

"Your remark," said he, "reminds me of an Irish squire I heard of, who, wanting to get rid of the charge in his pistol, fired it out of the window into a crowd, saying, 'I hope it won't hurt any of you!' Have you been in Ireland, mademoiselle?"

"I have seen next to nothing of Ireland; far too little to have caught up, as you infer, any traits of her nationality."

There was not the slightest tremor in her voice, nor

change in her color as she spoke, though Grenfell watched her with more — far more — intentness than he was aware of, or would have permitted himself to bestow if he had known it.

"I know very little of the green island myself," said he. "I once made a yachting excursion with a friend to the West, — the same friend to whom I am now indebted for the honor of knowing you."

Kate's cheek grew crimson; she had mistaken the meaning of his words, and fancied that they referred to his meeting her first in Vyner's company, and not to his possession of Vyner's Cottage.

"Will you let me present my friends, — Mr. Ladarelle, Mr. Adolphus Ladarelle, Mr. Grenfell?" said Sir Within, at this critical moment, "and then, if you will give mademoiselle your arm, we will go to dinner."

It required all the practised tact and consummate skill in such matters of Sir Within's to carry through that day's dinner.

Kate scarcely spoke at all, the elder Ladarelle very little; the younger was, evidently, bent on finding out who Grenfell was, what were his clubs, his houses, and his associates; and Grenfell, not at all unused to such assaults of curiosity, repelled them by a cold and distant politeness, which gave little aid to table-talk. So that on the old envoy was thrown all the burden of the entertainment.

Where men imagine that in supplying the material wants of humanity they have amply fulfilled the part between host and guest, and that when the viands are good, and the wine exquisite, the whole responsibility is satisfied, it will seem that Sir Within's fears and anxieties were not all reasonable; but this was not his theory. At a grand dinner, a state occasion, a certain dulness was a part of the solemnity, and full-dress liveries and gold dishes were the natural accompaniments of dreariness and display; but a little dinner meant a choice party, a selected few, bound to bring with them their faculties at the brightest; not sharpening their wits at the moment of exercise, like an unruly orchestra tuning their instruments when they should be playing, but ready to start off at score. What a blank disappointment

was here! The few sallies that relieved the dulness came from the younger Ladarelle, and were neither attic in themselves, or quite unquestionable in point of taste; and when they arose to take their coffee, the feeling was rather gratification that so much of weariness had been got over, and a hope that there was not much more to come.

"I shall want you to sing, *ma mie;* I see you won't talk," whispered Sir Within to Kate, as he drew near her.

"No, sir, I have a headache. I shall go and lie down."

"That is about as much of her company as she has vouchsafed us since we have been here," said Ladarelle the younger to Grenfell, as they stood together in a window.

"Is she haughty?"

"I don't know."

"Vain I should take her to be, eh?"

"I don't know."

"Who is she?" whispered Grenfell, in the confidential tone he knew how to assume with younger men.

"I don't know that, either," said Ladarelle. "The old fellow says his ward; but I 'd not be surprised if one of these days he should say his wife."

"Why, he 's seventy."

"Seventy-six, — seventy-six! but he 'd like to fancy he was eight-and-thirty."

"A natural sort of self-delusion in its way," said Grenfell, carelessly. "He 'd be wrong to marry, though."

"I believe you; and very hard on me, too."

"How do you mean on you!"

"Because the estate comes to me; but he can charge it with a settlement if he marries; that 's what I call hard. Don't you?"

Grenfell had no time to resolve the question, for Sir Within had already come over to propose a rubber at whist, a party to which, as an old member of Graham's, his appetite was not whetted as young Ladarelle whispered, "I wish you joy of your whist; old Wardle revokes, and my father never pays if he loses!"

"Come over and dine with me to-morrow," said Grenfell; "it will not be more dreary than this."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A NEW FRIENDSHIP.

"What a snug place you have here; it's as pretty as paint, too," said Mr. Adolphus Ladarelle, as he lounged into the Cottage, a few minutes after the time named for dinner.

"It is not mine; I am only here on sufferance. It belongs to Sir Gervais Vyner," said Grenfell.

"Not the Vyner who sat for Holstead?"

"The same."

"And the man who bought Cloudsley's yacht 'Carinthia,' and then exchanged her for the 'Meteor,' that won the Cowes cup two years ago," continued Grenfell, who was watching the altered expression of the other's face, as he learned that he was the guest of one so closely allied in intimacy with one of the leaders of fashion; for though the Ladarelles were rich people and well placed in society, Vyner moved in a set, and associated with a class, quite apart from and above them.

"I never met Vyner," said Ladarelle, carelessly.

"He is the man I am most intimate with in the world. We chummed together at Cambridge, travelled together, and would have stood side by side in public life together, if I had not been too indolent to fag at official drudgery. But here comes dinner;" and taking his guest's arm, he led him away literally captive, so completely was he overcome by the news that he was dining with the great Sir Gervais Vyner's dearest friend and oldest companion.

Now, though the Ladarelles were not in that class to which Grenfell aspired, and with whom he hoped one day to see himself, they were on the direct road to it. They occupied what represented an intermediate territory, through which

he must pass; and he set himself patiently to cultivate their good opinion, secretly cherishing the hope that a time would come when he could afford to be indifferent to it.

The dinner was exquisite; and young Ladarelle enjoyed, not alone the good cheer, but the freedom of being alone with one to whom he could talk without any reserve.

"You don't half know what a charity you've done," said he, "in asking me here to-day. That dreary old place was killing me. My governor is not what people call jolly. Old Sir Within is about the greatest prig I ever met; and as for the ward, she is either insufferably impertinent or downright underbred."

"She is exceedingly beautiful, however," said Grenfell, smiling.

"At times, — yes; I'll not dispute that. But she has a something half supercilious, half silly, occasionally, that I don't like. Do you think her clever?"

"I have no means of knowing. I never met her till yesterday. Old Wardle declares that there never was her equal, — that she learns whatever she likes, without any labor; but it's easy enough to understand infatuation at his age, and he *does* seem to admire her vastly," said Grenfell, slowly.

"I'd say the old fellow was madly in love with her, if the idea was not too absurd; not that it would be a laughing matter for me, though, — very far from it."

"How do you mean?"

"I told you last night, that if he were to marry he can charge the estate with a settlement. But that's not the whole of it. Sir Hugh Rivers says that if he should have a direct heir — Oh, yes, — it's all very fine laughing; but the world has seen some such cases."

"Very true," said Grenfell; "and we all know what Lord Stowell said of them."

"I know nothing about Lord Stowell; but I know this, that it's no pleasant thing to think there's a flaw in what one was once sure of. I used to fancy myself as much the owner of Dalradern as though Sir Within Wardle was only a tenant."

"I scarcely think, if I was in your place, I'd fret myself about the contingency you speak of," said Grenfell.

"I'll not go so far as to say I fret about it. I don't exactly do that; but it worries me in certain ways."

"I understand," said Grenfell; "it makes the Jews more difficult to deal with, — more captious about post obits."

"You have it, exactly. That fellow Joel — I can't imagine how he came at it — said to me t' other day, 'I don't like my security, Mr. Dolly; it ain't what I used to think it was.' And what do you think I am paying him all the time?"

"Ten — perhaps fifteen — per cent."

"Guess again."

"Twenty? — surely not more than twenty-five?"

"Forty, — ay, forty per cent! And when I was let in so heavily last May on Grampus, I stood for the whole of Cloudsley's lot, old Joel refused to renew under sixty per cent! He even threatened he'd go up to Leadenhall Street and have a talk with my governor."

"Which might not have been pleasant."

"I believe you. The governor has only to know that I've been betting in the ring to scratch my name out of the bank to-morrow, and cut me off root and branch. You have n't an idea what these old 'dons' in the banking world think of what they call 'the house.' When my father speaks of 'the house,' he means something that represents the honor of all the Ladarelles, — not alone since Adam, but the unborn partners that are to discount and keep deposits for centuries to come. Maybe you have not mixed with these sort of people?"

"Very little; but I have heard tell of their prejudices," said Grenfell, with the very faintest tinge of color in his cheek as he spoke.

"That's just what my governor is. After the bank comes the monarchy with him; so that you see I must be cautious."

"I know something of Master Joel. It is rather his interest to stand well with me; and, if you like, I will just give him a gentle hint to keep quiet, and not create any disturbance."

"Oh, would you? By Jove! I'll take it as a great service to me. The fact is, I've beeu going it rather fast.

Hawkshaw 'let me in' pretty heavily on 'Caithness,' and then Blunden, as you know, levanted; so that our last settling day was rather a dark morning to me."

"Have you any other creditors than Joel?"

"Nothing very heavy. I owe Davis — "

"Grog?"

"Yes, — Grog Davis. I owe him about two thousand; but he never presses. Grog 's a gentleman in that respect. It 's only when a fellow 'hums' and 'hahs' about whether the thing was all square or not; that 's what Grog won't stand a moment. He 'll insist on his money then; and, what 's more, he 'll have a shot at you, too, if he can get it."

"Yes, but he 'll have his money first. I never heard of Grog Davis shooting at a solvent debtor yet."

"You know him, that 's plain enough," said Dolly, laughing.

"Who could have been about town the last ten or fifteen years and not known him? I rather like him too."

"So do I," cried Ladarelle, eagerly, and as though it relieved his heart of a weight to make the confession. "Say what they will of Grog Davis, he 's a fellow to do a right good-natured thing; and as for advice, there 's not a man in the clubs I'd as soon go to as to him."

"He has a deal of worldly wit, that 's certain."

"Ay, and he has more. He knows the exact way to treat every one. I 've seen him go up and take the Duke of Dullworth by the arm just as familiarly as you 'd take me."

"Yes, when the Duke wanted him; he might do that."

Dolly paused for some minutes, and seemed to reflect. He was, indeed, reflecting and considering with himself whether he would make a clean breast of it, and tell Grenfell all, — everything that he had on his mind, and everything that he had done in consequence. At length he appeared to have formed his decision; and, pushing his glass from before him, he leaned his arm on the table, and addressed Grenfell in a voice of most confidential meaning.

"I wrote to Grog since I came here," said he, significantly. "I told him all about old Wardle, and as much as I could make out about his ward. It was n't much; but I added

whatever I suspected, and I asked what he thought of it. He answered me by the same post."

"And what did he say?" asked Grenfell, for the other had come to a dead stop.

"I only got the letter as I stepped into the carriage, and glanced my eye over it. Shall I read it for you? It 's very short."

"Read it then, by all means."

"Here it is," said he, producing a very square-shaped sheet of paper, with a large seal of coarse wax attached, — evidence that it had not been encased in an envelope.

"'DEAR DOL!' — That 's his way; he 'd be intimate with his Royal Highness. — 'Dear Dol, your note was writ like one of the queries to "Bell's Life," and in the same spirit I answer it. The old cove means to marry her —' Eh, what?"

"I did not speak; go on."

"'The old cove means to marry her, and cut you out of the estate, just as Tom Barkely was done by Rixley Drummond; only that Tom was offered the girl first, and would n't have her.'"

"He 's all right there. Tom Barkely's obstinacy cost him about sixteen thousand a year, and sent him out to India as a major in a marching regiment," said Grenfell. "Go on."

"'This is my opinion,' he puts two *n*'s to 'opinion,' and it makes it read all the more stubborn; 'and as for the remedy, Master Dolly, all I can say is, there ain't two ways about it, — there ain't two ways about it,'" repeated Ladarelle, slowly, and as though weighing each word as he uttered it. "Now, will you tell me, what does he mean by that?"

"Read it over again."

"'This is my opinion; and as for the remedy, Master Dolly, there ain't two ways about it. — Yours, C. D.'"

Grenfell took the letter from the other's hand, and pored over it in silence for several minutes; then, leisurely folding it, he laid it down on the table.

"How do you understand him?" asked Ladarelle again.

"It 's not very easy to understand what he says here; though, if the words had been spoken instead of written, I suspect I could have come at the meaning."

"'There ain't two ways about it,'" repeated Dolly, moodily, "and why not say which is the one way? That would be more to the purpose."

"It's one of two things, evidently,—either you are to get rid of Sir Within, or his ward. Grog is not a very scrupulous fellow; but though he would poison a horse he had laid heavily against for the Derby, I don't think he'd go so far in the case of an old diplomatist. It remains, then, to be seen what is to be done with the ward; he probably means you should carry her off yourself."

"Perhaps she would n't come; if she has designs on Sir Within, it's almost certain she would not."

Grenfell made no answer, but sat lost in thought for some minutes, when he said: "Yes; that's what Grog advises; his calculation is that this old man's infatuation, which, uninterfered with, would have led him into a foolish marriage, will, if it be crossed and thwarted, as certainly break him down and kill him."

"Men don't die of these things!"

"Not men like you and me, certainly; but there is a time of life when existence is held on a very frail tenure; and at that time a mere hope extinguished serves to crush a vitality."

"And do you really think he'd take it so much to heart?"

"I know too little of him to give an opinion. When I have seen him some half-dozen times more, and seen, besides, something of his manner towards her, I might risk a guess, perhaps."

"If I was quite sure that I 'stood in' for the double event,—that is, to stop her marriage and succeed to the estate at once,—I almost think I'd do it."

"Yes," said Grenfell, after another pause, "this must be what Grog alludes to, as the one way of dealing with the matter."

"She'd insist on marriage, I suppose?" said Dolly, in a sulky tone.

"Of course she would."

"That's a bit of a bore. I had not calculated on such a step for these six or eight years yet. Then there's another thing to be thought of: my governor, who naturally will not

see the necessity of the step, is sure to be outrageous at it. All that he will recognize will be the very thing he most despises in the world, — a love match."

"Could he not be brought to see a much more valid reason for this match? Don't you think the matter could be placed before him in such a light that he must accept that view?"

"No. I know him better. I could tell you at once what he'd say."

"And what would it be?"

"He'd say: 'If she must be got out of the way and married off, get some hard-up sub who can't pay his mess debts, or wants to lodge a few hundreds for the next vacancy; or find some Irish squire.' My governor always thinks an Irishman is ready for anything but paying his debts. 'He'd marry her for a couple of thousand down.' That's what my governor would hit on, without taking five minutes to think of it."

"What if *she* would not consent to such an arrangement?"

"That's as it might be. You'll not find my governor giving any one credit for a strong will but himself. He reasons out every question his own way, and never suspects the mere possibility of opposition."

"That may do in the bank, perhaps, where none can gainsay him."

"He'll tell you it does just as well in the world at large; and he'll point to himself as the best proof of the system."

"I should like to hear your father discuss the question with the young lady herself; she, I take it, has a will of her own, also; and the matter would probably be well debated."

"She'd have no chance with my governor."

"I'm not so sure of that. I have a suspicion that she could hold her own in an argument that touched her interest."

"You know more of her than I do. She spoke to *you*, to *me* she barely condescended a few words. No more wine, thanks. I must be thinking of the road. I have got old Sir Within's horses, and the coachman tells me they have never been out after sunset for the last four years, and if they get cold now it may cost him his place."

"Why not come over and stop here, it might bore you less than yonder?"

"I should be delighted; I could ask nothing better; but I am supposed to be down here on business. My governor is not at all satisfied with the way things are going on. He says Sir Within has cut down too much timber, and he has taken renewals for leases he had no right to grant, and what with his tanks and fish-ponds and river-gods, he has left two mills without a drop of water."

"Tell him, with my compliments, Sir Within Wardle will do worse than all these."

"You mean about that girl?"

"Yes."

"That's what Grog says, but I dare not quote *him* to the governor. Tell me, would you have any objection to my telling him that this was *your* opinion?"

"I have not the honor of being known to your father, and a mere surmise of mine would carry no weight with it."

"I don't know that. I fancy he rather took a liking to you last night. What did you do at whist?"

"Lost a few half-crowns."

"Ah, that accounts for it all. He said at breakfast this morning, that though you held only indifferent cards, you played with perfect composure, and it was quite a pleasure to play with you. With a few nights' ill luck you'll stand high in his favor, I promise you."

"It is a cheap friendship, after all," said Grenfell, laughing.

"Yes. You may have it for five pounds, but I doubt greatly if you could re-sell it for as many shillings."

"Make use of my favor, therefore, while it lasts; and if nothing prevent, come and dine here the day after to-morrow," said Grenfell.

"Agreed. Here come the fat coach-horses; see how they heave their flanks, only coming round from the stable-yard. I tell you, Grenfell," said he, in a whisper, "there will be a great sale of stock at Dalradern one of these days; and there's a lot I'll certainly not give orders to have bought in. Good-night, — good-night."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A WOODLAND RIDE.

It was only at intervals that the sun's rays pierced the leafy shade of a long valley in the woods at Dalradern, where Sir Within and his ward were riding. The tall beech-trees, which stood like the columns of a gigantic cathedral, were met and interwoven above so densely that the light struggled with difficulty through the foliage, and fell in fanciful patches on the smooth turf beneath.

With noiseless tread the horses moved over that even turf, so that, when the riders were not speaking, not a sound broke the stillness, except the rich carol of the blackbird, or the deep-voiced cooing of the wood-pigeon.

Sir Within rode his strong dark-brown short-legged cob, a beast of grave and dignified deportment, never startled nor surprised by the fretful and uneasy performances of the mettlesome animal at his side, and whose natural hot temper was alternately chafed and caressed at the fancy of his rider; for it was her pleasure to be eternally correcting some imaginary fault, or teaching some new accomplishment. Now it was his neck that wanted plasticity; now he bore a little too heavily on the hand; now the off-shoulder was a thought too prominent in his canter; or, more vexatious than these, he *would* respond to a touch of the spur by a sharp switch of the tail, — a breach of good breeding she could not tolerate.

Firmly seated on an animal that defied all sympathy in these mettlesome feats, Sir Within had ample time to admire the exquisite grace with which she rode. It was, indeed, the very perfection of the accord between horse and rider, which makes the spectator unable to say to which of the two he yields the palm of excellence. No bound nor spring ever took her unawares; and when the animal seemed half mad

with excitement, the graceful caress she stooped to bestow appeared to subdue him like a charm.

"Why are you so grave, my dear Gardy? You told me you should be yourself again when that tiresome man was gone, and now he 's off, — thank Heaven for it! — but you look so depressed and dispirited, as if you had not yet tasted the relief."

"True, *ma mie*, quite true. I have not quite convinced myself that we are free of him. His son, however, remains, and is to stay till next week."

"Yes, but how little we see of him. Your kind neighbor, Mr. Grenfell, has him almost every day at dinner."

"For which I owe him all my gratitude."

"I take it, Mr. Grenfell invites him to please himself. He is very lonely yonder at the Cottage. He says he has made no acquaintances, and I suppose that even Mr. Adolphus Ladarelle is better than solitude, — not that I should think so myself."

"But you show that too plainly, *ma mie*. There are no feelings we ought so strictly to control, so far as the manifestations go, as our distastes to people in society."

"I think he hates *me*."

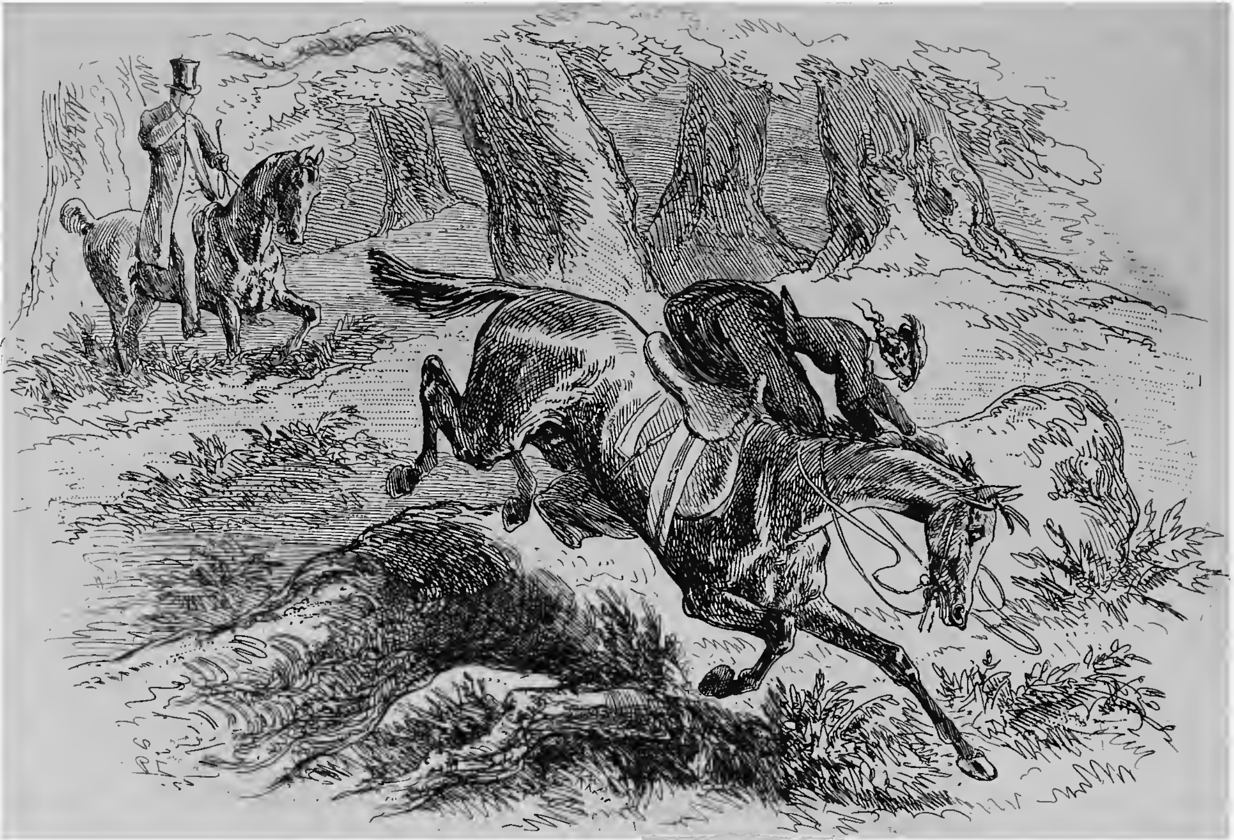
"That would be impossible, child. He may be afraid of your wit; he may not like to encounter your repartee; he may feel, and not unreasonably, that he does not stand high in your favor, and this may impart a degree of constraint to his manner."

"I have not seen the constraint, sir, but I have the dislike, and it was so perfectly mutual, I was glad of it."

"Another mistake, *ma chère*, and a great mistake. The people who really like us need no caressing. The blandishments should be all reserved for the doubtful, — just as we administer cordials to the weak."

"I do my best, sir, but I own I do not approach it with a good grace. Do you really wish me to become a favorite with this young gentleman?"

"Nay, *ma mie*, you go too far. Your nature is like a pendulum, that swings if it be but breathed on. I did not say so much as that. I simply meant that I should prefer if he were to carry away from us a pleasant impression of



The Fall

and came tumbling over, head-foremost, to the opposite side, with his rider beneath him.

Sir Within had covered his eyes with one hand, not to see her take the leap; and he remained thus for a few seconds, waiting to hear her voice and the tramp of her horse as she joined him. At last he removed his hand and looked around. She was not to be seen. He cried her name, — he screamed it in his agony.

"This way!" cried she; "I'm not hurt, — don't be frightened, — come and help me."

Dismounting, he made through the tall ferns and the felled branches, and soon gained the spot, from which the horse had only now arisen, and stood trembling over the fallen figure of the girl. "Oh, my life, — my darling, — my heart's dearest," cried he, kneeling down beside her; "tell me you are not crushed, — not injured."

"Only stunned, Gardy, nothing more. It was all my own fault. I rode him at speed; he had no time to gather himself, and the martingale — " As she spoke, her voice grew weak, she leaned her head on his shoulder and fainted.

How did the deep woods resound to that poor old man's prayers and cries for help! He shouted, — he screamed, — he implored; he offered untold gold to him who should come to his aid. He pledged to give half of all he had in the world to any who should succor her. It was by a caprice of Kate's that they rode without a groom, and he inveighed against his own folly now for the compliance. Madly mingling self-reproaches with his cries for assistance, he grew at length hoarse, and so faint with his efforts that he could with difficulty sustain her weight. Just then was it that she rallied, and with a playful smile said, "Dear Gardy, just pass your hand over Cid's knee. I hope it is not touched."

"What do I care for the horse! Are you safe, my own darling, — are you not hurt?"

"Not in the least, — I think not; my ankle is a little stiff, — a mere sprain, no more. This shoulder too — There, don't touch it, only help me up. Yes, of course, I mean to mount again, — do tell me if his knee is all right?"

"Only think, — without help, — without a servant, — not a creature near us," muttered he.

"Very dreadful," said she, with an arch smile; "quite compromising, I declare."

"Oh, I have no heart for a jest now!" said he, with a heavy sigh, as he assisted her to rise.

"My sweet little horse," said she, patting him and throwing her arm round his neck, "I did treat you very ill, — very ill indeed. It was soft spongy ground, too, and not fair in any way, and you were not in the least to blame. Do you know, Gardy, it was a mere bit of bark that caught his foot; for, after all, it is not above four feet high, is it?"

"I don't know — I don't care how high it is. It very nigh cost you your life, and cost *me* more than I wish to tell;" and he muttered these last words beneath his breath.

"You have never helped me to mount, I think, Gardy! Mind, now, don't touch Cid's bridle; he won't bear it. Just give me a slight lift, — that's it; thanks. Oh, how nice to be on the saddle again! If you would n't think very ill of me, I'd ask a favor?"

"Anything in the whole world, *ma mie;* what is it?"

"Then, like a dear kind Gardy, let me ride him at it again; I'll do it so quietly —"

"Not for a dukedom, — not if you went on your knees to beg it. I declare you have but little feeling in your heart to ask it. Nay, I did n't mean to say that, my sweet child; my head is wandering, and I know not what I say."

"I hope you'll not tell of my disaster, Gardy," said she, as they rode slowly along towards home. "A fall brings one down at once to the level of all the people who do nothing but fall. Don't smile; I mean simply what I say as applied to matters of horseflesh, not morals, and promise you'll not tell of me."

"The doctor must hear of it, certainly."

"No, Gardy, I'll have no doctor."

"I insist upon it, — you shall, — and you must, Kate. Surely, when I say it is for my happiness, you will not refuse me."

She made no answer, but, passing her reins to her right

hand, she laid her left hand over his, and so they rode on without a word on either side.

"Is it not strange that a crush and a tumble over a big tree should make one so very — very happy; but I declare to you, Gardy, I never knew my heart so full of delight as at this moment. Tell me what's the meaning of it?"

"Gratitude for your escape, *ma mie*, — the thankfulness that even the most thoughtless feel for preservation through danger."

"No, it's not that; the sort of ecstasy I feel is something quite different from all this. It has nothing to do with peril, and just as little with gratitude. It has more in it of pride, — that's not the word, but it will do, — of pride, then, that you made so much account of me."

"For a moment I thought I had lost you!" said he; and his voice trembled, and his very cheek shook with emotion as he spoke.

"And would the loss have been a deep sorrow, — a very deep sorrow?"

He pressed her hand to his heart, and said, in a low voice, "The deepest — the heaviest that could befall me!"

"Was it not worth a fall to learn this?" said she, laughingly.

"Nay, rather, will it not teach you to take more care of a life of such consequence to others?"

"Don't say others, Gardy,— say one other, and I am content." As she said this, she drew her hand hurriedly away, for they were already approaching the great entrance, on the terrace of which Grenfell and young Ladarelle were talking and laughing. "Mind, sir, not a word of my accident!" And with this she sprang to the ground before he could offer his hand, and, hurrying up the steps, disappeared within the building.

"Won't you ask Grenfell to stop to dinner, sir?" whispered Dolly, as Sir Within, after a few cold commonplaces, was about to pass on.

"Not to-day."

"But I have half done it already, sir. It was a great liberty on my part, but I blundered into it."

"Will you give us your company at dinner to-morrow,

Mr. Grenfell?" said Sir Within, without the hesitation of a moment.

Grenfell accepted; and, as Sir Within moved on, turning to Dolly, he said, "Did you remark his agitation, — did you notice the embarrassment of his look and manner? Take my word for it, he has made her an offer."

"Do you know it was passing through my mind, the very same thought; for as they turned the angle of the copse yonder, I saw her snatch her hand from him."

"Come back and dine with me. Common delicacy forbids you to spoil a *tête-à-tête*."

"I can't take the thing as coolly as you do, Grenfell. It 's no laughing matter to me."

"Don't laugh, then, that 's all. There can be no reason, however, that you should not dine; so step in, and let 's be off."

"I suspect you are right," said Dolly, as they drove away. "The old fool has capped his folly. I whispered to him to ask you to dine."

"I heard you, and I marked the eager way he put it off till to-morrow. His confusion got the better of all his tact, and showed me plainly enough that something had occurred to excite him greatly."

"She passed in, too, without ever looking up; she never bowed to us, — did you notice that?"

"I saw it all, and I said to myself that Master Dolly's next dealings with Joel will entail heavy sacrifices."

"It 's not done yet," said Ladarelle, with an affected boldness.

"No, nor need be for some weeks to come; but let us talk no more of it till we have dined. Vyner sent me his cellar-key this morning, and we 'll see if his old wine cannot suggest some good counsel."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SCHEMING.

THEY sat late over their wine, and, telling the servants to go to bed, Grenfell ordered that he should not be called before noon on the next day.

According to custom, his servant had left his letters by his bedside, and then retired noiselessly and without disturbing him. It was already late in the afternoon when Grenfell awoke. The first note he opened was a short one from Sir Within, begging to excuse himself from the expected happiness of receiving Mr. Grenfell that day at dinner, as a sudden attack of his old enemy the gout had just laid him up in bed. "If I have only my usual fortune," added he, "my seizure will be a brief one, and I may soon again reckon on the pleasure of seeing you here."

The tidings of the illness was corroborated by Grenfell's valet, who saw the doctor travelling to Dalradern with all the speed of post-horses.

The thought of a courtship that ushered in a fit of the gout was just the sort of drollery that suited Grenfell's taste, and as he lay he laughed in derision of the old man and his schemes of future happiness. He fancied himself telling the story at his club, and he dwelt on the opportunity it would afford to talk of "Wardle" as his friend, — one whose eccentricities he had therefore a perfect right to dish up for the amusement of all others.

"Take this," said he, giving the note to his servant, "to Mr. Ladarelle's room;" and, fancying to himself the various modes with which that young gentleman would con over the intelligence, he lay back again in his bed.

There was no friendship — there was no reason for any — in the apparent interest he had taken in Ladarelle. It was

not of the slightest moment to him which of the two, if either, should marry Kate O'Hara, save as to with whom he should stand best, and be most likely to be well received by in the future. Were she to marry Sir Within, the house would, in all likelihood, be closed to him. The old minister was too well versed in worldly matters not to cut off all the traditions of the past. "He's sure either to introduce her into life under the auspices of some of his own high connections, or to live totally estranged from all society. In either case they are lost to me. Should she be married to Ladarelle, I — as the depositary of all that was secret in the transaction — I must needs have my influence. The house will of necessity be open to me, and I shall make of it what I please." By this last reflection Grenfell summed up what his experience of life had largely supplied him with, — that is, an inordinate liking for those establishments in which a large fortune is allied with something which disqualifies the possessors from taking their rightful position in society. In his estimation, there were no such pleasant houses as those where there was a "screw loose," either in the conduct, the character, or the antecedents of the owners.

These houses were a sort of asylum for that large nomade population of highly amusing qualities and no characters, the men who had not "done" everything, but "done" everybody, and of women still more dubious. In these houses the style of living was usually splendid. Wit has a sort of natural affinity for good cookery, aud Beauty knows all the value of the "costly setting" which splendor confers. Last of all, there was that perfect liberty — the freedom from all the discipline of correcter establishments — which gave to every guest some prerogative of a master. You came as you liked, went as you liked, and very often, too, introduced whom you liked. What more could a man do if he were the rightful owner? Now, Grenfell was free of many such houses, but in none was he supreme. There was not one wherein his authority was dominant and his word a law. This he ambitioned; he craved impatiently for the time he could say to the men in his club, "I'll take you down with me to Ladarelle's — *I*'ll show you some real cock shooting — I'll give you a day or two at Dalradern." Would not

that be fame — distinction — triumph? Ladarelle, too, was a man made by nature for such a part, — careless, extravagant, sensual, fond of amusement, without caring in the least for the characters of those who contributed towards it, and inherently vain and open to the coarsest flattery. With him, therefore, Grenfell anticipated little trouble; with her he was by no means so sure. She puzzled him, and she seemed determined not to afford him any opportunity of knowing more of her. Her avoidance of him was plain and unmistakable.

"Perhaps she fears, perhaps she distrusts me," thought he. "I 'll take the earliest moment to assure her she need do neither, but make me her friend implicitly." He understood a good deal by that same word, which in ordinary life is not imputed to friendship. In fact, by friendship, he — as a great many others do — simply meant conspiracy. Thinking and reflecting in this vein, he lay, when the door opened, and young Ladarelle, in dressing-gown and slippers, entered.

"What 's the meaning of all this, Grenfell?" said he. "My fellow, Fisk, who is just come over, says that Sir Within is perfectly well; he was in the stable-yard this morning at seven o'clock, and that it is the ward, mademoiselle herself, is ill."

"He won't have us at dinner, that 's all I know," said Grenfell, yawning carelessly.

"He says nothing whatever about me; scarcely civil, I think, considering I am supposed to be his guest."

"I 'll give you a dinner. You 'll pay me with interest one of these days, when you come to that estate."

"That I will."

"Do you know, as I lay here this last hour, I have been plotting out the sort of life a man could cut out for himself in a place like this. You are the sort of fellow to have the very pleasantest house in England."

"I should like to try."

"If you try, you 'll win. Shall I tell you, Master Dolly, the quality which first attracted me towards you?"

"What was it?"

"It was this. You are one of the very few young fellows I ever met who was not infected with a slavish worship

of the titled classes. How, being a Cambridge man, you escaped it, I don't know; but you have escaped it."

"You're right there," said Dolly; but the color that mounted so suddenly to his cheek seemed to imply a certain confusion in making the assertion. "You know we had a peerage once in the family, and it is a hobby of my governor's to try and revive it. He offered the present people to contest any two of the Opposition seats, and proposed to myself to go into the House; but I told him flatly I'd rather get into Graham's than into Parliament."

"A much harder thing to do!"

"You're in Graham's, ain't you?"

"Yes; and so shall you be next ballot, if you really wish for it!"

"What a trump you are! Do you know, Grenfell, I can't make it out at all that I never have met you before?"

"I'm some twelve or fifteen years your senior," said the other, and a slight twitching of the mouth showed a certain irritation as he spoke; "a few years separates men as essentially as a whole hemisphere."

"I suppose so."

"Town life, too, moves in such a routine that when a man comes to my age he no more makes a new acquaintance than he acquires a new sensation."

"And, stranger still," continued Dolly, with that persistence that pertains to ill-breeding, "I never so much as heard of you."

"I feel ashamed of my obscurity!" said Grenfell; and his pale cheek became mottled with red.

"No, it ain't that. I meant only to say that I never heard of any Grenfells but the Piccadilly fellows, Cox and Grenfells! 'None genuine but signed by us.' Ha, ha, ha!" and Dolly laughed at his drollery, and the other joined in the mirth quite sufficiently not to attract any especial attention. "Not relatives, I presume?" added Dolly, still laughing.

"Delighted if they were!" said Grenfell, with a sickly smile. "I don't think the dividends would smell of curry powder!"

"That's what Cecil St. John says: 'Let the greatest

scoundrel in England only leave me his money, and I'll honor his memory.' Do you know St. John?"

"One of my most intimate friends."

"I am dying to know him. Grog Davis says he's the only man that ever took the wind out of *his* sails."

"I'll have him to dinner when I go up to town, and get you to meet him," said Grenfell. "It must be on a Sunday, though, for Cecil shuns all others, which he calls dun-days, to distinguish from Sundays."

"I'd like to wipe off every shilling he owes. I'd like to set a fellow like that clear with the world."

"I'll tell him you said so. It will go a very long way towards acquiring his esteem."

"Well, I declare it's a thing I'd do, if I had my property. I've heard wonderful stories about him."

"And he could tell you still more wonderful ones himself. He's one of those men," — here Grenfell's voice became authoritative and collected, — "one of those men who, if he saw himself in such a position as yours, would no more doubt as to what he would do, than he would hesitate taking a fair fence in a fox-hunt."

"And what would he do *in my* place?"

"He'd reason out the thing somewhat in this way: 'If I suffer the old cove to marry this girl, he'll either hamper the estate with a heavy settlement, or, mayhap, alienate it altogether. I'll marry her myself, or, if she'll not consent, I'll carry her off. Abduction looks very big in the law-books, but it's a light offence, except where the woman is intractable.'"

"And would you carry her off?"

"St. John would, I'll take my oath on it!"

"And not marry her?"

"That's as it might be, and if she insisted; for he has three other wives still living."

"But is the thing possible?"

"Possible! Why, it's done every week of the year in Ireland."

"Ay, but we're not in Ireland, unfortunately."

"That's true; neither are we in France; but it was a French cook dressed that 'supreme' we ate yesterday."

"I see what you mean," said he, pondering slowly over the other's words. "You think one might get fellows who understand how this sort of thing is to be done?"

"If I don't mistake greatly, I know where to go for the very man you want. In an excursion I once made with Vyner in the West of Ireland, we rambled into a wild district of Donegal, where, in a lonely region, we chanced on a little inn. It is a flattery to call it an inn. It was a small thatched cabin standing by itself in the midst of the mountains; there was not another habitation, I'm certain, within ten miles of it. The fellow who kept it was as rank a rebel as ever graced the gallows; and made no secret of his treason, either, but owned it boldly and impudently. I had more than one discussion with him, and learned that the rascal had all the shrewdness and low cunning that pertains to that class of his countrymen. He had not, however, been well treated by his party, and he was not at all indisposed to betray them if he could see his way to secure his own advantage by it. At all events, it was clear to me that for a case which required craft, daring, and no interference of scruples of any kind, this fellow was eminently suited; and I have often thought, if I needed a man for an enterprise where the law must be broken, and the penalty incurred a jail and a long imprisonment, I'd go and look up my friend in Donegal as the man for the occasion, — not to say that his house would be the very place to afford a refuge beyond all risk of discovery."

Ladarelle listened with deep attention throughout, and when Grenfell had finished, said, "What do you mean by a refuge beyond all discovery?"

"Simply, that for some short time, marry or not, you must be able to baffle pursuit, and for such a purpose I'd back this spot in the wilds of Donegal against the kingdom."

"Suppose we were to fail?"

"We can't fail; she goes willingly, — or, if not, unwillingly; but failure is out of the question. Your object is that she should not be Lady Wardle, is it not so?"

"Yes, undoubtedly."

"And to secure this, it is worth while incurring some risk?"

"Certainly; but I should like to know the extent of that risk."

"I 'm no lawyer, and can't tell you what class of misdemeanor the law makes it; not to say that the offence is one which differs according to the judge who tries it; but the question to which you will have to look is this: If the girl be satisfied that she is really married, however grieved the old man may be, he will never disturb that fact. He 'll shut himself up in his castle, and let his beard grow. A great shock at his age lasts for the remainder of life, and he 'll nurse his grief till it lays him in the grave."

"Then there must be a marriage?"

"Some sort of marriage, Irish or Scotch, — they have them of all sorts and complexions; but English law smashes them, just to show these poor Celts in what a barbarism they are living, and that even their most solemn contracts are a farce, if not ratified by us here."

"So that I could marry again if I wished it?"

"Of course you could. Why, scores of fellows about town have gone through that sort of humbug. Don't you know Lawson, — Jim Lawson? Well, he married his sister's governess before he married Lady Lucy King; and they wanted to make a fuss about it; but it was proved that it was only a lark on his part, though *she* was quite serious about it; and the priest, too, was only in deacon's orders, or it was after canonical hours, and it was all irregular, even to the ring on her finger, which Harry Bushe said was copper, and so the Lords smashed it, as they always do these Irish things, and Jimmy married the other woman."

"I wish there was to be no marriage at all."

"Perhaps you do; perhaps you 'd like it better if old Sir Within would have the politeness to die off and give you no further trouble?"

"Ah, if he would!"

"But, as he won't, — as he is firmly bent not merely on living longer, but actually taking measures to make himself an unpleasant memory when he does go, I suspect you ought to look sharp to your own interests, Master Dolly. But, after all, I find myself pressing like an advocate in a case where the very utmost I ought to do should be to advise as

a friend. You know, by this time, all I think on this matter. It is for you to follow the advice or reject it. Meanwhile, I mean to get up and have a walk before dinner."

"Just one thing more, — as to this Irish fellow you speak of. Would he take all the risks — the legal risks — if he were well paid for it?"

"I think it's very likely he would. I don't think he'll bind himself to go to the drop, exactly; but I take it he'll not boggle about a reasonable term of imprisonment, and, perhaps, 'hard labor.'"

"Will you write for him, then?"

"Not without you are fully determined to employ him. If you pledge me your word to this, I will write.

"If I pay him —"

"No, no, I'll have none of that! These Irish fellows, even in their most questionable dealings, have a point-of-honor sense about them that makes them very dangerous men to treat with. Let them only suspect any intention of a slight, and their old Spanish blood, I suppose it is, takes fire at once."

"Let me have a night to think it over."

"Take a week, take a month, if Sir Within will give it to you. You are your own master, and need not ask for time from any one."

"I'd like to reflect well on it. It is too serious a thing to do without good consideration."

"Do so, by all means, and begin at once, for I want to ring for my servant and have my bath."

"I wish you'd have a little more patience; one can't decide on a thing of this sort in five minutes."

"Who asks you, my dear fellow? — who presses you? I only beg to be allowed to get up and dress myself, and a not very unreasonable request, seeing that it is close on five o'clock, and you have been here since three."

"Well, I'll do it, come what may of it. I'll do it."

"Take the night to consider it."

"No, I am resolved on it. I'll do it."

"Very well; we are too late for the post to-night, but I'll write to this man after dinner, and by that time you will have fully made up your mind. Now go, or I'll begin to

regret the day and the hour I ever thought of giving you counsel."

"You are the most impatient fellow I ever met in my life," said Ladarelle, as he rose reluctantly, and with unwilling steps sauntered out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WITH DOCTORS.

On the evening of the same day Sir Within sat alone in his grand old dining-room. The servants had withdrawn and left him in solitary splendor, for the massive plate glittered on the sideboard, and the blaze of many wax-lights illuminated the three or four great pictures of Rubens' on the walls, and sparkled over the richly cut glass that figured amongst the dessert, and there, amidst all, sat that old man, — pale, wan, and careworn, — to all seeming several years older than one short week ago. A small table at his side was littered with letters and law papers; but though he had gone for them to his study, he never noticed them, so deeply was his mind bent on other thoughts. At last he looked at his watch, and then arising, he rang the bell.

"Dr. Price is still above stairs?" said he, in a tone of inquiry.

"Yes, Sir Within."

"And you are quite certain you told him to come to me before he left the Castle?"

"Yes, Sir Within."

"That will do," said he, with a sigh.

Scarcely had the servant closed the door than he re-opened it to announce Dr. Price, a small pock-marked sharp-featured man, with an intensely keen eye, and a thin, compressed mouth.

"Well, doctor, well?" said Sir Within, as he came forward towards him with a manner of great auxiety.

"Well, Sir Within Wardle, it is, as I suspected, a case of concussion; there 's no organic mischief, — no lesion."

"What 's a lesion?"

"There is no fracture, nor any pressure, so far as I can detect; but there is very grave injury of another sort. There is concussion of the brain."

"And is there danger, — be frank, doctor; is there danger?"

"Certainly there is danger; but I would not pronounce it to be imminent danger."

"London has some men of great eminence: which of them all would you select to consult with on such a case? I am certain that you would wish a consultation."

"I have no objection to one, Sir Within, and I would name Sir Henry Morland, as the first man in his profession."

"Then write for him, sir, — write at once. Here, in this room; here" — and he opened a door into a small cabinet — "you will find everything you want."

"Certainly; I obey your instructions. I will write immediately; but say in what terms. The young lady is your ward, — am I to style her by that title or by her name?"

Sir Within blushed, but it was more in anger than shame; the barest approach to any question of Kate's position jarred upon his feelings like an insinuation, and he fixed a steadfast stare on the doctor before he replied, to assure himself that there was no covert impertinence in the request. Apparently he was satisfied, for in a calm voice he said, "It will be unnecessary to say more than that his presence is requested by Sir Within Wildrington Wardle at Dalradern Castle, and with all the speed possible."

While the doctor was writing, Sir Within walked to and fro with short and hurried steps, his mouth twitched from time to time, and a nervous motion of his fingers betrayed the immense agitation that possessed him, and against which he struggled hard to subdue all outward signs. Had the occasion been a ministerial conference, — had the event been one in which a bold front was called for, to cover a weak position or affront a coming peril, — the old envoy would have borne himself well and bravely; no one could have worn an easier look in a trying emergency, or better baffled the searching that would try to detect a secret misgiving. But where was all this subtlety now? Of what did it avail him? He bent before this blow as humbly as a school-girl,

and soon even abandoned the attempt to dissimulate, and wrung his hands in passionate sorrow as he went.

"Will that do, then, Sir Within?" asked the doctor, as he handed him the note he had just written.

"I have not my glass," said he, hurriedly, while his fingers held it; "but, of course, it is all right. You will instruct me as to the fee, you will do whatever is necessary, and you will also, I trust, remain here. I wish you not to leave the Castle."

"Impossible, Sir Within. Sir Godfrey Wynne is very ill, and I have a very anxious case at Glasswynd."

"But none of them, I will venture to say, so needful of watching as this. You have just told me how precarious these cases are. Remember, sir, I have some claims upon you."

"The very greatest, Sir Within. But for your munificent donation, I should never have been physician to the Wrexham Hospital."

"I did not mean that," said Sir Within, blushing scarlet; "I did not allude to that. I spoke of old family claims in your father's time. Dalradern was always his stanch supporter."

"I know it well, sir; but a doctor owes allegiance to the very humblest of those who need him."

"A doctor, I presume, is bound to accord the patient whatever of his time he can pay for?"

"Not to the detriment of others who are ill, Sir Within."

"I know of no other than those under this roof, Dr. Price. I insist, therefore, that you remain here."

"I will return before evening, Sir Within."

"If you leave this now, sir, you need not return."

"Let me entreat you to moderate your warmth, and hear me."

"Sir, I accept no lessons on the mode in which I should comport myself. My education is not, I would hope, yet to be made in this respect. You stay now, or you never re-cross this threshold."

"Then I most respectfully take my leave, sir."

As he moved towards the door, Sir Within placed himself against it.

"This is conduct, sir," cried he, passionately, "for which I was in no way prepared. It is the first time in my life I have seen a physician refuse his services to those who had the right to call for, and the ability to requite them. I will not suffer it."

The doctor moved his head mournfully, and muttered a few low and indistinct words.

"No, sir. I want no apologies. I will not listen to excuses!" cried Sir Within, whose cheek was in a flame, and his eye flashing with anger. "I have done my best — my very best — to misunderstand your meaning; I have tried my utmost to persuade myself that this was not intentional slight; but apparently, sir, you insist that I should know it, and feel it."

"You distress me greatly, Sir Within; and all the more that I really cannot follow you in what you imply."

"I never imply, sir — I declare — I assert!" and his voice was now shrill with passion. "It is no insinuation I make, it is an open declaration, — that it is what scandalous tongues have dared to allege against this young lady's residence under my roof is the sole pretext you have to refuse your services here. Don't deny it, sir; I read it in your confusion half an hour ago. You intend to build a character for high morality on this event. You know this county better than I do, and you are a better judge how far your strict virtue will be remunerative; or, perhaps, you fancy that I will condescend to an explanation with you."

"No, no, Sir Within. You are too unjust, — quite too unjust in all this."

The old Baronet never heard the interruption, but went on, —

"But, sir, if I have scorned to make explanations to the first gentry of my neighborhood, it is not likely I will descend to them for the satisfaction of a village doctor. Go, sir, — go! but at your peril, one word to gratify the slanderous temper of your clients; for if I hear that you have dared to insinuate, however faintly —"

The doctor did not wait for him to finish, but hurried down the stairs, crossed the hall, and hastened to the stable-yard; and in a very few minutes the sharp sound of his

horse's feet on the ground declared that he was off at speed.

Sir Within had sunk into the chair beside the door from which the doctor had just issued, powerless and overcome. The outburst of passion, what had been but one exit of an overwhelming sorrow, had run its course, and now he sat there wretched and forlorn. Of his late altercation he remembered positively nothing. Something had occurred, — something that excited and agitated him. The doctor had said, or somebody had said, he knew not what; but it shadowed forth a sort of reflection on him — for Heaven knows what; and he wiped the cold perspiration from his brow, and tried to collect himself. At last he arose and rang the bell.

"Will you tell Dr. Price I should like to speak to him?" said he, in his usual bland tone.

"The doctor is gone, Sir Within; he left the Castle half an hour ago."

He nodded; and the servant retired. After a little while he rang again.

"Let Dr. Price know I wish to see him before he goes away," said he, in a faint voice.

"The doctor left the Castle some time back, Sir Within," said the man, in some astonishment.

"Ah! very true, — I remember; that will do."

Once more alone, he tried to remember what had just occurred, but he could not; and with weary steps he mounted the stairs slowly, towards the corridor where the sick-chamber stood.

"She is sleeping, Sir Within," said the nurse, who sat outside the door to enforce silence, — "sleeping, but dreaming and wandering on continually; and such strange things, too, she says."

"What does she talk of, nurse?" said he, scarcely conscious of what he asked.

"She be talking, sir, of being a-gathering seaweed on the rocks, and crying out to some one to take care, — that the tide is gaining fast. 'It will be soon in on us!' she cries every moment; 'make haste, Patsey, or we 'll lose it all!' And then she 'll wring her hair, as if there was water

in it, and tie it up short, afterwards, on the back of her head. I never see a young lady go on the same way before!"

"Wandering, — mere wandering," said Sir Within, faintly.

"Of course it be, Sir Within; but ain't it a strange sort of wandering for one bred and brought up as she was?"

"When people rave, they rave," said Sir Within, curtly.

"Yes, sir, so they does; but people born to every comfort and the like seldom talks of going out to look for firewood, or to bring home the goats from the mountains; and that poor sweet dear there won't think of anything else."

"You are a fool, ma'am, or you would never think of attaching importance to what a patient raves about in a fever. I wonder Dr. Price could not have found a more competent person." And with this rebuke he retraced his steps, and sought his own room.

As he sat there, a servant entered with a note Dr. Price's servant had just brought. He tore it open impatiently, and read: —

"Dear Sir, — I have accidentally heard that Sir Henry Morland will be at Wrexham this evening. If it be your wish to see him at Dalradern, pray inform me by the bearer.

"Very respectfully your servant,

"Pritchard Price."

Sir Within at once addressed a most curt and conciliatory note to Dr. Price, requesting to see him and his colleague as soon as would suit his convenience. That there was something for which an apology was needed, he knew; but what it was, how it occurred, or why it occurred, was totally beyond him; his note, however, was polite in every respect, and its conclusion actually friendly. Dr. Price, however, did not make his appearance; but towards midnight a post-chaise drove into the courtyard, and the great town physician entered the Castle. He was a short, stout-built, heavy-browed man, stern, and almost peremptory in his manner, reserving all his mind for his patient, and scarcely condescending to notice the friends of the sick person.

"Who is it?" asked he, bluntly, of Sir Within, as the old envoy politely handed him a chair.

"My ward, Sir Henry, a young lady not fully seventeen."

"Humph! I did not know you were married."

"I am not married, sir. I was not aware that we were discussing that question."

"Let me speak with your sister, then?"

"I have no sister, sir."

"I don't care what the relative is, — cousin, aunt, grandmother, — if not too old."

"I repeat, sir, I have no female relative here to whom I can refer you. I shall send for my housekeeper, however, who is a most intelligent person;" and he rang the bell hurriedly.

"And this ward, — strange thing, a ward in the house of an unmarried man, — what 's her name?"

"Miss O'Hara."

"O'Hara! O'Hara! One of the Antrim family?"

"No, sir; no connection even."

"Oh, this is the housekeeper! Show me your patient, and tell me about the case as we go along;" and abruptly returning Sir Within's salutation, he left the room, and proceeded upstairs. "Yes, yes," he muttered, as the housekeeper recounted the symptoms. "Yes; I know all that; but I want to hear how it began. Was there any shock — any accident? None? Mere fatigue, — a long ride, — over-exertion, — a very hot day! Yes, yes, quite common, — answers at first collectively, and then goes off raving, — that 's enough!"

The rough, ungracious man, abrupt of speech, and actually rude in manner, became gentle as a woman as he stole up to the bedside and laid his hand on the hot and burning forehead. She raised her hand, tremulous with fever, and placed it upon his, and said, "Yes; the pain is there!"

"Let us see if we cannot cure it," said he, softly, as he sat down beside the bed.

She turned her large lustrous eyes upon him, — brightened as they were in the glow of fever, — and stared at him steadfastly and long. He was counting her pulse, and she watched his lips as they faintly stirred, as though she could read her fate in their motion.

"Well?" cried she, —"well?"

"Well, you are about to get better, my dear child; the fever is decreasing, and your head freer."

"Yes," said she, hurriedly, "the horrid fancies that torment me are passing away, and I can think now. Who are you?" asked she, after a pause.

"I am your doctor."

"But your name? I never saw you before."

"I know that! This is my first visit to you. My name is Morland."

"Morland—Morland—I have read that name in the newspapers; Sir William, or Sir something."

"Sir Henry Morland."

"Physician to the king, I declare," said she, raising herself on one arm to look at him; "and you have come here, all this way, to see me!"

"And very well worth my while it was. It is not every day I chance upon so interesting a patient."

"How kind you are,—how pleasant your voice is! It soothes me to listen to it."

"But we must not talk any more now, my child."

"Oh yes, let us talk, it is so delightful; tell me of all the fine people you see daily. Do you speak to them as kindly as to me, or are you more reserved and distant? Do tell me."

"I will tell you all about these things another time, when it will be safer to hear them. You must have perfect rest and quiet now."

"It would quiet me far more to listen to you than to let me think on and on, as I have been doing. You are going away already!"

"I cannot help it, my child; I have many others waiting for me to see them."

"But you would n't hurry away from me in this fashion if I were a great person?"

"Pardon me; you are a very great person to *me*."

"How so? Tell me what you mean; do tell me," cried she; and she started up and caught his hand with both her own. "I must know what that means."

"Listen to me, my child," and he spoke in a graver,

almost a stern manner; "I can only do the work of my daily life by being very despotic. I have replied to more questions of yours now, than I should have answered to a royal highness. Good-bye."

"Good-bye!" said she, and pressed his hand to her hot lips. "Good-bye; don't forget me."

As the doctor, followed by Mrs. Simcox, left the room, he stood for a moment in the corridor, deep in thought. "Her mind is collected now," said he, at last; "there is only excitement; there is no aberration."

"She has those intervals every now and then, sir, and she'll speak as sensibly as any one; and, indeed, it's hard to say when she is not talking rational, for she is odd and strange when she's well."

"Yes, I see that; she is no ordinary person."

"And no later than last night, sir, when we imagined that she was talking a mere gibberish of her own, our second housemaid, that was in the room, went over and answered her, and there they talked together for more than a quarter of an hour, sir; and I asked Molly what it was, and she said it was Irish. So, when the girl came into the room this morning, I told her to talk it again; but, would you believe it, sir? our young lady began to laugh, and asked what the creature meant by that nonsense. She did not know one word, sir, Molly was saying, any more than ourselves."

The doctor nodded assentingly, as though such a case was familiar to him, and passed on. At the foot of the stairs he found Sir Within waiting for him.

"I will talk to Price," said Sir Henry; "I shall see him to-night, and to-morrow I will take another opportunity of seeing her before I return to town."

"Are you hopeful as to the result?" asked Sir Within, with much anxiety in his look.

"She has youth in her favor," said he, as he buttoned up his overcoat.

"And you think well of her case, then?"

"I did not say so, sir; I don't think any man would go so far; for it will be tedious, and consequently precarious. And there are now and then recoveries that can scarcely

be called benefits. How many miles do you call it to Wrexham?"

"You speak of the effects upon the brain, — the permanent effects?" said Sir Within, with trembling eagerness.

"Brain or membranes, I don't think it signifies much which. And Wrexham, — how far is it?"

"Your postboy will tell you, sir; this case is of much more moment to me."

Sir Henry turned a full steady look on the old envoy, as though he were contemplating an order of being wholly new and strange to him; and then turning to the housekeeper, who still stood at his side, said: "Stop the ice, — apply mere cold water; don't talk to her, and no more Irish, — take care of that, — no more Irish. Good-night, Sir Within;" and stepping hastily down the steps, he entered his carriage and drove away.

"What did he mean by that last direction, no more Irish, Mrs. Simcox?" asked Sir Within.

"La, sir, it was about a thing that happened last night;" and she recounted the incident, at somewhat greater length than we have given it.

"Send the girl to me," said Sir Within, as she finished; "let me speak to her in the library."

The interview lasted about half an hour, and at the end of it Molly was seen to hasten to her room, pack her clothes, and descend to the stable-yard, where a conveyance was in waiting for her.

"This is a hasty way to leave us, Molly," said one of her fellow-servants, as she mounted the cart.

"It's my mother that was sick, and sent for me," said the girl. "Drive on," added she to the groom; for Sir Within was leaning on the window-sill, overhead, and watching the scene.

Sir Henry arrived the next morning to find Kate worse than he had left her; and, though greatly pressed for time, he remained nigh an hour in consultation with Dr. Price, who had accompanied him. There was more fever and far more of excitement than on the day before, and she talked incessantly to herself, occasionally giving way to bursts of laughter.

"How grave you both look this morning!" said she, with a derisive smile, as they arose to leave her bedside. "I think I can guess what's passing in your mind." Morland shook his head in dissent, and she went on: "Of course you would be reluctant to say it; but the simple truth is, doctor, you think me very, very ill."

"So far you are right," said he, gently.

"Yes, but you suspect more. You believe that I am dying."

"You have many things in your favor, my dear child. You have youth, you have strength, and you have what is sometimes worth them both, — good courage."

"You do me justice, doctor. I have plenty of courage, more even than you know of; and I have another thing," added she, while her eyes flashed wildly and her lip shook with agitation, — "I have no great desire to live!"

"Come, come, young lady," broke in Price; "it is not at your age that one is weary of the world."

"I never said I was," cried she, impatiently; and then, turning from him as though he were not one to understand her aright, she addressed the other. "May I speak to you alone?"

"Certainly; my friend here will have no objection, I'm sure."

"None whatever," said Dr. Price, as he moved towards the door.

"And you, Simcox, you must go too; and take Nelly with you."

"La, miss —"

"Do as you are told," said the doctor, peremptorily.

"And now we are alone, child," said he, as, having closed the door, he returned to the bedside.

"Sit down, sit there," said she, pointing to the chair, "and wait a moment till I collect myself. I don't like that man, his voice jars on me, — there is so much in a voice. Yours, for instance, soothes me." He smiled kindly on her, and she continued: "I was not always so captious, but illness makes one very fretful. Ain't it so?"

"Naturally."

"I must be very ill, then, if irritability be the measure.

Do you know" — and here she spoke with immense rapidity, and with a jarring vibration in her voice — "do you know there are times, mere moments, in which it needs all my self-control not to scream aloud? Yes, I feel as though I would give life itself to cry out — to fling this weary load off my poor heart, and tell all — all!"

"You must be calm, young lady, or I shall think I have done amiss in permitting this interview."

"Don't call me young lady. The other, that man I dislike, called me young lady. You must call me Kate." He only smiled, as she took his hand in her own burning hand, and said in a coaxing, caressing tone, "Say Kate — Kate!"

"I am very proud that you let me call you Kate."

"Yes, that's it; and you say it softly, as it should be spoken. It's a pretty name, is it not? No, don't look on me pitifully. If it be even as you fear, there is no cause for sorrow. Answer me one thing," said she, half sternly, "but answer truly. Shall I die of this? There, there! I do not want any more. You think I shall; but I know better. Ay, doctor, there's a keener instinct, stronger than all your skill, and it tells me I have years and years before me; years of such trouble, too, it would be a mercy I were taken now!"

"Calm yourself, my child. I like your self-confidence; but be calm."

"And am I not calm? Count my pulse;" and she bared her arm and held it towards him. "It *is* a pretty arm? Then say so, frankly. What harm can flattery do me now?"

"I must leave you, my dear child. I have a long journey before me, and much hard work at the end of it. I am sorry, very sorry to go. Don't shake your head, Kate, it is the simple truth."

"Then why not stay?"

"I have told you, child, that many others are expecting me."

"Yes, great people, titled people, people of condition, as they are called; as if we, too, had not our condition. Don't you hate that word? Don't you hate every vulgar sneer at the low-born?"

"I like your generosity —"

"My generosity!" cried she, with a wild hysteric laugh,— "my generosity! Oh, yes; my generosity has a touch of genius in it. It reveals to me the unseen, the untasted! For what can I know of such people?"

Her brows were knitted fast as she uttered the last words, and her lips were drawn tight, as though she spoke under the pressure of some intense constraint.

"There, there!" said he, rising. "I knew all this talking was injurious, and I am much to blame for having permitted it."

"And you *are* going?"

"I must; I have no choice in the matter."

"Well, give me a minute more. Sit down again, and I will not detain you more than a minute or two. When I asked to speak with you alone, doctor, it was to beg of you to make my will. You need not be afraid that it will take long. I have only one legacy and one heir. Now mind what I shall say to you. It may happen — I myself think it will happen — that I shall get better of this fever. Much of my raving — what they call my raving — was such wandering as passes through my head any day; so that it may easily be I have never been so ill as I seemed to be, and all the wonderful stories Mrs. Simcox told you in the window last night, — my strange fancies about my bare feet bleeding with the sharp stones, — no matter, fact or fancy, it was in my head before this. You are attending to me?"

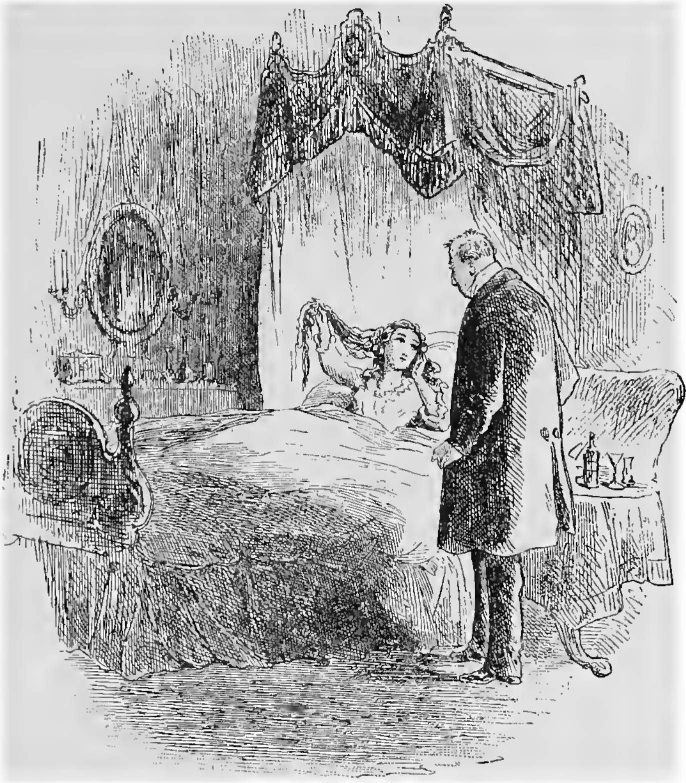
"I am."

"I was afraid you thought that this explanation was only 'wandering' of another sort; but I see you do not. I see you follow me."

He nodded.

"If, however, *your* skill be better than my second sight, — if I can call it so, — I have a task for you to do. When it shall be all over, before I am buried, you will take care — But wait, let us do it regularly." She raised herself on one arm as she spoke, and with the other hand she pointed to a small writing-table at the farther part of the room. "Open that desk, and take out an envelope. It ought to be black-edged for the occasion," said she, with a sad smile, "but I don't think it matters much. Yes, that one will do

very well. Write now the address I shall give you: 'Mr. Peter Malone.' Show it to me, — is it large and plain? No; take another. It must be clear, bold writing. I think I ought to write it myself; of course, I ought, and I will."



"All this excitement is wrong."

"Then don't prolong it. Give me the pen and that book to write on. I declare it is *you* that are nervous, doctor. What makes your hand shake?"

"If I am nervous, it is because I feel much self-reproach for all this — this — "

"This — what?" asked she, smiling. "Do give it a

name. I am sure you are not angry at my detaining you. You are too kind and too considerate to reckon minutes against one who may have so few of them; and then, as to this task I impose on you," — and she smiled again, — "do confess you never heard of so short a will. There, it is all written now. Read it out, that I may see if it be legible."

"'Mr. Peter Malone, to the care of Mr. T. O'Rorke, Vinegar Hill, Cush-ma-Creena, Ireland.'"

"Your pronunciation is not quite faultless, doctor; but, luckily, you will not be the postman. Mind, now, this is to be posted so soon as all is over. No, no, — not as it is. I have not yet enclosed my legacy. Take that scissors you see yonder. Open the shutter, — a little more, still; yes, that will do. Now come here. Cut off the longest and the brightest lock you can find here;" and she unbound her golden hair, and sent it floating in heavy masses over her shoulders and her back, and even her face. "Don't spare it. I mean my last legacy to be munificent. There!" said she, taking the long tress from his fingers, "how soft and silky it is: see, too, if it has not that golden radiance the Venetian painters raved about! The old man to whom that envelope is addressed once asked me to give him a lock of my hair; he begged for it very eagerly, as a parting gift, and I refused him. I can give it now, — yes, I can give it now. Ask me nothing, — I will tell nothing. I thought to have told you all, — the whole, long, dreary story, — but I cannot. There, you are impatient to be away. I release you; only remember that if I do not die you are to return that paper to me. Do you understand me?"

"Perfectly, and will obey you to the letter, my dear child, if you will not give me this tress as my fee for having cured you. Perhaps I have as good a claim to it as that other to whom you would bequeath it."

"No, no, no!" cried she, impetuously. "You never cared for me, you never could care for me as he does; but keep it if you will. Good-bye, good-bye! One instant more. There is another old man to whom I would send a message."

"Your guardian?"

A scornful curl of her lip and an impatient gesture of her head stopped him.

"Tell Sir Within that I was very grateful to him. He did much to make my life a very happy one, and yet I am so glad to leave it! Speak kindly to him, and comfort him; tell him, if you will, that if he would continue to love me, it were best I should die; for if I were to live, doctor," — and here her eyes grew full and wide, and her gaze steadfast, — "if I were to live, I should lose that love."

The wild look she gave, the strange vibration of her voice, and her words themselves warned the doctor that a period of excitement was approaching, and he drew the curtain and moved away.

END OF VOL. I.