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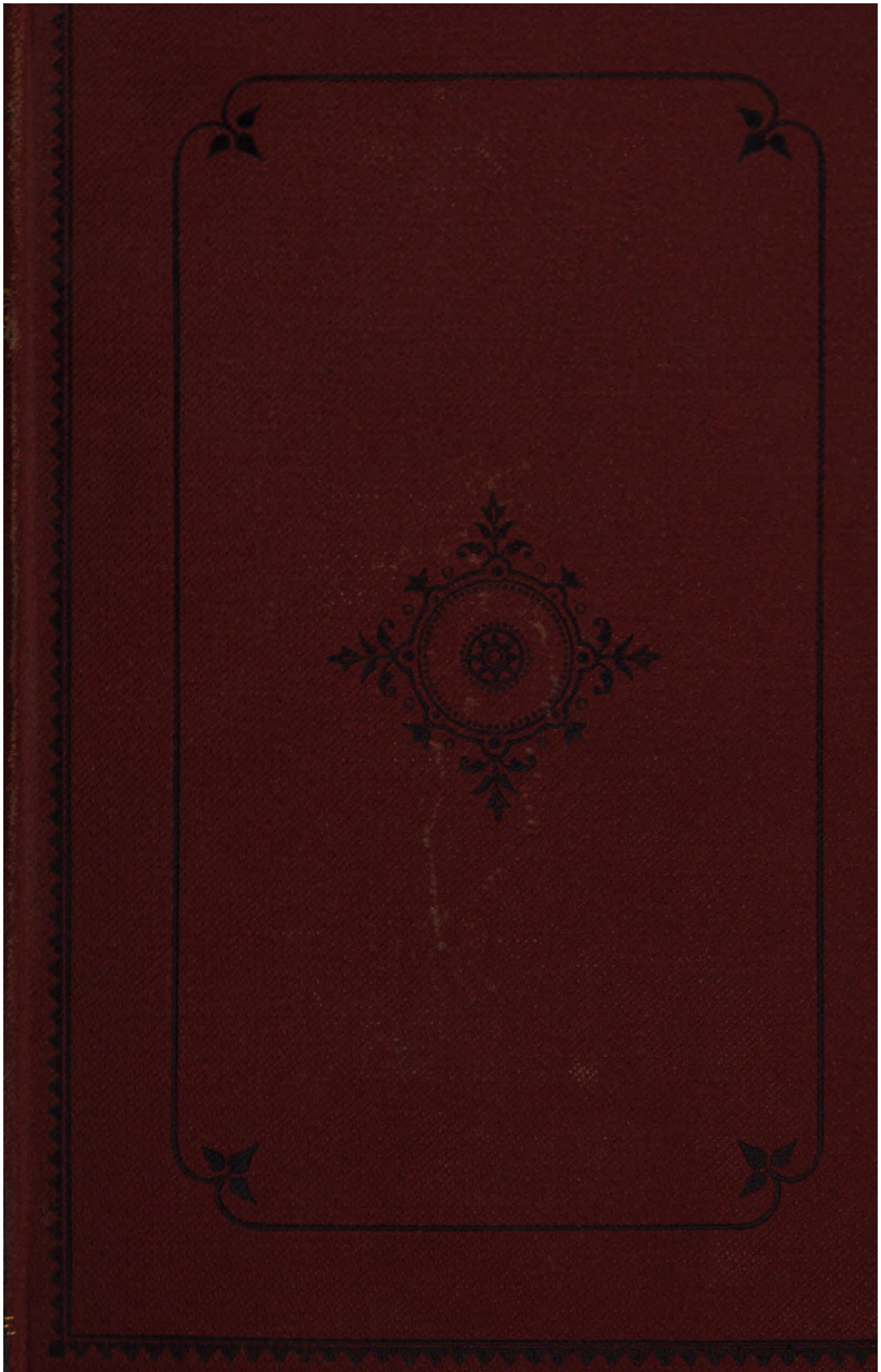
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NOEL D'Auvergne:

A Fable.

By SAMUEL RICHARDSON, B.A., B.L.

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord?

Hamlet. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Polonius. That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. Bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: give me that man,
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart.—SHAKESPEARE.



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“ Likewise thou
Art more through Love, and greater than thy years.
The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will bring
The drooping flower of Knowledge changed to fruit
Of Wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect end.”

TENNYSON.

PREFACE.

THE reader will find in my book a law-lecture scene in Trinity College, Dublin. I refer to it here because to me it seems, in a measure, to confirm the remark of the "Saturday Review" (July 10th, 1869) that "amongst ourselves the study of law, both academical and professional, is in a thoroughly unsatisfactory state." In plain language, our system of education for the Bar is an expensive farce. To become a lawyer is, like dancing in a young ladies' seminary, *one of the extras*. The medical embryo goes into the dissecting-room and learns his business, but the law-student, with a decanter of wine before him, gapes at the capacity of his elders for eating, if not drinking. A lease or a brief are mysteries to him which no amount of unnecessary dinners or lectures shall explain.

I wish further to state that the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore is entirely a fictitious individual.

Some of the circumstances surrounding the death of the first Lady Summervale have been suggested to the Author by the recent revelations of the murderer Sherwood.

The scene in court has no foundation in fact, except as regards the sounds of military music which float at times into the Dublin Four Courts, to mingle harmoniously with the melodious utterances of our orators there.

And now, my little David, not without fears for thee, I send thee forth to give battle to Goliath the Critic.

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NOEL D'AUVERGNE.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. LEYNE AND THOSE WHOM SHE LOVES.

“As streams that run o'er golden mines,
Yet humbly, calmly glide,
Nor seem to know the wealth that shines
Within their gentle tide, Mary!
So, veil'd beneath the simplest guise,
Thy radiant genius shone,
And that which charm'd all other eyes
Seem'd worthless in thy own, Mary!”

TOM MOORE.

“SO you would advise me to wear the pearl ornaments to-night, and not my favourite diamonds: the lovely gems, how they sparkle yonder! Is it so, Mary?”

“Oh, no! the diamonds, most certainly.”

“And those flowers, Mary, was it not kind of O'Malley Oranmore to send them? So thoughtful!

He is always thus—far more than others—ever since the first day we met. The Honourable O'Malley Oranmore! Brother of a lord!——” She paused, and looked downwards for an instant thoughtfully. She raised her eyes again and heaved a short sigh. Ah, me! a woman dreams sometimes. “Now, Mary, my dearest love, will I do?” she questioned anxiously, and surveyed herself in the long glass from head to satin-booted feet.

“Yes,” said Mary.

“Rogue, you say this just merely to get rid of me. You hate vanity; and, alas! I am vain with a vengeance! I almost hesitate ere I believe the truthful look in those mysterious eyes of yours. How mysterious they always are! Once more, and once for all, will I do? Answer me, Mary!”

And Madeleine's brown orbs rested beseechingly upon her gentle sister, who, already dressed, was waiting, quietly standing beside the toilette-table.

Mary replied very affectionately and very decidedly, “Yes, you *will* do! Only you are so pale; but then you seldom blush much—seldom blush as I do,” she added, and smiled.

“Would that I could steal some of the red roses,” she answered, kissing Mary ardently, “which are wont to crimson your fresh face, my dear pet!”

Mary silently clasped the shining jewels around Madeleine's neck, and made no reply.

Madeleine gave one careful glance in the mirror at her stately figure in the graceful pride of its early womanhood, and, evidently thoroughly gratified with the result of this self-study, descended gaily to the drawing-room to bid her mother farewell, ere she drove off to that evening's ball, accompanied by her sister Mary and her brother Harold.

The sweeping folds of Madeleine's costly dress disappeared from the bedchamber before Mary prepared to follow her sister. Mary Leyne waited alone for a moment, her sad mysterious eyes fixed intently upon the carpeted floor; suddenly they flashed vividly as she lifted them, allowing them to travel round the room carefully and thoughtfully; but the light seemed to die out of them, and they assumed a dull, tired expression, as though no object in the room brought rest to her. Then she beheld in the mirror her own most fair, girlish image, from the contemplation of which she withdrew her mystic eyes immediately, and defiantly, and contemptuously, with a peculiar look directed upward—a look which seemed to pierce the ceiling as if in impatient search for the distant sky beyond—and a still more peculiar smile, sweet, and wise, and truly satisfied.

Overtaking her elder sister half-way down the staircase, they entered the drawing-room together, arm linked in arm—the fair and the dark girl presenting to each other a striking contrast. A

lady in subdued-coloured dress was seated there, to whom a young man was relating something which appeared to be of great interest to them both, and his words fell upon the ear in tones pleasant to listen to while he talked rapidly and joyously, like one whose soul is spotless.

The calm elderly lady sitting so contentedly there is Mrs. Leyne, and the young man is her only son Harold; the one, the mother of the girls, the other, their beloved brother—indeed, he was very dear to them.

Mrs. Leyne was certainly a beautiful woman five and twenty years ago; but she was then no more than eighteen. Times change, and the faces of people with them. Now her mild countenance wears the beauty of wisdom as its chief adornment—and it is not an unmeet one; while around the small lips reigns perpetually a sweetness, meek and fair to the eye in its expression—a sweetness written by sorrow there and by time.

Her husband, who had been a barrister of much repute in Ireland, died some three years previous to the period of the opening of this story. His death occurred in an unexpected way. One quiet evening in the young Springtime, he came wearily home, after ill-success in a heavy and momentous law-suit. He dined as usual with his family, and subsequently, retiring to his study, read, and wrote, and toiled in the professional business of his life. When his daughter Mary entered, as she did gene-

rally every evening, carrying with her his favourite cup of tea, taking it nervously from her hands, he kissed her hurriedly, but fervently and earnestly; and then he suddenly bade her go from the library, that he desired to be alone. Surprised, and fearing something, she knew not what, Mary, after the lapse of some anxious minutes, returned with a second cup of tea; but, alas! he never required another from her ministering hands. She knocked at the door, but receiving no answer, entered the room; and there he lay in his arm-chair, speechless and death-like, with papers, and parchment scrolls, and strongly-bound law-books piled promiscuously around his feet. That night his holy and chivalric spirit fled to the bosom of God. That night the eloquent voice was wondrously mute. That night the logical mind had no more true need for its ready logic here. Seeing him just as his best-beloved daughter Mary saw him, so white and strangely calm, another girl would immediately have fled, frightened and fainting, from the library. But not so Mary Leyne. She was no puny-hearted, clinging woman, who leans not on her secret strength from Heaven. Strong in her beautiful humility, and turning first, as the needle to the pole, eagle-like to Him who was the Food of her daily life, she gently rang the study-bell for assistance, lifted meanwhile, fondly and sorrowfully, the poor, down-bent, helpless head into her tender, tender arms,

caressing that lofty, care-worn forehead, and pressing her pure lips to it, until some one after a long time appeared in answer to the study-bell; and the news went whisperingly hither and thither, that the sword of death had cleft the household's heart.

The awful and solemn scene in her father's library made such an impression upon Mary, that the stern story of it was written in her memory amongst those lessons of experience we would not forget for life.

They were resident in Dublin when this angel of sorrow threw his shadow over them. The cloud broke in tears, but it was long in passing away, and the hereafter sunshine was all the dearer for that abiding gloom! Eventually the Leynes removed to their present abode, situated in the suburbs beyond Dublin, chiefly for this reason, that the old, beloved, homely-looking mansion in the quiet city square, where waved and murmured in the summer and the winter winds the railed-in, restless trees, too sadly with its thousand importuning reminiscences recalled to the mind of each one the memory, sorrowful yet gladdening, of him—the keen lawyer, the silver-tongued advocate, the successful man in the world's competition for the prizes of social life—who, in spite of the generous gifts of genius, and notwithstanding all the fame of his legal and eagle intellect, was in less than a week after his demise forgotten, except by the few who proved life-long

friends, and the four or five of his own flesh and blood—the nearest and dearest, who must submit to separation from him now.

Harold Leyne, his only son and heir, was a happy law student of the Inns of Court, in the first flush of a young man's enthusiasm for poetry and politics. He resembled his sister Madeleine greatly. Like her, rather tall, dark-haired, and in complexion almost colourless. He had bright blue eyes, whereas hers were a soft brown. He was quieter in mien too, and still more so in temperament. She was intensely, morbidly eager for the excitement of society's exquisite pleasures. It must be said he did not dislike them by any means. And yet the big and splendid hope which had dawned with the radiance of a sun within him was intent upon other and better joys. Brother and sisters were much about the same age. He was just one and twenty; Madeleine a year older, and Mary, the youngest, not quite nineteen. This only brother's strong love for them made itself felt in many involuntary ways. But it was to Mary, and not to the older Madeleine, that Harold told his deepest and most sacred thoughts. For she was a sweet woman, this sister Mary, and won the knowledge unasked of the hidden wishes of her brother's honest heart. He could not hide them from her. He must needs tell some one of them, and who so alive to sympathize with him as loving Mary?

When he came telling her of them—and often this happened—a bright and gladdening blush animated her affectionate face and died fleetly away; and her hazel eyes, which ever seemed to carry within them unfathomable secrets, would soar from their depths, like the morning dawn out of the night, aglow with the light of purity and heavenly grace. Speaking to her, Harold often felt he was in the presence of one whom angels rejoiced to see and to be with, and at that unuttered thought he rejoiced in his own way too.

To-night her ball-dress is as simple as her sister's is elaborate, and she wears no ornament about her person save a cross of gold reposing upon her bosom and secured by a delicate necklet around her white and perfectly-shaped throat. One chaste, pale flower blushes slightly in her abundant brown hair.

“You look cold, child,” her mother said to her.

“I suppose it is owing to the slight ball-dress,” she answered, and stood before the fire waiting for the carriage.

Then Harold, who had left the drawing-room, returned, saying, “There go the carriage-wheels! Girls, are you muffled up carefully? Mother, good night! Do not let loneliness come upon you while we are away. It looks almost unkind leaving you here all alone.”

“I am accustomed to solitude, and I love it well,

Harold! That I need not tell *you*, my dear boy. Don't be uneasy about me—I have lots of duties to occupy me before I go to bed," Mrs. Leyne answered cheerfully. "Remember me to your host and hostess, and take every care of yourselves, my darlings!"

They kissed her one by one, and more than once, especially Mary, who, bending over her mother, and folding her arms around her, pressed her lips to those of Mrs. Leyne for well-nigh half a minute.

The drawing-room door closed at length behind them, and they were gone from her. The sound of the vanishing carriage-wheels over the gravel-path lessened quickly, and the stately house seemed solemnly silent to Mrs. Leyne. The ticking hall-clock beat monotonously to and fro. A log of wood upon the fire suddenly sank deeper into the flames beneath it. The wind, as it passed the window, heaved a fitful sigh, as though it were a weary spirit doomed to wander homeless over the world. Sometimes the startling shriek of a hurried night-train, whistling as it rolled noisily into the neighbouring city, disturbed Mrs. Leyne. She resumed the needlework, interrupted by the entrance of her three children; but her jewelled fingers delayed their familiar office, while unconsciously the knitting-needles dropped from her lap to the floor, and flashed in the flickering firelight. The ex-

pression of her face became alternately peaceful and disturbed. The future of her children was troubling her constantly of late. Her mother's heart yearned painfully for their happiness. Her husband's portrait, which hung suspended from the wall near by, attracted her notice. It was no new thing for her to study in solitude that face, with its clever brow. No new thing for her to sigh bitterly and stifle the terrible sorrow that would wrench from her, if she yielded to it, all her remaining love of life, and launch her by her own hand into eternity, in her wild desire for him who was gone before her there. Painful remembrances made her rise from her seat and ascend to her bedroom hastily. As she glided thither, a hot tear fell by chance upon her wedding-ring; she felt its warmth upon her hand, and with a burning kiss bestowed upon that golden relic, she brushed the tear away. Arrived at her bedroom-door, she entered, and walked across to where a blue silk curtain concealed from view a small recess, into which she advanced on tiptoe, and knelt before a silver crucifix, beside which stood a statue in marble of the Virgin. From the tinted ceiling a gilded lamp glowed with softened hue upon the countenance of the kneeling lady. She remained for upwards of a quarter of an hour in that suppliant attitude which is surely dear to God, and

then she returned to her sleeping apartment, full of love, with a pretty, child-like expression beaming upon her motherly face.

She was awake when Harold and his sisters arrived home, at five o'clock. She distinctly heard them speaking in whispers when they passed the door of her room, and she thanked them in her heart for it, knowing that they murmured low to one another lest they might disturb her slumbers. "God bless ye!" she softly said, and closed her eyes, feeling within herself a sense of profound peace, such as the world never gave her and never could give.

In another hour, when stalwart labourers, smoking their first pipefuls, wended from humble dwellings to commence their early labour,—

"For men must work,
. . . there's little to earn and many to keep,"—

and the noise of carts rattling on the sun-dried roads indicated the birth of busy day and humanity's renewed struggle for subsistence, a figure closely veiled glided down the curved avenue, and passed unnoticed the lodge gates attached to the mansion of the Leyne family. This figure continued its rapid pace towards the entrance of a building where men and women were following one another, and disappearing through the door-way. The veiled figure entered with the rest, and, flinging her dark veil

aside, revealed the joyous face of Mary Leyne. She knelt side by side with these humble country-folk and hardy day-labourers; and no one in that modest little chapel was humbler or happier than this maiden, whom, a few hours ago, Honourables, and Right Honourables, and a stray Lord or Baronet danced with and listened to, as her gay laughter and winning words delighted them, and made them sigh when another claimant came and led her away to the whirling maze.

In the glad sky the sun was higher when Mary Leyne tripped lightly home again, rejoicing with the wild birds, this shining April morn, and hearing from afar the bugle-sounds summoning men to the battle of life, the imperious factory bells, the shrill warnings of impatient trains, the rising hum of the city, and, amidst such notes of strife, the quieter tone from a church-belfry, like the accents of a wise counsellor, bidding mankind not to forget.

A Newfoundland dog, lazily stretched in the sunshine across the hall-steps, bounded forward swiftly when he saw her approaching. She patted him, and he looked up gratefully; but she bade him make no disturbance; and he implicitly obeyed, with loving lustre in his big eyes. The blushing girl applied her latchkey noiselessly to the door, the dog's bushy tail wagging energetically all the while. When the door was opened, he would fain follow her in and be with

her : she and he were such close friends from the days of his foolish puppyhood. If the dog could speak, he would tell many a tale of her solicitude for him at the breakfast and dinner hours. Many a tit-bit, many a crust and unpicked bone he had to thank her for with that energetic tail of his, and those glistening, wistful eyes ! This morning, however, she told him he must not come in ; and so she cautiously closed the door and left him to his dog-thoughts, in the genial enjoyment of the Spring sunshine, and hastening without being heard up-stairs to her bedroom, lay down and slept soundly, with the unutterable smile upon her face, no less sweetly expressive in her saint-like slumber than when, with the gladness of a holy heart, she lifted her veil in the little chapel and charmed by her loveliness the poor and lowly worshippers, who rejoiced to see her kneeling amongst them.

Oh ! there are men and women living lives that are truly beautiful, in spite of the influence of those who would rob them of their precious treasure and set up instead, for universal worship, an idol of gold. In the midst of much delusion they are a reality. By those who are as themselves, they are rightly understood ; to others, they may seem fools or enthusiasts. The passions, the hopes, the fears, the selfish ambitions that collect and storm in the little heart, drive no long-abiding clouds over the sunshine which beams so

fruitfully upon the narrow path they so confidently tread. In the battle of human endeavour their blood courses cool, and to them is given the splendid victory! They are part of the glory of the great Creator; and old age does not make them regret a youth which, on this side of the grave, to none comes back again.

“All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died.”

It was eleven o'clock before the Leynes greeted each other again; and at breakfast this was, after bidding her mother good morning, the first sentence uttered by Madeleine:—

“We made a new acquaintance last night, mamma.”

“Who is the person, my dear?”

“One of Harold's particular friends.”

“And, like him, a law student, mamma,” Mary put in.

“Harold is bringing him out here to-day,” Madeleine went on. “He wishes, we all wish, to introduce him to you. You will ardently admire him, mamma: he is just the sort that wins admiration, especially from such as you; he is so unlike many young men whom we meet every day, and who are such good-for-nothing, stupid-headed fellows! I wonder at Harold, and am angry with him, for hiding this friend of his

so long from Mary and myself. During their college course they have been intimate friends, and yet he never brought him here."

"To fall in love with him, and break your heart if he did not care for you—a catastrophe not at all impossible," said Harold Leyne mischievously.

Madeleine pouted and drank her tea in silence, directing over her sparkling cup an angry and flashing eye at her brother, which made him laugh.

"You have not told me his name yet," Mrs. Leyne said, addressing her elder daughter.

"Noel d'Auvergne!" Mary exclaimed, in a clear, eager voice, before Madeleine could reply; and a blush, fresh and beautiful—one of the early roses of first love—brightened her face.

CHAPTER II.

NOEL D'AUVERGNE.

“A youth was there, of quiet ways,
A student of old books and days,
* * * * *
With many a social virtue graced,
And yet a friend of solitude ;
* * * * *
Books were his passion and delight,
* * * * *
He loved the twilight that surrounds
The border-land of old romance.”

LONGFELLOW.

THIS same morning, after the ball, he was partaking of a lonely breakfast in his rooms in Trinity College, Dublin. Lonely! Yes, so far as one like him may be lonely. So far as one may be lonely who belonged to two distinct worlds—the world he lived in and was so dissatisfied with, and the world that lived within him, of spiritual beauty and of hidden happiness, wherein, upon an unseen support, his glad soul reposed, waiting with a trust which was born of truest love. The morning

meal finished, he arose from an easy-chair, and attended to the wants of two glorious-throated canaries carolling and rejoicing in the sunshine that poured its profuse golden stream through the half-open window. A large and imperturbable cat, dozing on the window-sill, glanced with dignified restraint upon the restless, demonstrative birds, and closed his contented eyes. He was a very trustworthy cat! In spite of delicious temptations, he had never yet placed a covetous paw between the bars of that graceful cage. He seemed to have an understanding with his good master about the safety of these yellow warblers, and so confined himself to his proper vocation, in the pursuit of thoughtless mice. Noel d'Auvergne fed the birds, arranged their pretty prison, and, raising the sash still higher, hung the cage upon a convenient nail fastened outside the window for that purpose. Doing so, a bunch of primroses got detached from his breast, and fell in a rapid shower to the ground beneath. An acquaintance, crossing the quadrangle, ran boyishly over, picked them up, touched his lips with them gaily, and carried them away, smiling step by step to himself over his fragrant spoil. D'Auvergne nodded and kissed his hands, and proceeded to feed that philosophic-looking cat — said animal taking his breakfast quietly, as he did most things. Then the postman came round and left a host of letters

which Noel read. Several were from students absent from town, requiring him to execute particular commissions, to send them a fishing-rod, or a new-fashioned scarf, or the latest book out. He was a great favourite, and they did not hesitate about entrusting him with a sacred secret now and then. He exercised the same fascination over the colourless, pondering thinker, whose midnight lamp often paled before the triumphant light of dawn, and over the hearty athletic undergraduate who loved the oar, the racket-court, the cricket-field and the "noble art of self-defence" better than Newton's Principia, or Virgil's verse. In stature of middle height, broad-shouldered, swarthy-hued—sunshine has frequently played upon him—his forehead white, his sweet blue eyes sad, though in his heart dwells joy deep and undisturbed, his face stamped with the self-mastery of one who has suffered physically and mentally, and fears no suffering now—such is Noel d'Auvergne with his whiskerless face, so young-looking for one who has lived six-and-twenty years, and only adorned with a thick moustache, lighter than his brown, waving hair. Such is Noel d'Auvergne outwardly; to know a little of him inwardly, this story is offered to every indulgent reader.

Some one knocked at the door, exclaiming, "Are you up yet, D'Auvergne?"

"Is it you so early! Come in, Harold," he an-

swered, throwing aside a letter he was reading more carefully than the others which had come to him by this morning's post.

"How fresh you look!" Leyne said gaily, perching himself at the same time upon the breakfast-table, first removing the china with one cautious sweep of his ready right arm. "Were you out before breakfast?"

"I was," he replied.

"That explains your looking so well, after last night. By the way, rolling home in the carriage, my sisters closely questioned me about you, D'Auvergne." Noel smiled. "I turned shamefully surly and silent, because I was dreadfully sleepy, and would not answer. To make up, however, for my silence and surliness, I said I would bring you out to our place to-day. I have a spare saddle, you know, and bridle, and a spare steed, Noel, to put them on. We can have a canter in the fields together. What answer will you give me? You will come?"

"With pleasure."

"My mother will have luncheon prepared when we return, or perhaps, before we go. In the afternoon I will give you full liberty to depart and get thirsty and tired over Coke and Blackstone, for the rest of the day. I am aware you are busy preparing for an important examination, and I won't, of course, ask you to stay the evening."

"Very well."

The quiet smile upon D'Auvergne's sunburnt countenance broadened and became more beautiful, and the two friends saw for an instant into the great depths of each other's eyes, with a mutual gleam of pleasant recognition. "Since this is arranged satisfactorily," Leyne said, "you had better come with me at once to the lecture, or we shall surely be somewhat late. Though that does not matter much," he added, "we'll trust to the charitable short-sightedness of dear Doctor A."

D'Auvergne, going straightway into another adjoining room, re-appeared, dressed in his college garb.

"You glide about as if some one was asleep there," Leyne remarked.

"Oranmore came home with me last night," Noel said unconcernedly. "I gave him a bed. He is in that room."

"He sleeps soundly," the other added.

"Yes, indeed! He danced a great deal: he always does so, I need not tell you. He will find breakfast here. Come along, Harold," he replied, a little bitterly.

"Where is your home?" Leyne one day asked him.

"This is my home, Leyne," D'Auvergne suddenly responded, glancing round his book-laden chamber;

and then, pointing to three small pictures hanging from the walls, he said, softly, "I keep them covered lest the least dust should injure them!" He unveiled the two nearest to where they stood. "My parents," he went on; "and this," he drew the covering away from the third, while his sorrowful blue eyes filled with tears, "is my only sister, Mary."

"Oh! such a face!"

"Yes," he replied, "it is pretty. She died, aged nineteen, six years ago, of consumption. She went first. Fairest things fade! Wherever I go I bring these pictures along with me. I cannot help it, Harold. I cannot bear to part with them even for a short month or two. That my Mary should die so young and perfect in her loveliness of body and of mind makes me understand a little of the death of our Redeemer. Ah, Harold! if you knew all Mary has taught me! Thinking of the lessons I have learned from her almost compels me to believe that what is called education is not true education, that colleges and universities do not sow the most fruitful seed in a man; that goodness, justice, truth can live and reign without their possessors opening one book of Homer, or studying one chapter of human philosophy. Harold!" He added, emphatically, "My sister! my darling saint! my pure-minded Mary! taught me more than all the learned Fellows of this University

have yet succeeded in teaching me, and, goodness knows! they have been three years and a half at me now!"

D'Auvergne told him further details relative to his family history. That his father—a Frenchman, a scion of an ancient race—having held a commission in the Austrian service, retired, after obtaining his colonelcy, and settled in the south-west of Ireland, upon an estate which once belonged to his wife's family. Madame D'Auvergne first met her future husband in Italy, where they were in the same year married. "I was born in Paris," Noel said to his friend; "poor Mary in a charming country residence outside Vienna. Mary died in the south of France, whither we vainly brought her for her health's sake. My father died in Ireland, and my mother in Rome. We have been a family of wanderers, you perceive. I, the last of the flock—the last of my race, in this land at least—still am a wanderer. I have no home, Harold Leyne!"

When all died, no ties binding him to Ireland, D'Auvergne went out to Mexico to visit an uncle—his father's brother—a wealthy mine-owner, resident from the far days of his hot-headed youth in Sonora. Noel sold the place in the south-west to a rich parvenu; auctioned off the cattle, the furniture, many an elegant relic, and afterwards secured his berth in a ship bound for San Francisco—no one saying a gay

or a sad farewell to him—in quest of this remaining relative. He found him, after little trouble; but only to lose him again, and to discover that he himself was the owner of vast property in this foreign land. The wealthy uncle died, scarcely regretted, for he had been a solitary unmarried man with few friends. Long ago, when he was a poor adventurer, he may have loved, and loved in vain; but—well, they tell a story, and, if it is true, pity him from your heart, gentle reader. Old men look not back upon a cloudless past; and the heart knoweth its own bitterness. He died, making no will; and Noel d'Auvergne unexpectedly, as nearest of kin, became the undisputed owner of these mines, and all those extensive buildings and wandering herds of live stock; reducing which into a handsome sum of money, he re-embarked, in a twelvemonth from the date of his uncle's death, for Ireland, richer than many an emigrant after the burthensome labour of a long life. In Dublin he entered his name for the difficult profession of the Bar. And therefore this morning, being likewise a hopeful law student, he accompanied Harold Leyne to the lecture on Civil Law by Doctor A.

The belfry of Trinity College is sounding peremptorily; and so they join the throng awaiting the arrival of the Professor of Civil Law. Leyne and D'Auvergne approach and converse with several

friends. The group they have just joined consists of two newspaper reporters and the sub-editor of a Dublin daily journal. In the wisdom of the world these are wise. They are patiently working their upward way to an honourable social position through the law courts. They would shrug their shoulders if you pointed to the stars and exclaimed, they are beautiful. They know they are beautiful; but what is it to them? The knowledge of it does not give them bread.

In the centre of a handsome hall four lads bend towards each other their earnest faces, questioning the issue of a debate which was carried on last night in the rooms of the Law Students' Society. The result is settled amongst them as if cabinet ministers were not more wise than they. These young fellows take to their vocation thoroughly, and are of that band who wrestle with Coke and Blackstone, and meditate over the pages of Herbert Broom. Brave, aspiring workers in legal mines; daring spirits, who dive into the depths of Statutes and carry up triumphantly to the clear daylight the sunken treasures of Justice. Into the midst of the attending crowd advances Professor A., and the hearts of the young leap up towards him as towards one whom they would love. Seated in the lecturer's chair the Doctor produces a long-looking paper, and calls the names of the students. This preliminary occupies some amusing

moments, partly in consequence of certain obstinate gentlemen who, in spite of the Doctor's repeated questioning, still persist in pronouncing their own names properly. One succeeds in answering the name of an absent friend, obtaining for the latter thereby credit of attendance at the lecture. Doctor A. begins,—

“ Gentlemen,

“ As I had the pleasure of remarking in my last dissertation, Justinian says” (the sentence is in Latin). The quotation from that authority ended, a shuffling of feet feelingly accords on the part of the audience attentive appreciation of the Doctor's efforts. Such expressions of admiration bring forth, from the lecturer's lips, a threat of complaint to the heads of Trinity College, Dublin. The students admit the reasonableness of the threat, by a spreading murmur of applause. Further enunciations meet with like approval from the range of benches, during the continuance of which one wary young listener unobtrusively opening the lecture-room door closes it as unobtrusively, and makes his disappearance. The Doctor continues to dilate upon a dissertation concerning the nature and rules of a difficult-to-be-recollected Latin definition of a regulation of obsolete civil law. During the recital of this important subject the students become quiet.

One here, one there, talking to an attentive neighbour; another killing time with a novel; some, sensible fellows, seriously settling breakfast with a little healthful slumber. The Doctor at length appears, like his hearers, convinced of the utility of Civil Law lectures not being too prolonged, and to others' satisfaction, stops short. The sleepy class simultaneously awoken into ordinary life again, betokening their ready concurrence in the mutual desirability of going, without delay, about their daily business. In a few minutes the four white walls of the tenantless lecture-room become blank as ever. The disturbed flies have it all their own way there once more. The morning sunbeam throws dust-laden light on bare benches. The only remnant of the batch of students and of their genial-mannered lecturer, is yonder caricature, sketched by some undeveloped Hogarth in prominent, not untruthful lines on that black-board behind the lecturer's chair—the bleak, familiar territory of *X Y Z* and *pontes asinorum* some of us have, in our reluctant boyhood, travelled smiling and sighing and wondering.

“We are not much wiser in Civil Law after that lecture, D'Auvergne,” said Leyne very drily.

“No, certainly,” his companion replied as drily, and they separated for awhile. Noel D'Auvergne found in his chambers the following note addressed to him:—

“My dear Friend,

“I am going out to keep an appointment at my club, and return you a thousand thanks for your kindness. Dancing sent the champagne to my head, I know not how on earth I came to sleep in your rooms instead of my own. A cloud darkens my recollections of last night. When we meet, you, I trust, will make the past clearer for me. I am quite certain I got into no trouble, nor made a fool of myself, since I was with *you*. Believe me most grateful, and also

Ever devotedly yours,

“O'MALLEY ORANMORE.”

“You were as drunk as a lord!” D'Auvergne said to himself, and sat down to write answers to the letters he received this morning. Around him in disordered array lay cups and saucers, broken crusts of toast, egg-shells and remnants of devoured ham-rashers. Alas! how many mourn, owing to the superfluous neatness of their talkative wives, for the departed negligence of quiet-tongued bachelorhood? Still Noel d'Auvergne was not by any means satisfied with his present mode of life. Not by any means! There was some one most worthy of his faithful love, whose absence was keenly felt when at times, in the waning twilight, he brooded and wove a pleasant future by the lonely fireside,

while the canaries, silent-throated, slept in the decorated cage overhead, and the meditative cat purred at his feet and looked up at him now and then contemplatively.

CHAPTER III.

BRAVELY DONE!

“I saw the treasured splendour, her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip.”

TENNYSON.

MARY LEYNE, her fair face shadowed by a broad-leafed straw hat, stood alone in the perfumed garden, pleased within herself at the sunny thoughts of the approaching Summer. She was not the least lovely object in the exquisite scene spreading around her lithe young form. At her feet flowers bowed before her to the healthy ocean breeze, and the clustering foliage of many trees made welcome protection from the oppressive noontide heat. Hedge and hill-side wore that pale green hue of Spring—a delicate colour which is seen in Autumn too, ere the leaves wrinkle, and yellow, and succumb to the inexorable winds. A silent passion for flowers dwelt in the innocent breast of Mary Leyne. She would stoop over their wonderful petals reverentially,

and, witnessing their perfection, thanked God for it and for all things! In solitude they appealed to her imagination, by the simple universal language of their eloquent beauty,—

“Every where about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born :
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn.”

Watering some favourite plants on the box-wood bordered way, she moved leisurely down one of the many paths of the garden, until, at length, arrived at the brow of a small cliff, under which was heard the familiar music of the sea-waves dashing persistently up the rugged sides of imperturbable rocks, Mary Leyne, drinking in a long draught first of the sweet pure air, and, in the glad intoxication of health and the happiness of goodness, breaking forth into merry singing laughter, sat down in gay abandonment upon a rustic seat.

“Her fancies as they come and go,
Her pure face speaks the while,
For now it is a fitting glow,
And now a breaking smile ;
And now it is a graver shade
When holier thoughts are there—
An Angel's pinion might be stay'd
To see a sight so fair.”

She looked around inland, and then across the bay of Dublin, and gazing on the scene in its April loveli-

ness, Mary Leyne felt the proud delight of a genuine Irish girl, who is not ashamed to belong to the people who inhabit this little emerald gem set in the silver sea. To-day the peaceful wind hardly ruffled the placid waters, and graceful yachts, spreading their snowy sails in vain, seemed to float like secure birds upon the passionless waves. Underneath the cliff, not far from the shore, a young man, clothed in attractive white, slowly sculled an elegant wherry, feathering his pair of shining oars most evenly for Mary's edification; and his tutored efforts were not unrepaid, for, recognizing in him a childhood's friend, she immediately stood up, waving her trembling handkerchief, until he became in the distance a nodding white speck, lessening with every sudden gleaming stroke. Then a steamer laden with people laboured by, hastening upon a pleasure excursion, and strains of soothing music floated from a band of Bohemian performers on board. All the time from the mysterious ocean a ship was approaching, with the silent grace of a stately swan, the stars and stripes of the United States waving imperiously in her rear, bringing familiar memories of American story of forests, of red men, of prairies, of noble rivers, of inland seas, of youthful cities wherein toiled the children, the grandchildren, the great-grandchildren of mature Europe. Impetuous railway carriages sped between Dublin and its sea-port,

Kingstown. Howth Hill towered loftily—the sentinel of the sunlit scene. A fleet of herring-boats floated in company beneath it, with swarthy sails outspread to catch the delaying wind. The only cloud in the grand blue sky was above the murmuring city itself. Mary saw that, and sadness filled her heart as she thought of the struggle of humanity raging amidst this quietness of Nature. Her eyes turning from the direction of the city caught sight of the brilliant cross crowning the sharp spire of a neighbouring church. Then those mystic eyes of hers lost their habitual sadness and flashed joyfully. She glided blithely back through another pathway to the house, and met Madeleine coming towards her.

“Mr. D’Auvergne has already arrived,” her sister said, “and O’Malley Oranmore. Mr. Oranmore has ridden from the city; when Harold met him this morning in Dublin, and asked him to join our party, he consented, although he had an engagement elsewhere: was not that good of him? He is so kind to us!”

Mary quickly donned her grey riding habit; then both girls went in search of Harold and his guests. They found them already mounted and leaving the stables. With a sudden impulse Mary went over to D’Auvergne and held out her hand. The troublesome animal he was riding became motionless. She began to smile.

“He knows me,” she softly uttered. “Poor Tom! Take care of yourself, Mr. D’Auvergne: with you he will be restive, although he seems so quiet when I am by.”

The girls were soon mounted, and the group rode away joyously, for the spirit of youth was within them—within even O’Malley Oranmore, at least apparently, for he thought it well to be as other people; better than the good amongst the good, and amongst the wicked a very devil indeed. It was a doctrine of his social creed, to which he adhered faithfully and daily.

They reached the hill of Killiney, and dismounting ascended on foot, speaking only when they paused to glance around at the lovely panorama. Noel d’Auvergne experienced new sensations of happiness.

“Yet it was not that Nature had shed o’er the scene
Her purest of crystal and brightest of green;
’Twas not the soft magic of streamlet or hill:
* * * * *
’Twas that friends were near.”

Friends most assuredly! although he had spoken to these two sisters last night for the first time.

They descended from the hill, and, having remounted, Mary rode on before them, her sister following in a quieter canter. A sportsman in a field close by fired at a sea-gull which had strayed landward, and the horse ridden by Madeleine Leyne,

frightened by the rapid noise, started forward at such a pace, she found it impossible to pull him in. She could see the silken ears thrown back ominously. Noel d'Auvergne gave the reins to "Tom." He drew near the pursued, so near he could behold Madeleine's strong riding gloves cut through from holding the useless reins. Wayfarers gaped at the flying couple, an old fruit-woman wrung her withered hands in dismay; boys gleefully hallooed, a clamorous cur came out of a house barking behind them, a crowd of rooks rose at the disturbance, setting up a cry to which hoarsely replied a flock of gabbling geese, waddling in a roadside pool; when he saw the horses coming, a man driving a donkey-cart left his seat with surprising rapidity, and ran behind a hedge. Madeleine's animal galloped down a narrow lane, and cleared a stone wall, four feet high, which stopped up the path. Gallant girl! she has not fallen! Noel d'Auvergne could die cheerfully in saving her life now. He saw a frightful danger to which Miss Leyne was exposed. Madeleine herself comprehended in another moment her awful position. She was in a large field terminating in a steep quarry at one extremity, and thither the horse, bearing his precious burthen, hastened. The first expression of fear escaped her then. What the spark is to the cannon, that faint sound was to Noel d'Auvergne. He only had one thought.

—to save her. He leaped into the field from the road and happily discovered he was much nearer than Miss Leyne to the brink of the ugly precipice. Reining up within a few feet of it, he waited calmly for Madeleine. She saw who it was stood thus between her and eternity. She tried to turn her horse aside, but Noel was not to be defrauded of an heroic deed. In a second or two the horses met, and in the collision fell. The gaping chasm was ready for its prey, but one at least it was defrauded of, for Madeleine Leyne was saved. She arose unhurt to her feet. The force of the collision threw D'Auvergne's horse to the quarry's fatal edge; he sought to separate himself from the struggling animal, under whose hind feet the dried earth loosened quickly, and the poor steed next moment lay with broken body and quivering nostrils amongst the rough rocks fifty feet below. D'Auvergne was being carried away with the crumbling earth and stones, when he found himself held back and grasped under the arms. Then quietness and soothing silence seemed to follow, and he thought some kind one bent over him, putting back the clotted hair from his wounded forehead. He opened his eyes once ere he closed them in unconsciousness. He saw in that fading glance the white, frightened face of Madeleine Leyne. O'Malley Oranmore was the first to ride up in haste a minute later, followed

by the others. A crowd of men and women gathered, as such crowds do, many looking on wonderingly, many officious and in the way; four or five really useful. Two chairs were conveyed from a neighbouring cottage, and D'Auvergne carefully placed upon them. Harold cantered home for the carriage. Oranmore was sent into Dalkey in order to seek a doctor, and bring him back with him if he could. Four strong country fellows lifted the temporary litter and carried the prostrate form into the adjacent cottage, where D'Auvergne recovered consciousness. He heard a group of sympathizing women talking compassionately about him, and earnestly praising him. An absorbing pain troubled his weary head, he felt something like warm blood streaming over his temple, but he did not remember why he should be lying helpless with those whispering people busy about his strange and lowly bed. He could not understand their answers to his questions, and he murmured, "It is all a mystery to me! What has happened to me?" A fair white hand flitted before his eyes and pressed some cooling substance to his brows, staunching the flowing from the wound above them. A soft voice softened his soul until he almost forgot the continual pain weakening him more and more. Suddenly he grew intelligent, a light broke in upon the darkness; he saw again the leap over the wall, the vivid depth of the quarry, the struggling

horses striking against each other; then the sudden blow that crushed his arm, the impetuous and fierce fall to the earth; and last, and long lingering and sweetest recollection for days and weeks to come! the brave tearful girl he had rescued from death bending over him so pityingly, and stroking the hair that wandered over his bloodstained brow. The fair white hand which laid the cooling balm to his wounded head ceased its charitable office, and the sweet soft voice gave no more thoughtful orders to those standing in readiness by. The pain weakened him still more, and he longed in his prostration to see that fair hand busy about him again, and to hear the pleasant-sounding voice. He felt that they must belong to Madeleine Leyne alone. Who else possessed fingers so delicate, and a voice so musical? Noel d'Auvergne was, however, mistaken. Madeleine was resting weak and overcome in the second of the two rooms of the cottage, and his first nurse was Mary Leyne; hers were the long white hands, so delicate in their touch, and hers the modulated words so soothing to the ear.

O'Malley Oranmore returned after a considerable time without the physician. He declared he could not find one high or low; the Dalkey doctor was from home, and he was quite unable to procure another near, although—at least, he said so to Mary and her sister—he most diligently inquired. So he

came back, he added, to see what best might be done, and to offer his services in every way.

Then while he was talking to them about the patient, Harold reappeared with the carriage, and accompanied by Mrs. Leyne and a physician. Noel was cautiously lifted into the vehicle; Madeleine and Mary took their seats opposite to him, and the party drove homeward, silent and distressed: except O'Malley Oranmore, who was loud in his sympathetic declarations, as he rode by the carriage-windows, and peered in at the uneasy occupants. Mary ardently regretted his returning with them; she entertained a deep-rooted dislike for every thing he said and did. Had Madeleine beheld the horrible expression of his clear-cut countenance when, riding up before the others to the spot where she knelt by the quarry's edge, he witnessed her solicitude for the wounded preserver of her life, she too, like her cautious sister, would have ardently regretted his returning with them, and with less trustfulness would her gentle brown eyes have been fixed upon him when he spoke to her in such complete and polished sentences.

From this day henceforward, and to his life's bitter end, he hated Noel d'Auvergne. Ay, he hated him as he hated the name of Virtue.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HONOURABLE O'MALLEY ORANMORE.

“ With lips depress'd as he were meek,
Himself unto himself he sold :
Upon himself himself did feed :
Quiet, dispassionate, and cold.”

TENNYSON.

BORN within that circle sacred to aristocratic blood and to genius, but whose doors nevertheless the golden key of the plebeian can sometimes open, the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore availed himself of the privileges of his noble birth to the fullest extent in his power. In many a pleasant country-house throughout the land his familiar figure was conspicuous when fox-hounds clustered on the lawn or friendly voices chattered over the ample Christmas board. In stately city mansions, in the gay cricket-field, at the race-course, at the yachting-club, no one knew more people intimately than did this younger brother of a peer. Although an “Honourable” he early knew the provoking disadvantage of being a poor gentleman. His dead father had gone in for

electioneering during his lifetime in order to make statesmen of his sons, but to such a degree that between it and open "Irish" hospitality he could only allow his youngest boy two hundred a year, and obtain for him a commission in an infantry regiment. In the army he lived a dishonourable and a reckless life, so dishonourable and so reckless that advice reached him from a very high quarter it would be necessary for him to sell out, which warning he reluctantly obeyed, just when he had purchased his captaincy, and at seven and twenty returned home from Gibraltar, where his company was stationed. His father died meanwhile, and O'Malley Oranmore arrived too late for the funeral, and found to his surprise and bitter disappointment that the father who would have been fondly careful of him but for his own fault, had cut him off, had left him no provision, had forgotten him as if he were dead. The new peer, his brother, received him in a kind, brotherly, forgiving way; allowed him his old room, a horse to ride, a rod and a gun, and last, not least, a few desirable pounds annually to keep him in clothes and trifles, asking in return that O'Malley should look after some business connected with the management of the estates, and above all, for he was very capable of doing it, to make himself useful and agreeable when the house contained guests, which was easy, pleasant, and sufficing for awhile, after the routine

of peaceful soldiering in bleak barracks. He settled down to his new state of existence satisfied, knowing, no one knew it better than himself, a lord's grand mansion in the country is not the worst place on the face of the earth to contrive to be comfortable in. Heiresses often paid a week's visit to his brother's place, and they were, of course, directly in his line. But he did not intend to remain too long the upper-servant where it was not impossible he might be, even yet, one day master and lord of all. It was very good to be able to knock down pheasants at will, to ride a thoroughbred, to sit to a first-rate dinner, to sleep in a comfortable chamber decorated with foils and boxing-gloves, fancy pipes and sporting pictures, and a couple of cases of rare wines; but then—but then he had no business here; a truth which the peer's haughty lady keenly reminded him of in ways most galling to a sensitive mind. But, fortunately for himself, O'Malley Oranmore's mind was not very sensitive, and though young, he had lived long enough to measure men and women rightly. So he submitted in silence, and no one he treated with more considerate respect than "my Lady." Though she hated his presence and took care not to conceal her hate, she could not drive him from beneath her roof. Oh, no! He had no notion of going out into the cold of the indifferent world because it suited *her*. Oh, no! he knew better

than that, and persisted, in spite of her dagger-thrusts, in not being sensitive. His exercise of patience was not in vain, for at length good times unlooked for came. An aged sister of his departed father died when the snow was thick upon the roofs of houses, and in the chilling December morning they laid her beside her brother's coffin in the family vault of the little country church a few miles distant. In the loneliness of her spinsterhood, O'Malley, since his return, had shown towards her some kindness. It may have been that in his own solitary position he learned to understand her desolate state, and held out to her the hand of fellowship, walking with her occasionally, writing all her letters, taking her for a drive once or twice a week. Be this as it may, she was grateful and did not forget him. She bequeathed to her dear and affectionate (so she called him in the will) nephew O'Malley five hundred a year—her whole property. He could afford to return "my Lady's" look of scorn now! He did not conceal henceforth his long-disguised contempt for her. He gave up, thanking his brother as sincerely as it was in his nature to be thankful, for his friendly protection, his old room which had been his in boyhood days; and removed to Dublin in search of some woman with money whom he might safely offer himself to, since he was no longer a pauper. True that stories went before him there—stories of his military life, which

however brought no blush into his clear countenance, for were they not, he reasoned with himself, the follies of youth, and—and—bah! what cared he? Was he not the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore, with five hundred a year? To marry an heiress was the long-cherished hope of his life. Already he had sought beneath his brother's roof to win a maiden, but her wary father would have nought of this elegant ex-soldier, who carried no purse, and had no home of his own.

But now, in people's eyes, he was an important being. They were certain the old maiden aunt was a female Cræsus, and that this favoured nephew was in the enjoyment of a splendid income. Families with daughters, shy of him heretofore on account of his poverty, made him stay for days and weeks in out-of-the-way country houses. It was not wondered at he should so soon after his rich relative's decease abandon this dullest existence amongst fields and provincial men and women, and flee to the satisfying society of the city. By and by when it would seem fit to him to settle down, he could purchase a lordly place like his titled brother's. So they said, and envied him, and mourned for themselves. He was perfectly well acquainted with this wide rumour of his newly acquired wealth, and he rejoiced, feeling profoundly that to him such a rumour was nearly as valuable as the actual possession of the property

they alleged had fallen to his share. He held his cards cautiously, however, for he was not fool enough to lose sight of this unpleasant truth, namely, that the cards, good as they were, still were not all trumps. Long before Madeleine Leyne was personally known to him, the fame of her beauty and the story of her desirable fortune reached him. When he saw her face to face he felt convinced how especially suited she would be to that position he wished to realize. He never dressed and perfumed himself with such studiousness before. He never threw such unconscious sweetness into his voice and mien. He looked an exquisite, and yet not an exquisite, for he possessed the *ars celare artem*. He went great lengths, and would go greater, to gain the love of Madeleine Leyne, and in truth was in a fair way towards success. She had already reached that stage of affectionate feeling as to think of him more kindly, more intimately, more frequently than of any other human being in the whole wide world. Oftener in the calm hours of the night and of prayer her heart began to lean upon the recollection of him. She knew nothing authentically of his previous history, and if a strange tale reached her ear she removed it indignantly from her mind. She only beheld in him a gentleman heart and soul, and a possible husband. She was woman enough to be pleased with his attentions and to forgive him and

forget, if any of those cruelly whispered stories were partly true. Mary Leyne saw through his excellent acting, though. To find him alone with her sister was a misfortune she sought generally to foresee and prevent. He was aware that Mary was suspicious of him, that she would never be on his side as Harold was. But he was a great friend of hers nevertheless, for he made it his business to oblige her in every thing.

He was no churchgoer. Sunday's beautiful stillness and sense of rest strangely depressed him. He disbelieved revelation, called our beloved Saviour "that enthusiastic man;" and said to those who jested over his absence from divine service, that when he wanted to pray he prayed to the Great Spirit. The untutored savage in his native woods knows as much as this.

Once he loved another honestly when he was a boyish ensign in the —th, and the object of his affection was the barmaid of an hotel by the seaside. He promised to marry her; but his regiment in a short time was ordered away from the neighbouring city, and he went with it abroad, and never came to seek the deluded girl again. She waited and waited, dealing out drink to customers, obeying the commands of her employer, hiding her growing sorrow, wondering, in her trustful devotion to him, why he did not write, or send for her, or come himself.

Three years of disappointment passed, banishing youth from her face prematurely, and many, many bitter thoughts came which never came before. Young men ceased to saunter in, for the rose upon her cheek was white, and scars of trouble spoiled her delicate brow. Tedious the stormy winters when wild waves wasted their passion on the shore; mournful the gentle summer days, when excursionists poured down from the city on Sundays. It was sad work to awaken from her dream and to find that she was only a poor barmaid after all, whose business it was to deal out drink to thirsty lips, and to be familiar with cursing and drunken quarrels. At last a well-to-do brother settled in America, enclosed money to his orphan sister, and she went across the Atlantic to him. She was exceedingly grateful for his kindness, as one must needs be who like her is alone and uncared for. Keeping house for him while he prospered in riches, and gave her lots of pocket-money, gems, and charming silken dresses; but all these things could not mend her broken heart. Then the wealthy brother married, and she gave up the household keys to the satisfied young wife. In her brother's house she would be one too many henceforth, and so she went to live in a lonely lodging, and there, at eight and twenty, the broken heart found rest in death. In a New York cemetery, the shadow of a sculptured cross is thrown upon the

grass-grown grave of O'Malley Oranmore's only love.

This sleek thirty-year-old heiress-hunter is not too tall. Blue eyed, beardless, whiskerless, wearing gracefully a dark brown, bushy, military moustache, his long hair curling behind each ear down his neck, vigilantly obedient to fashion from spotless collar to Paris boots, he moves about amongst the daughters of men, who gaze upon him as upon one who might deliver them from greedy brothers and sisters, from mamma's precepts and papa's unpleasant murmurings over millinery bills, and the cost of gloves for the little hands which would willingly exchange all the splendid gems they wear for one plain wedding-ring.

This evening, seated in a room at his club, a wicked leer draws his thick moustache aside from its even and graceful position. He permits that sardonic distortion, for no one is present to notice the expressive curl, which is a meet interpreter of the images crowding in his mind into indefinite plans, to be more accurately arranged and skilfully matured when their time has come. He is thinking of Noel d'Auvergne. He is full of disquietude that Madeleine Leyne should be indebted to him for being the means of rescuing her from inevitable destruction, and, still worse, in such a manner—so heroic, so unselfish, as to win her unbounded gratitude, her real admiration, and, perhaps—for how can he foresee but that such

a terrible blow to his prospects may eventually be the result of all this?—her enthusiastic love. O'Malley Oranmore knew enough of the world, knew enough of D'Auvergne, to feel certain that no woman could long be acquainted with D'Auvergne without becoming devotedly attached to him, either in friendship or in love. And now he was actually for several weeks living under the same roof with her! attended on by her, nursed there by the family, ingratiated amongst the Leynes. They would—*she* would—daily more intimately understand what sort of man D'Auvergne was, and Oranmore felt that to understand him was to prize him as few are prized. It was a great disappointment to O'Malley Oranmore that this episode should have taken place; and so he keenly felt it to-night, for he uttered this sentence before he rose and left the room:—

“ Well for me, better for him, had he never been brought in that sentimental way to her house! Better for him to have followed the horse to the bottom of the quarry, and have lain there under him as lifeless, than to cross my path! Noel D'Auvergne, keep out of my way, or, by heaven! I will make you!”

Next minute he was smiling amongst a group of club friends, and the graceful moustache was as even as he could desire, and his blue eyes were full of calm and pleasant light, like sunshine, as though the soul within was happy and sinless, and scornful of sin.

CHAPTER V.

BEATRICE'S LOVE.

“Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.”

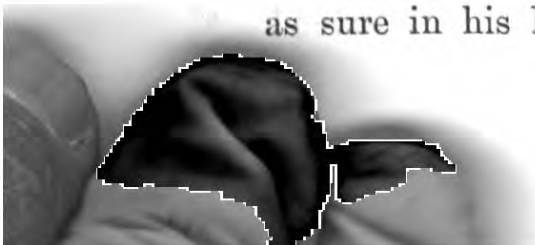
SHAKSPEARE.

PLEASURE-SEEKERS hasten to the Rhine every year, to the lofty heights of Switzerland, to the classic land of Italy, and heed not that there is a spot not far from home well worth a visit. That spot lies in the south-west of Ireland, and is called Killarney. Here the skies are radiant when the summer sun burns in the blue expanse; here the upward stretching mountains look like roads to heaven; here are ruins where one may meditate and weave an unwritten poem; here hand in hand lingers the past with the present;—the crumbling shrine and the bustling hotel, the peasant and the tourist. With its “fair gardens, shining streams,” blushing flowers, venerable trees, storied piles, and modern residences, Killarney is a sight to come and see. It is the Eden of Ireland; nay, it seems as if the earth in this one little corner reflected back some portion of Heaven!

What different travellers—birds of passage on the wing—cluster here for a week or two, and then separate to meet perhaps no more. Hopeful youths, with strong blood within them, beginning the fight of life, pensive maidens pining for true love, children happy in their unconscious purity, men of middle age thoughtful after the splendid education of experience, the old thinking of the vanity of things.

When the lakes are moonlit the bridegroom speaks to his young bride soft whispers full of sweetness, as the dip of the oar measures time to the echoes of amateur music ringing among the bosoms of the surrounding hills; and when he will be in the distant hereafter a white-haired widower, surely dear Killarney shall bring back to his recollection the vivid memory of her who, by her prevailing example, made him henceforth good.

Glena, Torc, Innisfallen! how the emigrant, when he hears of these familiar places, forgets the sorrow, the gloom, the hunger which drove him into exile, and recalls that autumn evening, the last he spent in his native Killarney, when the sunset glowed upon the lovely land! A tear starts, which he, man-like, brushes away, his hands grasp the spade more firmly, big emotion fills his religious breast, and, with a smile of faith upon his face, he submits, satisfied—he says it in Irish—with the blessed will of God, and is as sure in his heart as that two and two make four



that though clouds may come and clouds may go, the sun is behind them shining still.

In the neighbourhood of the town of Killarney is situated a cottage, within view of one of the lakes.

“All round a brooding quiet dwells.”

Flower-beds in fantastic forms are laid out in front of the cottage, and a green lawn well cultured terminates in a leafy wood which hides from view the public road. The sudden lustres of Torc waterfall are flashing in the distance; round the variegated flower-beds wind in whimsical bendings walks carefully gravelled; at the different windows of the cottage creepers cluster, dappling with moving shadows the spotless curtains—herding, curling up, crowding upon one another around the newly-thatched roof. The open door displays an ample hall, enlivened with pictures of hounds, and red-coated huntsmen, and gleaming fish, and etchings of the lakes, and skilful water-colour drawings in such numbers as to almost conceal the walls from which they are suspended. High up close to the ceiling branch the truly gigantic antlers of an ancient Irish elk. On a broad cocoa-mat underneath sleeps a shaggy wolf-hound of Erin. Outside the cottage, in a large arm-chair, an invalid lady, closely wrapped in furs, is seated, holding listlessly a few flowers, whose fresh appearance tells they have only just been gathered. Very weary in look; yet

the face of the lady is this moment lit up with radiant happiness, for at her feet, reading a letter aloud, reclines a girl, who has numbered but twenty summers—her only child and nurse.

“I have finished your letters, mamma, dearest. I will be sure to answer them in the course of the day, especially that one from our solicitor. This remaining letter—I ought to know the handwriting!—is from my old friend Mary Leyne. Shall I read it aloud for you?”

“Not now; I am not strong this morning. How cold it is!”

It was a beautiful sunny morning, and Beatrice a little sorrowfully rose to her feet, drew the shawls more closely round her mother, and whispered, “God is good, mother!” Then she glided on tiptoe into the cottage, and the Irish wolf-hound wagged his tail as she passed him by.

Her father was dead, and she felt convinced—for her mother was in consumption—that in a short time she would be an orphan in the world. She was a strange girl, some people said. They saw the pleasures of life little satisfied her, which was true. She was less influenced by many things than others were. From her youngest girlhood she had but one wish to satisfy, and to secure it she abided her time.

Anxious to read Mary Leyne's letter, she hastened to her own room, from which could be seen the lakes,

the vivid town, the beetling peaks, the tourist parties proceeding curiously, some in pleasure-boats, some on ponies, some on foot, some partaking of a quiet pic-nic under the shadow of trees.

At a favourite window she sat down, leaning partly out, until the vine-leaves, sheltering incipient grape-clusters, scarcely touched her hair. From the dark green depths of trees close by came the songs of birds, and from the meadows around floated the perfume of the freshly-mown hay. A caged linnet above where Beatrice sat sent forth his melody; and she looked up at him with a most grateful smile. She seemed unconscious of her own extreme loveliness. The sun shone upon her firm hazel eyes, and sparkled over her golden hair, and spiritualized her colourless face, whereon was unmistakably written goodness, wisdom, and peace. She read her old friend's letter, which was all about Madeleine's narrow escape and Noel d'Auvergne's brave conduct. It was a long epistle; and towards the close of it Beatrice read the following:—

“My brother wishes to be remembered to you. Dear, dear Beatrice, may it one day come to pass that I shall yet twine my arms about you calling you sister! Every day I pray for you both since I have known whose dream of youth you are. God bless you, dear Beatrice! God bless you both is the prayer of

MARY LEYNE.”

D'Auvergne's heroism caused her white cheeks to glow, for such an action touched her eloquently. The allusion to Harold Leyne filled her with mournful feelings. Her young heart was untried in life. The tender human longings of her affectionate nature yearned for sweet promises the future pledged itself to fulfil. How bright this morning the world looked to her! How worthy to be lived in and to be deeply loved! The coloured hills arose before her,—the silent heights of mountains, the sleepy lakes, the tumbling cataracts that sleep not, the green woods streaked with light, and overhead the harmless clouds following the gorgeous sun; the life-laden fields nourishing drowsy cattle; above the vine-bordered window, against which Beatrice leaned, the linnet, conscious of the presence of his mistress, answered as cheerfully the happy wild birds winging at their own sweet will through neighbouring groves, and by rivulet-banks where wild flowers bathed. Ah, why not be as other girls were? Why not be as one should be who had her years and her wonderful hopes? Why—cruel selfishness—turn thus from one who was honourable even to the degree which was her scrupulous standard, who, in the pride of his manhood's dawning strength, offered her his love and a share in all the gifts God gave him? Will she contentedly refuse him, casting him on a sea of danger where his soul may succumb to the storm and go down? It

would be hers, if she chose it, to ennoble him by wifehood. Her human, woman heart loved to beat in unison with the soft music of a retired existence, which conceals treasures, and, like the sea-shell, murmurs hidden its own song. That womanly heart desired indeed a true and manly love. Handsome Harold Leyne, so good and so kind! Wrapped in deepest thought, she gazed upon the placid lakes. A cataract brawling near by was at times forgotten in other sounds. A flock of birds swooped a moment, darkening the window where Beatrice stood erect now. Up Mangerton's side patient tourists toiled on diminutive ponies, at whom scattered goats venerably bearded pasturing stared. Down the gravel path of the garden a healthy-faced servant-girl tripped, bent upon some errand into town, the Irish wolf-hound following closely and willingly, as if the maid was kind to him.

Beatrice watched them both until the lodge-gates closed behind them, and then, bowing down her head, she spoke to One who had made her His bride. Through her lips escaped, with a thrilling emotion, the great and sweet name of her only accepted lover. Uttering it, this girl of twenty, who read no Plato, Bacon, or Locke, Kant, Cousin, or Descartes, drawing up her noble form, her face glowing with delight, said the wisest dictum in philosophy, "To love You is life!"

The gift of her unselfish love was not for Harold

Leyne ! A heart like this girl's is a peaceful sight amidst so many scenes wherein railroads, Atlantic cables, Mont Cenis tunnels, take their bustling part. Men of experience regard such a heart with a child-like satisfaction, as they watch this beginner of that task which to them has been

“ A long day's work,”

and are tremulous in themselves for the safety of the spiritual lilies which they endearingly regard. Pure Beatrice ! Beautiful human heart and queenly soul ! Divine blood courses through her young veins and fills them with eternal life.

“ She looks upon the things of earth,
Even as some gentle' star
Seems gazing down on grief or mirth,
How softly, yet how far !
Let her depart !”

Yes ! let her depart, Harold Leyne, though it costs you pangs which are swords of sorrow to you to-day. Her home is not within your home, but where her heart is, and where the treasure of her heart is.

A week later, in one of the still hours of the evening, Harold and his sisters were conversing with her in the garden beneath that window. Harold stood behind them, leaning against the rustic seat which the three girls occupied. He was peaceful and silent, watching Beatrice, and

listening attentively to the words from her lips. So happy was he in her presence, the flowers growing around them looked more beautiful, and the few stars shone with new brightness, and all care, all fears for self were absent, and his breathing went and came as if his whole being were at rest. How lovely he thought her, reclining between Madeleine and Mary, their arms around her, each one seeming desirous to claim the most of her regard. Too lovely Harold felt—and a pang of painful intensity disturbed his sense of peace—to be the light and life of his home, or of the home of any man. The girls retired in order to visit her sick mother, and Harold remained outside, until Beatrice came quickly back, gently reproaching him for exposing himself to the dangers of the dew falling heavily. When they bade good-night afterwards the Leynes returned home with serious faces, for it was evident to them that Beatrice would be motherless soon.

Beatrice noiselessly closed the hall door after them when they were gone, and went—it was her self-imposed household duty each night—through the various rooms of the cottage, examining the fastenings of the doors, and putting out the fires, and she brought the Irish wolf-dog for company's sake. She arranged her mother's pillows and vanished from the invalid's chamber, twining voiceless wreaths of prayer.

The Leynes had arrived in Killarney chiefly in order to be near Beatrice Fitzgerald, who was Mrs. Leyne's god-daughter, if, an event daily expected during the summer, her mother's illness should terminate fatally and Beatrice be left an orphan. Harold brought down with him a host of law-books, determined to be deeply versed in legal maxims against his return in the autumn to Dublin. But alas! as he soon discovered, it was a vain determination on his part. These principles of British justice looked like a new Euclid to him. The art of angling he tried with a great deal more success. Rod in hand, he penetrated into solitary places, mounting through tangled brambles by the banks of hill-streams winding and hiding under ferns, flowers and grass, meeting now and then in his ramblings a stray disciple of Isaac Walton, or some enthusiastic tourist—a brother student, perhaps, armed with a knapsack and a stout stick, "doing" Ireland on foot, in the vacation time. It was not, though Harold would have persuaded himself to the contrary, the gleaming trout which led him hither to their hidden mountain haunts. The poor fellow was human nature, and Beatrice Fitzgerald's restrained intercourse with him was taking all his hopes out of him, drying up all his interest in life, and driving him thus, as to a refuge from his unaccustomed disquietude, to the clear breath of the hilly breeze, where, amidst the solitude

of the scenery he might gradually, by the help of time, and of his own common sense, obtain the manly mastery over this foolish passion of the heart. There was within him the wealth of self-sacrifice, but, as with precious metal, the sorrows of labour must be expended in the mine ere the light of day would show the rare worth of it. Sometimes—these were dear moments—when she walked with his sisters and he accompanied them she spoke to him so kindly that her manner almost reassured him and he hoped on. Sometimes face to face, floating in the same boat upon the lakes, they listened to an Irish melody, or to a wild legend about yonder cliff, from the heights of which lovers leaped into the water below. And Harold listened so attentively because Beatrice listened, and loved these stories of the past, the more because she loved them so much. There were pony-rides, too, up Mangerton together, or through the Gap of Dunlo, when they marvelled at the scowling clouds gathering about the mountain tops, while soon again in the returning sunshine the blue lakes sparkled like sabres.

One afternoon, the twilight coming on, he found her in the garden watering the flowers. Harold's step startled her, and she turned round swiftly, taking reluctantly his offered hand. She was holding a few moss-roses and geraniums which she had just gathered to present them—a usual evening gift—to her

dying mother. One of the moss-roses dropped at the feet of her companion. Harold picked it up. "May I keep it?" he said.

She hesitated, looking at him with her wistful smile. "May I keep it?" he said again.

"No," she replied; then resolutely and without a word he restored it to her.

She sighed while she commenced her careful task of sprinkling the flowers again, and he noticed a little impatience in her movements as she withdrew further from him and busied herself with the water-can.

"Beatrice," he called in a low voice. She heeded him not, but continued her occupation still impatiently. He followed her, calling "Beatrice."

She laid down the watering-can and stood pale as death awaiting his approach. "Well?" she said coldly and sternly. "What do you want with me?"

"A twelvemonth ago," he replied, "you refused to listen to me, and, at your own request, I left you, Beatrice. But a year's experience of many things brings me back here to you. Beatrice, if I am ever to do any good, it must be through your help."

She was trembling visibly as she answered, "Harold, you must leave me at once, and never speak in this way to me again. You do not know me. I cannot love you. I am a stranger staying here until—"

until—" she glanced towards the cottage—" *she* dies. This charming place is no home of mine. Harold, I cannot love you," she added emphatically, "because I love another. If I did not love Him I would love you," she continued, with touching simplicity, which he understood; "but He has subdued me quite. I must be with Him always, if I want to be always happy." And her little, child-like, wistful smile shone full upon Harold Leyne, until he bowed down his head in his deep reverence for her. "My heart is not mine," she said to him: "He whom I love has the whole of it. To love Him"—she was very serious now—"is the solution of every thing in this life."

"I am unworthy of you, dear Beatrice," he answered, tenderly and sadly; "and, asking first your forgiveness, if I have caused you some pain, promise sincerely for ever and ever that I will not stand in your way. Beatrice, you are very good, though you would be the last to admit that yourself. And now,"—he smiled slightly as he spoke these words,— "you will forgive my curiosity—perhaps I know already, but tell me, I wish to hear it from your own lips—who may your lover be? Do I know Him?"

"I am sure you do!" she answered, and silently paused for one moment, while her brow bowed down low. She raised and fixed upon Harold Leyne her

brilliant eyes, beaming with great happiness ; then all at once her lips smiled, trembled, and uttered these words : “ I have loved Him from my childhood, and no one else, and the more I know Him the better I love Him ; and His love completely satisfies me ; and Harold, He lets me want for nothing ; and the very thought of Him makes me feel as if I had wings and no body at all and could fly. And I am never unhappy with Him ; and wherever I go, Harold, He comes with me, and leads me, and I live by Him ; and——”

“ But who is He ? ” Harold interrupted.

“ Who ! Surely I need not name Him to you. ” She looked at her companion, slightly surprised at the question.

“ Ah ! ” he persisted ; “ but, Beatrice, I wish to hear His name from your lips. Who is He ? name Him. ”

“ He has many names to go by, ” she answered, confidentially ; “ but the name I like most to call Him by is that at which every knee shall bow ! ” and, with a blush rising in her pale face, she whispered that name in Harold’s ear. It was the sweetest sound he ever heard, and in his admiration for her he could not help telling her so. Far sweeter than the song vanishing an hour before with beating heart he listened to, coming across one of the lakes, as to bugle-notes the measured stroke of oars beat skilfully, and

ringing laughter from happy youths and maidens stirred the soothing evening air.

Harold Leyne stepped back involuntarily, and remained looking intently at his quiet companion. She did not seek to comprehend why he stepped back thus. She did not know that he was admiring her more and more. She did not understand in what deep-seated reverence she was held by him. She never cared to know that. It never occurred to her that she was purer and holier than others were. It would surprise her to be told that such was truly the case ; it would have made her only uneasy to be told it through a long-settled sense of her own unworthiness. God knows she was not unworthy ! God knows that when compared with others she was "luna inter minores" indeed ! And so Harold Leyne thought too. She went to Harold after he had stepped back thus ; approaching him in her rapid, energetic way, which he knew and loved well, she laid her small hand on his shoulder, and said gravely, "As a sister I am speaking to you." He looked down, wistfully acknowledging the title she conferred upon herself. "Learn more about Him to Whom we have both been alluding ; for you were aware Whom I meant, in spite of your questionings ! I am sure you did ! Harold, He will show you yet what a large human heart He has ! If you are disappointed and hurt, and wronged, as you are pretty sure to be, He

will be upon your side if you are upon His, and He will not let you rest until, conquered, as I have been, by His love, you lean for ever upon His breast. Harold, be true to Him and pray for me. *I* will pray for you!" She took his hand fervently. "I hear your sister Madeleine calling my name, I must go now; they want me inside the cottage."

She went into the hall quickly, but he spoke her name, saying, "Beatrice, one moment!"

"Yes, Harold." She reappeared, and he advanced, gazing thoughtfully into her calm countenance, upon which the light from a lamp burning in the parlour shone through the window. The Irish wolf-dog came slowly out after his mistress, and licked her hand.

"Harold, do you wish to speak to me?" she asked, twining her ringless fingers through the dog's shaggy coat and tenderly pulling his yielding ears. "Harold, do you want me?" she inquired.

"Before you go in tell me how you, who are so young, can be so wise? For you are very wise."

"I am only a girl," she answered in her simple, truthful way, "but God guides me. God has taught me what I do know."

She was gone away next instant. The Irish wolf-hound stayed with Harold, for the dog and he were friends. "Only a girl you call yourself, Beatrice!" he said; "the old, old story!" he added; "God takes the flower of the flock! You, too, will

lose her one day, Billy!" he went on, and patted the dog. "Does she ever tell her thoughts to you, Billy?" He stooped down and glanced into the dog's eyes. "She told me, Billy, one of her thoughts to-night—one of her secrets! Ah, Billy, neither you nor I can keep her from going away!" He pressed his lips to the dog's forehead—"For *her* sake," he said to himself—and wandered desolately from the place under the twinkling stars, until he saw their reflection in the waters of the neighbouring lake. There, for awhile, he sat upon a projecting rock, and little waves beneath, glistening in the moonlight, leaped to land. The presence of the quiet night gradually influenced him. Silence seemed to pervade all things, for even the waves coming to the shore were barely heard at their continual play. And there in his loneliness he thought of Beatrice and of Him Whom she loved so dearly as to give herself to Him—His bride on earth and in heaven.

Not long afterwards Mrs. Fitzgerald died; and they went back to Dublin, bringing with them Beatrice, who was free now to fulfil the one wish of her life. To Mary Harold told his disappointment, and her sympathy was with him, for his sorrow might be her sorrow too, and Harold needed no words to convey to him that Mary's heart was full of solicitude about him. She made him feel that he was not quite desolate. Her unselfish ministra-

tion to his wants made home beautiful to him ; and her pitiful compassion day by day rose up between him and Beatrice and kindly veiled from him too embittering a recollection of her.

Visitors thronged daily to greet their return, and especially to be introduced to the goddaughter of Mrs. Leyne, who was reported to have plenty of money : young men, professional and non-professional, the rising barrister, the gallant officer, the aristocratic squire. O'Malley Oranmore was received by Madeleine very graciously, and he was keen enough to detect the reason of that. She did not care for him was the meaning of her gracious manner in his eyes. He consoled himself by cursing Noel d'Auvergne, whom he hated as the cause of this change in her demeanour.

Strange, Madeleine thought it, that Noel d'Auvergne came not to see her. The whole first week from the date of their arrival home passed away, and he came not. Each day, when evening drew on, she murmured to herself why he kept away. Each morning there was a radiant expectancy in her delicate face which died out when the afternoon was gone. The truth was, that D'Auvergne was on a visit with friends in the south of Ireland, within view of a pretty arm of the sea, where in boyhood he first saw the ocean, when those restless waves seemed to come from some paradise beyond

the far horizon ; a place where he once had many friends, and where he might be said to know

“every tree
And bush, and fragrant flower, and hilly path,
And thymy mound that flings unto the winds
Its morning incense.”

His friend Paul Middleton was the last in Ireland of a numerous family, boys and girls when D'Auvergne was a boy, thoughtful men and women now ; some in Australia and America, one in a peaceful Norman château on the banks of the shining Seine, one a toiling sailor, working his way upward to the mastership of a vessel, and one who had been a sailor too, whose bones lay fathoms below in the middle of the Pacific—a wild, generous spirit who met death as the lightning flashed, and the winds made a shroud of the spray around him.

On the first evening of Noel's coming a scene occurred which lingered pleasantly in his memory. His friend, with his young wife, lived in

“a sweet green spot,
Where the lily was blooming fair ;
The din of the city disturb'd it not,
But the spirit that shades the quiet cot
With its wings of love was there ;”

and after a long conversation with them both—she a girl of twenty, her brown hair bound back from her temples, and in her simple dress exhibiting

no other ornament save the plain gold ring which told the story of her state of life—candles were lit as the twilight deepened, and then the young wife glided from the room. And it was this domestic scene, so eloquent in its simplicity, that left upon him a pleasing impression which he did not forget when his hair was white. The autumn evening, the sound of the sea, the familiar voices which were yet not altogether familiar, the mutual recollections, the sympathy of friendship, the love of the two young people, so happy and satisfied with each other. Noel was not impressionable generally, but the scene of that first evening impressed him deeply; and so he said to Paul Middleton when they were alone, half in envy, and half in admiration.

“It is all *her* doing,” the husband answered.

After some time the young wife moved softly and swiftly into the room, with the air of one who went about doing good. She sat by her husband's side with loving earnestness in her meek face.

CHAPTER VI.

MARY SUFFERS AND SUBMITS.

“ She once was a lady of honour and wealth,
Bright glow'd on her features the roses of health ;
Her vesture was blended of silk and of gold,
And her motion shook perfume from every fold :
Joy revell'd around her—love shone at her side,
And gay was her smile, as the glance of a bride ;
And light was her step in the mirth-sounding hall,
When she heard of the daughters of Vincent de Paul.

* * * * *

Those feet, that to music could gracefully move,
Now bear her alone on the mission of love ;
Those hands that once dangled the perfume and gem
Are tending the helpless, or lifted for them ;
That voice that once echoed the song of the vain,
Now whispers relief to the bosom of pain ;
And the hair that was shining with diamond and pearl
Is wet with the tears of the penitent girl.”

GERALD GRIFFIN.

BEATRICE FITZGERALD, young, beautiful,
wealthy, many innocent joys before her, troops
of friends ready to receive her amongst themselves,
with a true lover longing to take her to his home—
these advantages coloured with brilliant hues her

future years and yet—and yet they did not satisfy her! More, more, much more was necessary for her happiness. What more was necessary? Simply to give up her youth, her beauty, her wealth, herself to Him she loved, and to live not by these transitory things but by Him. People pitied her sincerely, from their hearts they pitied her—pitied her loss to society, pitied the throwing away of so much careful education—for they readily perceived that Beatrice Fitzgerald was accomplished, that all those refinements and acquired qualifications which render one conspicuous and desired in society were developed in her by skilful training. The strange thing about their pity was, that had she died they would not have pitied her half so much! It was deemed a sad sacrifice on the part of this rare young maiden to abandon the pleasant haunts of the fashionable world and become a Sister of Charity—in other words, a pauper schoolmistress, whose daily business was to teach the ignorant children of the poor, or else a pauper nurse doing menial service in the wards of some city hospital. But the mistake was to deem this act of hers a sacrifice. It was no sacrifice at all; and Beatrice herself would be the first to stand up and deny that there was any sacrifice whatsoever in it. The real sacrifice now for Beatrice would consist in being compelled to remain in the world. Gradually from childhood upward, year by year, the

pleasures which others prized were laid willingly aside one by one. She gave them their trial and found their worth; and after a time without an effort, but by the force of her natural bent, aided of course by Him to Whom she was always true and to Whom she must have been exceedingly dear if we reflect upon His regard for some of the women in the Gospels, not only did she free herself from attachment to these sources of happiness, but in her intense love for and sweet repose in her Master's Heart, she forgot their very existence. Yes, truly, the real sacrifice for her would be to have to go back to these, to come under their uneasy influence again, to take for their sake the least of her time from the service of her Beloved. She loved Him to that degree that she ceased as it were to live. He lived in her; and her whole being was conscious of His presence, was absorbed in that presence. Can it be wondered at, then, that she deemed her act no sacrifice in the least, and never once looked at it in the light of a sacrifice—nay, that she was almost impatient for the enjoyment of the delightful freedom from all those dangerous human influences which would easily take another away from serving Him thus? This act of hers is of very frequent occurrence amongst the educated Catholics of the United Kingdom, and yet clear-sighted and well-educated men and women are made sorrowful, if not angry, thereby. This darkening of

the understanding, for we call it nothing else, is a pitiful test of that blindness of human nature which is unable to perceive that such a noble dedication of a young human soul, be it that of youth or maiden, is the highest expression of the Kingdom of God within us, and of the glorious divinity, if we might so speak, of our poor human nature, which thus by its union with God can forget itself in God and live on earth a Godlike life.

Beatrice could not help hearing of this pity of the world for her desertion from its ranks. It had no plaintive effect, however, upon her, and only strengthened her fearless determination to follow Him simply, for she remembered with a joyous acknowledgment of it that *He* died at the ripe age of manhood's strength and beauty.

It shook Madeleine Leyne's nerves terribly, though, to think that Beatrice should actually leave them. She expected they two would be queens of society together. This sudden refusal of an unassumed sceptre took her completely by surprise, and pained her considerably, for she likewise thought it a sacrifice. Beatrice bore with her friend's opposition, knowing that Madeleine loved the world so well that Beatrice's unexpected departure from it would be forgotten by her before a month was passed. God, well pleased assuredly that nothing human filled her noble heart as He did, gave her patience when thus remonstrated

with, and daily opposed by friends who were not so wise as herself. Her soul refused authoritatively to be bound within the circle of a single house—even Harold's home. Her boundless love, so tender and yet so strong—ay, stronger and tenderer than even a mother's love, because it was His love burning within her—shared itself with the feeble, the forsaken; in the regions of pestilence seeking out its objects, wielding the sceptre of Divine goodness in the prison, the schoolroom, the poorhouse, the hovel, the hospital; silencing by its unselfish ministrations the great agonizing cry of human wants. The joyous hope of Beatrice was to begin this kind of life as soon as possible; and patiently waiting meanwhile, she committed without a thought for the future its yearned-for realization to Him to Whom she cheerfully gave back completely all He gave.

Mary Leyne merely for Harold's sake was sorry, and for that reason alone. As for pitying Beatrice—pitying her! such an unusual idea for her never entered her mind; on the contrary, when she heard the news she went through the house carolling so gaily that the different birds in the conservatory hopped about their cages enviously, and set up in emulation a noisy chorus of wild songs.

It was close on Christmas when Noel d'Auvergne made his appearance: they were all glad to have him amongst them once more. He dined with the

Leynes on the first day of his visiting them; and after dinner Mary unobserved, in a darkened corner of the drawing-room, sat down, and leaning her arms upon a small table studied steadily his face. She thought of their two lives, so altogether different, so entirely apart, yet so possible of becoming one and the same in hopes and aims, if he—alas! he was frequently in her thoughts, too frequently for her perfect peace of mind. That canter to the very quarry's edge, that fearless stand there, that smile when the broken arm was setting, that comparison which he once earnestly made in his illness of her wondrous resemblance to his own dead sister—a Mary, too—that trust, like a brother's or a lover's, which he implicitly placed in her when one day he asked her, while he reclined upon his sick couch, to go into Dublin, and giving her the keys of his rooms, requested her to have a look at his chambers for him and bring him some private papers which she would find locked up in his writing-desk—that trust reposed in her and not in Madeleine, or especially Harold, sank down deep into the silent depths of her good heart, which was always loving others far more than they loved it. But more than all these reasons, that charm! recognized in the voice, in the eye, and which is the eloquent interpretation of the soul's nature—these and many other influences with them worked their separate ways, as streams through hidden, pic-

turesque places, ere they arrive at and broaden the flowing river; and before Mary Leyne found out the necessity of checking peremptorily its useless course, the waters of human love were rushing through her to that ocean of peace which was yet far away beyond the distant fields in this chequered land of Time. Unobserved in her obscure corner of the drawing-room she contemplated him, dreaming sweetly many visions within her thoughtful self, noticing his least movements, listening to his words. She beheld him leaving his seat by Beatrice Fitzgerald and going in a glad way over to Madeleine, who was busy sewing. The latter spoke to him as to one whom she feared not: her joy in his presence was plainly manifest to Mary. Beatrice went to the piano meanwhile; but neither ceased a moment speaking to listen to the really excellent music, they seemed as if their own conversation was excellent music enough in their ears, as if the cultured sounds from the piano floated over to them like an appropriate accompaniment to the silent song of love in both their hearts.

Mary from her darkened corner sent one piercing glance towards each, and then all at once buried her head in her hands. She saw it all in that intense, instantaneous scrutiny. She was not the chosen. He loved her sister. So be it! The only one who ever made her heart yearn as Harold could not make it yearn, passed Mary unconcernedly by. Her face

buried thus in her hands she accepted her disappointment, and began the same minute the solemn endeavour to bear it as it ought to be borne. She arose and went about the drawing-room, exchanging touching smiles of friendship with calm Beatrice, who had left the piano again and was talking quietly to Harold and Mrs. Leyne. She gave a rapid household order in an undertone to one of the servants, and sat down as usual to preside at the tea-table. After tea Beatrice again went to the piano, and played a song without words by a great master. Harold stood behind watching the music leaves, and on Beatrice's hand a tear fell from his downbent lids. She played on unmoved, making those speaking, even Madeleine and Noel, silent against their will as the skilful chords mingled and gave forth delicious sounds that sent her holy soul into her eyes. When she was done Mary took her vacant seat at Noel's request, for she had often sung for him during his illness, and, as he told her to-night, he loved her voice. Only her voice! She sighed at the remark, and sorrowful in heart she let her eager fingers travel over the keys, uncertain into what strain she would permit them to glide. At last, after lingering over another air or two, she thus began :—

“ She sung of Love, while o'er her lyre
The rosy rays of evening fell,
As if to feed, with their soft fire,
The soul within that trembling shell.

The same rich light hung o'er her cheek,
 And play'd around those lips that sung
 And spoke, as flowers would sing and speak,
 If Love could lend their leaves a tongue.

“ But soon the West no longer burn'd,
 Each rosy ray from heaven withdrew ;
 And when to gaze again I turn'd,
 The minstrel's form seem'd fading too.
 As if *her* light and heaven's were one,
 The glory all had left that frame ;
 And from her glimmering lips the tone,
 As from a parting spirit, came.

“ Who ever loved, but had the thought
 That he and all he loved must part ?
 Fill'd with this fear, I flew and caught
 The fading image to my heart—
 And cried, ‘ O Love ! is this thy doom ?
 O light of youth's resplendent day !
 Must ye then lose your golden bloom,
 And thus, like sunshine, die away ? ’ ”

Music is a confession of the heart, and Mary's plaintive song was such in very truth to-night. It came from *her* “glimmering lips,” the spontaneous outpouring of the new lamentation within her breast, which she found it so hard, as time wore on, to subdue and change into a song of resignation. Every one in the room was touched by the words of the melody, for it came home to each one with more or less force. Grand power of music ! even kings will bow to it, for they are men. Who has not heard a strain full of memories that remind him of seldom-remembered days—a happy song, it may be, that a

dead mother sang when the world was new and without sin to him who listens so gravely now? Many a Magdalen singing in the mud and rain from door to door utters those notes perhaps so sweetly because her songs take their desolate excellence from the story of her wilful life; that exquisite air she was taught in the home of her innocent girlhood, or it was the first she tremulously sang for him who cast her a weak waif upon the world's waves. Mary left the room hastily when the song was concluded, and Harold came over to Noel, saying, "We wish to have a game of whist, Beatrice and I. Will you and Madeleine join us? Mary is goodness knows where! In the kitchen, doubtless. That region is a sort of sanctum of hers."

They sat down at the card-table opposite each other in the subdued light of the shaded lamp, shedding its soothing effulgence in their midst. Few words were interchanged throughout the silent game, but many conflicting thoughts contended in each bosom, and brooding eyes sought to read one another's depths as the noiseless cards were thrown: kings, queens, knaves, flashing upon the green cloth to be gathered up by dainty girlish fingers, or the broader and brown hands of the two men. Mrs. Leyne kept the reckonings and decided disputes. Several times, glancing at Madeleine and her partner, a certain wish in her own breast arose with regard

to the future of both. The same wish was entertained looking at Beatrice Fitzgerald and her son Harold, but that last hidden yearning she removed from her busy mind immediately. Afterwards Mary stole in unnoticed, with a smile upon her pretty lips. She had not been in the kitchen this time, but in her own room, whither she had fled after her song, in order to suppress the mourning of her disappointed spirit, beginning thus at once to bury the slain hope which lay dead within her. She was not the only one in the house suffering in this way. She remembered that; and her sympathy for Harold increased a hundred-fold, now that she was experiencing the bitterness which had brought already upon his forehead those lines which care and time write on so many brows. She would have been much more anxious about him did she know then what she discovered afterwards, to her sorrow and distress of mind, that he was not bearing his disappointment about Beatrice altogether as Mary would wish him to bear it, as at first, in the artlessness of her unsuspecting nature, she innocently thought that he did. To those who think no ill, slow comes the knowledge that others are not as good as they might be; and very slowly—because she would not allow herself to believe it until her own eyesight convinced her of the painful truth—very slowly the fact took root in Mary's mind that Harold was seeking relief from

himself by indulgence in a vice common among men, high and low. That night, when D'Auvergne was gone back to the city, and the inmates of the house had retired, Harold Leyne, after smoking a cigar alone on the lawn outside, went up to his bed-chamber, closing the door carefully and locking himself in. It was a room abounding in fishing-rods, guns and gun-cases; stray tackle and casts of flies hung on nails round the walls ready for use, Harold being an ardent fisherman. Taking a flask of brandy from a press in one corner, he poured the contents into a wineglass, and drank, repeating the act a second time. Then, undressing, he flung himself unsteadily on his bed, leaving, in his staggering haste, the candle burning on the toilette-table. Its flickering light indistinctly revealed him slumbering in the lethargy of the drunkard. How it would have made dear Mary blush to see him there, belying his early promise, forgetful of all that religion taught him, forgetful of the sinless soul which was once his proud possession, and which, Mary implicitly believed, was his possession still! But he seems to be only like so many of us—a coward in heart, and a fool in will, when the hour of temptation has come.

“ And as the dove, to far Palmyra flying,
From where her native founts of Antioch beam,
Weary, exhausted, longing, panting, sighing,
Lights sadly at the desert's bitter stream ;

So many a soul, o'er life's drear desert faring,
Love's pure, congenial spring unfound, unquaff'd,—
Suffers, recoils, then, thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught."

Beneath, directly under Harold, was his mother's bedroom, and the azure-roofed recess wherein before the silver cross Mrs. Leyne prayed for him, unconscious of his need of her prayers, and the softly shining lamp ever burning there revealed the expression of her face, which was one of childlike delight.

CHAPTER VII.

MADELEINE AND NOEL.

“They seem’d to those who saw them meet
The casual friends of every day ;
Her smile was undisturb’d and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

“But yet if one the other’s name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame
Would struggle like a captured bird.”

R. MONCKTON MILNES.

NO word of love was yet uttered, but they were not as acquaintances or as friends or as brother and sister, and she felt that the moment was coming when he would ask from her the heart which was already his. From that pure heart she daily prayed for him, and she loved him the more because of her purity. How she rejoiced, watching that smile of his which she knew so well ! And many a dream she wove of evenings spent with him in their mutual home, wherein taking upon herself the gentle lot of domestic duty, the unassuming endeavour to endear herself to him, she would prove to him that when he hastened

back to her from the law-courts, tired after his toiling there, that he was returning not to the lifeless home of a fashionable wife, but to the healthy atmosphere of a hearth that derived its wholesome influence from the unobtrusive presence of a true woman. Sitting with him by that pleasant fireside, she pictured herself often and often, long ere he ever spoke of love, listening in imagination to him as he told her of his difficulties in the world outside and asked the helping advice of her lesser experience. She seemed to see, too, in the years that were expected to come, a far-spreading vision of honours, of splendid fortune, of political greatness. In her eyes he possessed the qualities which surely secure success; and so picturing hopefully many bright things for him she thought a little—a very little—of her own unsuspected share in this, and her heart beat quickly with the contemplation of it all. But it was for him chiefly she visioned that brilliant future; beginning thus even now the noviciate of the self-forgetfulness which beautifies married and single life, and is a condition of happiness in either.

One night he was with her in the breakfast-room, where a wood-fire threw its flames about in the darkness, for there was no other light save the moon's rays through the undrawn purple curtains. It was the time approaching the joyous feast of Christmas. The snow outside crisped and glistened upon the

housetops. She pointed to the peaceful scene beyond the window, so lovely and calm! The sparkling snow hung upon the motionless trees, and a long line of light lay across Dublin Bay, revealing the ropes and sails of vessels passing across that shining streak, while from one ship not far away arose the sturdy voices of her running sailors hauling up the anchors to prepare for sea.

"That picture is beautiful, Noel!" she exclaimed, wondering at it, though it was so familiar.

"And you too are beautiful, Madeleine," he answered quietly.

She started back, fixing her fawn-like eyes upon him, and her bosom quickly heaved.

He took her hand gently but very firmly in his own, and softly said, "Are you angry with me for saying what is true?" He bent towards her and listened seriously for the lingering answer. She confronted him stedfastly, and her bosom did not heave so quickly now, while her tremulous lips settled into an assured smile.

"No, I am not angry with you. How could I be?" she replied gravely.

She had withdrawn her hand from his; and he went on, "Madeleine give me back your hand again—and give it for ever to me!"

She did give it back to him, childlike and lovingly.

"You do not ask me for my heart, Noel, because

you know it is yours already. You have my hand and my heart now !”

Then they told each other the double history of their love—the familiar story which need not be re-written here; for who does not know it, either from books, or from experience, or instinctively? They stood together by the window, two true united hearts, half in wonder at their great happiness, and silently grateful to God for it. Higher in the sky rose the moon,

“ as some fair saint,
Serenely moving on her way”

in “the calm majestic presence of the night,” while each within them felt and said it inwardly, though not in words, that their love is

“ love indeed—
No childish day-dream, but a life intense
Within our hearts.”

From Harold Leyne’s room there was a fine view of the sea, which appeared so blue and bright in the long mornings of the summer season, when he rose lightly to his day’s study with a hopeful heart. To-night, regarding it with lips compressed, he paid no heed to its moonlit beauty—the silver streak across it lighting up the rippling waves, the ships gliding majestically, the distant stars, the silence of rest. The peaceful stillness of the night irritated him, for it was not akin to the angry storm raging within him.

He longed eagerly to be away from those who loved him, far away from the scenes of his disappointment and the early secret shame of his own altered being. He desired to be alone and unknown in some large city, amongst the crowd of men who were heedless strangers to each other. It was painful for him to exist in the sweet atmosphere of home, where those he daily met and lived intimately with were so many unconscious reproaches that he should become what he had fallen to now. His own future was a marred, blurred picture, whose probabilities he dreaded to attempt to decipher for himself. He was as one overtaken by darkness in a noted place of danger, who hurries on to destruction nevertheless, because he will not have the patience to stand still and wait for the surely coming daylight to guide him again on his way. He would not be sorry to leave his home friends, even Mary, dearer than the rest, for some wild colonial life, in the vicissitudes of which he would find relief from the cruel tyranny of memory. To-night at family prayers his mother's words soothed him not; every prayer was a rebuking pang. So he closed both ears with both hands, and knelt deaf to the pleasant familiar voices which sounded most familiar when joined in unison at this treasured nightly duty. The holy words went upwards to heaven from lips that smiled as they uttered them; he remained silent, thinking stolidly and selfishly of

his own wants alone. He had congratulated Noel d'Auvergne, it is true, when he heard of the probability of their being future brothers-in-law; and his good-night kiss to his sister Madeleine was on that account full of unusual tenderness, while he could not help feeling some sympathy with their mutual joy; but now in the solitude of his bedroom he was like a slave trembling under the lash of his sorrow for Beatrice. In his weariness of spirit he sought consolation again to-night in that pleasure whose fruit turns to bitter ashes; and fretfully, half-unwillingly filled a glass from the bottle of brandy in his private cabinet. He lifted the thin rim until it touched his lips, when with a start he let it fall! The vessel shattered to pieces, the subtle stuff crept about, staining and scenting the carpet, and, like a thief caught in the act, hastening skulkingly in search of obscurity.

Glancing nervously at the broken fragments Harold stood still listening attentively. The cold night air came in through the window, which he had opened in order to hear the better, and the chilly current refreshed his heated countenance. Then, as he heard that familiar sound, gradual tears gathered and flowed rapidly down his cheeks. Good thoughts, like angels of light, glided into his clouded mind and brought back the sunshine of peace with its smiling sway. Oh, what was that powerful spell? What

was that which had touched his innermost feelings and changed him so? It was something which strove to draw the sting out of the wound in his mind. It was something which, with right royal power, dashed the sly source of sin from his expectant lips and scattered it thus triumphantly upon the floor. And yet it was not much. So trivial in its way that many would hardly heed it, and many would not know even slightly its daily meaning. It was not much to ears that will not hear it, though it gives forth an eloquent note: it was only a passing sound which floated hither sometimes indistinctly, dying "of its own sad sweetness"—the cadence of the bell which pealed at night from a convent near; "low and loud and sweetly blended," it seemed to him reluctantly to knell the mournful death of his soul. It brought to mind a peaceful recollection of that beautiful girl who inspired him with his strange, first affectionate pain of young love. "Ah, dream, too bright to last! Ah, starry hope!" Ah, star that appeared before him in the morning of his life, and vanished when he saw its real loveliness! A tender star of love it was, but its home was in the sky! His heart springs back this December night to that little garden near the Killarney Lake where, dividing herself from him, she refused him because his love gave not enough in giving to her his youth, his considerate care, his wealth, his social position, his



companionship for all the time God chose to leave him by her timid side. That beautiful Beatrice! lovelier than the loveliest amongst all whom he met! Yet she left him, heedless of her own attractions, and became a nurse in an hospital! *Sic itur ad astra!*

He moved about the room, crushing as he went the broken glass, disgusted intensely with the smell of the spilt brandy which arose with a strong odour from the carpet. Drawn by some secret thought to the window, he stood there gazing in that direction of the city where Beatrice had begun her praiseworthy life, so full of beauty and truth and goodness! Then, where he was standing, he knelt down, as if even at that distance from him she influenced him powerfully. Though his brows were knit, his lips wore a smile; and when he fell asleep afterwards his slumber was unbroken by the cruel unrest which had so often punished him before for his slavish weakness.

The realization of so much happiness in a life like ours down here, made Noel d'Auvergne labour severely in the study of his profession, for he wished by success therein to secure for his betrothed those social acquisitions which it is no unworthy ambition for an honourable woman to reasonably desire. To be justly proud of her husband, to behold him a respected leader in his rank of life, whatever rank it be—whether statesman or tradesman—is quite com-

patible with the possession of that disposition of being poor in spirit which a certain sermon once given on a mount inculcates. All praise to the noble hearts and intellects that struggle for the mastery, and feed not on the fat of the land, like "dumb, driven cattle"! A man need not love God the less because by the excellence of his brains and hands he surpasses his fellows. When the day comes that shall bring to light all things that have been here, perhaps the man who was deemed the slave of ambition on earth, shall receive the crown of humility in heaven. The motives for exertion are not always shouted to the multitude.

Noel was very happy. In Madeleine's eyes he saw the coming of hopes which were his hopes too; in her carefulness about him, in the quiet smile she greeted him with, in frequent unobtrusive ways, without seeking to do so, but inadvertently through her developing affection for him, she made him feel that there were deep joys in life he but half experienced heretofore.

"It is a great thing," he said to her one day, "to have some one to open my heart to. It is a great thing to have one like you, with whom one feels he is safe, whom he neither fears nor doubts. You do not know what a blessing it is to me who have been a hermit in a crowd so long!"

"I will be all to you," she answered fervently,

“that I can be. Every day one of my prayers is that I may be a true wife who knows the grand secret how to make her husband’s home really happy.”

She was looking up at him saying this as they were descending the stairs together : she opened the hall-door for him. It was night-time, he was leaving her and returning to town ; but before he departed he took her hands in his, whispering, “ God bless you ! ” ardently, while he paused to gaze into her face that he might bring with him the delicate image of her beauty into the night-darkness outside.

In his rooms he was handed by the servant a short note from Paul Middleton, announcing the arrival of himself and wife in Dublin that day. “ He will be with me for certain early in the morning,” thought Noel. “ I am glad of it ! He reminds me of old times. His wife and Mary were the same as sisters. Mary ! ” He withdrew the covering from her picture. “ There you are, with your kind young face, your favourite blue tie and plain collar, so white and spotless !—you liked what was spotless ; your soft voice is silent though, and I miss your solicitude for me. How joyous and holy in mien you always were when Sunday came ! and how your eyes used to light up at the sight of me ! Ah, Mary, I do not regret now your going ! God is wiser than I ; and the world was no place for such as you ! ” He drew the silken covering again

across the picture, and went to bed, thinking kindly of her. He did not awaken next morning until nine o'clock; and Paul Middleton was waiting in the sitting-room for him, having cautioned the servant not to disturb his master—a caution which the servant, however, disobeyed. They being sincere friends the meeting between them was cordial. No wonder they were friends, for in each other they found no base alloy, no random remark unworthy of either, no questionable action, no suspicion that either was not true diamond to the core. No wonder they were friends, for the same beauties were for them in the sky, upon the mountains and the sea, in the valleys, in the flashing windings of rivers. When they were boys the same novelists used to delight, the same poets to stir emotion; and when afterwards poet and novelist were laid aside, they continued, in spite of separations of time and space, fast friends, because, as they discovered, they both took God's part in this world, their early promise of living truly being thus fulfilled, and the source of the life and the strength of their manhood in this way one and the same for both.

Noel d'Auvergne took breakfast with him. Mrs. Middleton presiding at the head of the table, as joyous and talkative as need be—her very appearance suggestive of the healthy freshness of the country she had but yesterday left. Bright, cheerful, friendly,

directing loving looks at her husband, she tells Noel about the sorrow which has come to them both, speaking of it with a mother's eloquence while attending to the wants of her guest, handing the toast and pouring out tea. Yes; her baby-boy died. God wanted him, and what could she do but kiss his little dead face for the last time and submit to the Father's will?

“There is no flock, however watch'd and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!”

The deaths of children are lessons to the mother, and the memory of their short-lived existence but a sadness full of sweetness as well as bitterness.

Paul Middleton then told him the object of their journey up to Dublin, which was to meet his sailor-brother already arrived in Liverpool, after completing his sixth trip round the world. “He wrote to me from England suggesting our coming here,” Paul said; “and having taken no vacation last summer—I go on the Continent, you know, for a few weeks every year—I asked Adelaide's opinion as to the desirability of enjoying ourselves. She gladly assented; and so, accompanied as you see by that little lady yonder —”

“Little, indeed! Noel, is that true?” she interrupted.

Noel at once denied the truth of it; and Middleton resumed, “Tom unfortunately is not yet entirely at

liberty to leave his ship ; but, please God, we expect him to-morrow : I received a letter from him this morning to that effect—there it is, Adelaide. Read it aloud for Noel.”

He remained with them during the day, which was spent in shopping and sight-seeing. To the shopping Adelaide attached due importance, as might be expected, and as her husband's purse proved. You ladies from the country who visit a large city—let us say London—is it not true that a variegated dress conceals from your practical view the dome of St. Paul's ? is not Westminster Abbey lost to recollection in the flowers of the new bonnet ?—nay, do not the treasures of the British Museum itself sink into insignificance before the millinery display in a Regent Street window ?

“Tom started for sea,” Middleton remarked, “at fourteen. He was rather a wild lad then, you remember, and having got into a scrape at home, ran off, and actually went before the mast. He worked his way, studied carefully, and successfully passed the examination for second mate. Afterwards he became first mate of a ship trading to China ; and the captain dying on the homeward voyage, the command of the vessel fell into Tom's hands ; and after that prosperity followed him every where.”

D'Auvergne's eagerness in uttering the praises of the Leyne family excited Adelaide's curiosity ; a

happy smile deepened the dimples round her mouth.

“Your secret is safe, Noel,” she said at last. “You may of course trust me,” she added, “if it *is* a secret.”

“It is no secret,” he answered.

“You could not go on speaking of Miss Leyne,” she continued, “and not give me, after a very little while, a tolerable peep into the present state of your heart.”

“You have read me; for the future I must be more on my guard—but not with you, Adelaide. I hope you and she will like each other, for you must see one another and be friends before you leave. If you were as well acquainted with her as I am, I am confident you would be greatly pleased with her.”

“I have not the least doubt about *that!*” she answered playfully.

“I will bid good-bye now, Adelaide,” he said; and he held out his hand. It was late in the evening when this conversation took place, in a low tone by the fire, her husband being occupied writing business letters.

“Good-bye!” she replied. “I do not mind,” she went on, in a lower voice, “about your not being here to-morrow evening, if, as you said a few minutes ago, you have a particular call to make. I at least will guess the *real* cause of your absence. However, *do* pay us a visit some time to-morrow, should it be in

your power to do so, Noel, since it makes Paul so happy to talk to you or even *of* you. You possess a wonderful influence over him."

He only laughed, and was gone. She leaned her unadorned arm upon the mantelpiece, and stood there wrapped in thought until her husband had completed his correspondence and drew his chair near to where she was standing. She looked at him, and laid lightly upon his head the hand which wore her wedding-ring. Happy for them both were moments like this!

"Paul," she said to him.

"Yes, Adelaide."

"Do you think Noel changed?"

"I certainly think he appears much healthier, and perhaps stouter," he said.

"And no other alteration? You dear donkey! Is not his countenance glowing with gladness? Or, Paul, is it only women see those things?"

"Oh, he is in love, you mean! How do you know it?"

She looked askance at her husband. "Because I soon saw that his manner is becoming extremely like that of the good-natured idiot who is sitting before me now, when I declared it seemed fit to me to consent to be his little wife."

"Little, Adelaide?" he replied, naively.

"So you said this morning at breakfast."

“By the way, I don’t think that I was an idiot then,” he said, half seriously and half to himself. “If I was, it is well to be an idiot sometimes.”

“Of course you were an idiot, and nothing else; for when you married me I brought you nothing but myself! You got no fortune with me. My face was my fortune.”

“You brought me no fortune, darling? I do not agree with you there. You brought me a heart I have never found wanting in any need of mine. And if you call that nothing, I must say we shall have a fight about it, and I shall have for once the best of the argument. You generally have the best of it, you know.” The wedding-ring shone through his hair again. “And you generally are right too, whatever you do and say. What a head you have for business, Adelaide!” he said seriously. “And what a heart you have for love!” he added, taking in his own that hand with the plain gold ring. She knelt down, and looked up at him as if she was dead to herself for his sake.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ALMOST MY BROTHER!”

“Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,

* * * * *

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes.”

TENNYSON.

UNEXPECTED tears gathered in Mary Leyne's eyes latterly; she was often in alarm lest they might betray her emotion, the cause of which she shrank from being compelled to explain. It was hard, seeing Noel d'Auvergne almost every day with her sister, to submit contentedly to lose him whom she would have loved with a love so enduring. She would never again regard another as she did him. It was truly work for many an unrecorded moment, to go on fighting with herself to root out the tender tendrils of that unrequited affection which lingered still, though she tried so hard to crush its strong life. Every day's duties, manifold in their way, helped her in her silent task. Duties so frequently at hand,

ready to afford her occupation in sufficient abundance, for by a sort of tacit agreement amongst the rest of the family it was entirely understood that the household keys with their attendant responsibilities were always best in Mary's careful keeping. What a heart Noel lost when he sought not Mary Leyne's! To sympathize with Madeleine, to exult with her in her newly-found love, was the greatest trial of all; and bravely, in a saintly manner, that secret cross was borne, with a smile upon the pleasant, wistful face that seemed ever on the watch for kindness from others. Away from the immediate atmosphere of home, too, several other self-imposed duties proved an unforeseen relief from her unhappy broodings. The poor living in the neighbourhood stood in distressful need of attention—God help them! they sadly require the care of a good and wealthy nurse—and in her heart's unsolicited love for them and for all the sick and the desolate she would leave her mother's house, when her own home tasks were done, carrying on her arm a little basket of necessaries and comforts, often and often heroically braving the pestilence of contagious disease in some fetid cabin where a human being lay in the agony of sickness. Weary heads rested upon her bosom, fearful souls going to meet their Maker calmed down, confiding in her, deriving peace from her words and from the sight of her compassionate face. When she departed from the hut of the poor

man, gliding in the loveliness of her own unconscious grace, those around her felt as if the spirit of God was with her, and the humbly-born touched the hat to 'good Miss Mary' with more than politeness, while they smiled in a familiar manner which greatly perplexed her at first, until gradually she discovered the consoling meaning of it. She knelt like a girl of their own—which in truth she was—in the midst of them at an early-morning hour in the chapel; she sat by the bedside and read and conversed and ministered to the man or woman cleft down by the scythe of death in the prime of their time, or folded, as a mother might, in her arms the little innocent dying child—the pure white blossom which the kind breath of the Lord was wafting quickly to heaven.

The evening after the arrival of the Middletons she encountered Noel in the dining-room. He was preparing to return to town, after bidding Madeleine good-night. A joyous light which it saddened Mary to see shone in his eyes.

"You won't stay for tea?" she said.

"Not this evening. I wish to meet the Middletons when I go back to Dublin."

She held out her hand in farewell. He pressed it warmly, for she was Madeleine's sister—moreover, he was so fond of her that if tribulation ever should come he felt he would rely upon her counsel and assistance. When he came into her presence a suf-

ficig peace filled her heart, and her tell-tale face expressed it. As he was going towards the door she lifted her face: it was pale and collected in expression, and almost stern but for the most affectionate eyes.

“I want to speak particularly to you, about—Harold;” she paused; and he looked around, holding the handle of the door. “You have influence over him,” she continued—“watch over him for our sakes—for his own sake—for sake of the friendship between you—between you and us.”

He came back. “And so *you* have noticed him?” he said.

“I love him, and all my life I have known him well,” she replied anxiously.

“Does Madeleine know of it?”

“To me she has said nothing.”

“Nor Mamma?”

“I hope from my heart she has been spared that discovery!”

“He promises higher than turning out a good judge of wine, Mary.”

“Will you promise to take care of him when you have the opportunity?” she pleaded.

“I will do all that lies in *my* power, be sure. And you?”

“I too will exert myself in my own way. He is disappointed, poor fellow! at the step Beatrice

Fitzgerald has taken," she said, with sad earnestness; and then at the thought of Beatrice she smiled slightly—she often smiled at the recollection of that friend who was lost to her companionship now. "I was a little timid about speaking to you thus regarding my brother. It seems humiliating to him to speak of him to another as I have spoken of him to you, Noel. But, then, you are so different from others! Now I am very glad I have found the courage to speak to you."

"I saw that you were timid. You have no right to be timid with me, dear Mary. For the future I hope you will trust me more implicitly—I am almost your brother!"

"Almost!" she assented readily, with a sweet smile.

She closed the hall-door after him, repeating to herself, "Almost my brother!"

Not altogether convinced that this remark of his satisfied her, yet secretly most happy that it came from him, she went back to the dining-room and resumed the needlework laid aside when he entered; but the brooding mood followed, and she could not sew any more that night.

Noel introduced the Middletons next day. Adelaide so won a place in their hearts that, receiving a sudden motherly kiss involuntarily from Mrs. Leyne, she was allowed to return to town without

staying to dinner only on condition of spending with them the first day she could spare after the sailor's arrival.

“What do you think of them, Harold?” Mary asked when they were gone.

“They are happy. Happiness is very unequally dealt out in this world!” he muttered.

“Happiness is all of one's own making,” she answered. “God is too good not to give every one the means of being happy.”

He sighed, and turned towards the stables to see a new horse he had purchased a few days before.

It was on the lawn this conversation took place, and Mary moved down the avenue crying bitterly. She was more alone than ever before, for her brother was becoming alienated from her, and, alas! she knew the reason of it.

O'Malley Oranmore, summoned to his brother's seat in the country, consequent upon the death of the latter's wife, remained there until existence became for the noble peer once more much the same as it used to be ere this loss—with the substantial difference, however, that his life was no longer rendered uneasy and unsatisfactory by the inconsiderate jealousy of a haughty lady who married him not through attachment, but because she thought it a good thing. Her death having occurred early in the preceding November, O'Malley consented,

after some pressing, to remain the guest of his elder brother until after Christmas, partly against his own inclination, since this absence from town might interfere materially with his matrimonial plans regarding Madeleine Leyne. There was comfort derived from a short sojourn in the ample residence of his forefathers. Now and then he travelled up to Dublin to look after a horse, or a racing friend, contriving each time if possible to meet Madeleine, who understood the ultimate object of these visits, and would have willingly encouraged them at another time, for there was pleasure for her in listening to flattering sentences in a handsome drawing-room. The words were poisoned, and might hurt fatally, but she did not know the great danger, and at one time would not have refused to accept Oranmore. It was during one of these flying visits to town that the news reached him of Madeleine's engagement. He set himself resolutely henceforth the vindictive task of destroying their happiness. Never did he appear so friendly in the presence of Noel, never so polite, so precise, so tenderly attentive to Miss Leyne—never was he more terribly wicked in the designs of his depraved and sceptic heart than now, when his eyes were guileless, and his musical voice modulated softly, and his demeanour ably studied!

He had come back to town some days previous to the return of Tom Middleton from sea. Harold

Leyne, meeting him at the club, brought him out with him, as he often was in the habit of doing when Oranmore was in Dublin and disengaged. At dinner the latter was introduced to the Middletons, whom he would of course coolly cut should he encounter them elsewhere, seeing that they were but people in business.

The earlier portion of that day on which they dined with the Leynes, Tom Middleton spent in patient misery amongst tailors, bootmakers and hosiery vendors, to their great satisfaction. At dinner few would have detected in the quiet-miened guest, who listened so skilfully and spoke so accurately, the daring, gallant spirit who loved the winds and waves. On his left sat Rutherford Everton, Esq., an English barrister, heir to a baronetcy and eleven thousand a year, whose acquaintance Harold made in London, and who was deeply attached to Mary. He was a rising man, getting two thousand a year at his profession, and every one said Mary was a lucky girl. After dinner Noel went up to the drawing-room immediately.

“Madeleine,” he said, “I am going next week. I was not inclined to tell you before that I am entering an office in London, and will be absent at least the next six months!”

“It is for your good. I must be satisfied,” she replied.

"Harold, at my request, will enter the same office with me. We will be society for one another."

"I am very glad you are to be with him!"

"You are *very* glad?"

"Yes; for you suit Harold better than most people suit him. You will take care of him," she said seriously. "Yes, Noel, I am very glad indeed!"

He did not continue the subject of Harold's companionship, for he wished to say no more about it then. He saw by Madeleine's manner that she, too, knew what Mary had discovered.

When the others entered the room Mary, warbling a song, glided, as if it was a joyful satisfaction so to do, into one of Beethoven's favourites. Tom listened, standing behind her, with the lamplight full upon his face. In his dark cheeks lingers a faint bloom, and about him there is an unconscious nobility, while his brown hair seems always floating backwards as though the winds were blowing. His blue eyes have a habit of turning sharply upon one, as if their owner was anxious to find out what another's heart is. Not unlike a mere boy he looks with that innocent gaze of his.

"Do you play?" Mary asked, when she found who it was thus stood behind her listening.

"I do, Miss Leyne." He took her vacant seat the moment she requested him to play. When he concluded there was a long pause—silence which was his

praise, and he knew it was such. He made once more the noble instrument eloquent, and the room silent in surprise; and then he sang for them. His face grew girlish in its expression—it was a girlish-looking face, one would say, for the first officer of an East-Indiaman, only for the power reposing in the mild blue eyes. In his beautiful voice he sang a southern air which made Mary draw closer to him, and with herself her heart also. “The boatman’s hymn to Santa Lucia,” he said to her, when the song was finished. “I used to listen to it in the Mediterranean.”

We think if Tom wished to try his chance he would not find it hard to heal the wound in the heart of Mary Leyne.

When Noel d’Auvergne was domiciled in London he was forced to be very industrious, for the law-office was a matter-of-fact place. But the law is a living romance; and as the intricacies of legal machinery became familiar to him, he found himself no illiterate listener in the courts of Westminster—in the study of Everard Ducos, Q.C., no idle student. That last-named gentleman would raise his eyes from leases in order to examine instead the features of his Irish pupil, in whom he took a deep interest, recollecting, meanwhile, himself—his yellow self—a blushing young barrister long ago. He often detained Noel of an evening, when in the office the

day's work was done, and offered him a great deal of advice, candid and wise, and quite unasked for—the result of his own lengthened experience, which in his desire to further the interests of his clever pupil he so freely gave. He was fond of promising Noel a brilliant position at the English bar. “You have the way about you which can make men confide in you,” he would say. “You possess a kind of sunshine in your manner, which, added to your intellect, will gather in a regular harvest of briefs. You have especially the gift of speech, and *that* will not escape the notice of friendly-disposed attorneys. Come, D’Auvergne, give up Ireland!”

“Honours here would not be half so sweet as there.”

“Well, wherever you go may you be prosperous! You have the germ of success within you. I have seen it, D’Auvergne, and my old eyes have seen much in their day.”

The old barrister was kind to him, for manifold knowledge of human motives had been forced upon the former, and that knowledge made him appreciate D’Auvergne in a manner understood by the experienced lawyer himself. Noel, encouraged by his approval, laboured faithfully at his desk during the day. One there was in that green isle over the sea waiting in her mother’s home. What of a little longer toiling beyond midnight? Madeleine could have chosen

amongst the noble in birth; but he was more to her than they. He worked, and took to himself no praise. But others praised him. Respect, good-will, success, unforeseen friendships accrued to this labouring Temple student. Calm-faced lawyers noticed him with a courteous reverence, and introduced themselves to him. Dark-mannered, suspicious men were simple-hearted in his presence. Many unknown watchers of his movements gained courage to go on their noble way, which was his way likewise.

One spring afternoon he was writing in his chambers in one of the Temple courts. A tree, prolific in buds, was visible outside the window, the shadows of its higher branches falling upon D’Auvergne. Birds flew to rest a moment on the window-sill, and their warbling utterances broke the silence of the noiseless court.

“There, I have done with this letter! and now, Tom, we can talk about home,” he said to Middleton, who had come over from Ireland that morning.

“*Your* friends are well. I passed through Dublin and paid them a call. I had no sleep in the train last night—give me a glass of wine, Noel.”

He drank the sherry eagerly. “Thank you very much! I am better now. I wish to tell you a story, Noel, if you care to hear it.”

Just then the door opened, and Harold Leyne entered.

"I have an invitation for you, D'Auvergne," he said. "Rutherford Everton expects some fellows to dinner, and asks you to join. There will be a quiet game of cards."

"You know I am not going."

"I regret for your own sake your losing an agreeable evening. Suit yourself—it is a first-rate maxim. D'Auvergne will take care of you, Middleton. Sorry I can't stay to talk with you."

He went into an adjacent room. "I take a nip of brandy generally before dinner," he said, bringing back a bottle with him. "Do you prefer the sherry?"

"The sherry is excellent, thank you."

"I am sorry no one keeps me company. Our friend Noel sticks to tea and coffee. Do not wait up for me, Noel, since cards are uncertain, and it is probable I may remain at Everton's all night. *Au revoir*, Middleton."

"I hope that we will meet again," the sailor replied, in his off-hand way.

He went downstairs and across the dusky court, whistling a popular air. The birds flew upwards from the tree, disturbed and fluttering, basked on the housetops. A breeze creeping amongst the budding branches rushed coldly through the open window. Noel quickly let down the sash and raked the fire.

Tom remarked, "Be careful of Leyne; he is going it hard."

“You were not long making the discovery.”

“He has the marks of it about him.”

“London is not the best place for him,” D’Auvergne only said. He did not continue the subject—he did not wish it. “You must postpone that story of yours,” he added, “until after dinner. We can dine off a good joint on this side of Temple Bar. We will return here for a pipe and coffee.”

The sailor assented, and D’Auvergne led the way down the stairs. They passed through an adjoining court, where, from Rutherford Everton’s chambers, Harold Leyne eyed them thoughtfully. He was busy decanting that fashionable gentleman’s wines for immediate consumption by a half-score of thirsty lips—lips that often framed a curse, and held a cigar, and loved to send out the venom of slander.

A song floated towards him from an inner room,—

“But there’s nothing half so sweet in life
As love’s young dream :
No, there’s nothing half so sweet in life
As love’s young dream !”

“Save and except always a bottle of your claret, Everton. And, by Jove ! here’s Leyne with one under each arm ! More power to your muscles, Leyne, when you uncork such brands as these !”

“Oranmore, you won thirty pounds from me last night. I mean to have my revenge after dinner.”

“You shall have it with all my heart, Leyne.”

“Have you sung the whole of that song, Oranmore?” asked a voice.

“Yes,” he replied. “Do you like it? I will sing it again if you wish; but give me a drink first. ‘The Young May Moon!’ Tom Moore was a poet, and no mistake!”

“What a ‘Young May Moon’ Leyne was when he first came here!” exclaimed another voice.

“Oh, Everton cured him of that! ‘Took the shine out of him,’ as they say,” answered O’Malley Oranmore. “There is not much green cheese left in him now!” And the half-score laughed at Leyne.

“No, Oranmore, I am not what I was,” he said when they were done; “and I have to thank you for it as much as Everton yonder.”

“No thanks, my dear fellow! I am an excellent tutor, and charge moderately. I only ask payment back in friendship.”

“And in bets,” Leyne added, under his breath; for he was a little savage that Oranmore should have raised the laugh against him.

CHAPTER IX.

“ THAT IS A MOTHER’S BLESSING.”

“ A maiden-knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel’s hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch’d, are turn’d to finest air.”

TENNYSON.

“ I WAS very fond of Margaret Gray, I need not tell you, Noel,” said the sailor when they returned to the Temple after dinner ; “ so fond of her that I did not tell her of my love when I was poor and only a second mate. I was afraid lest by so doing I might bind her to an engagement which probably would be a long one, and thus as the best years of her youth departed she would run the chance

of losing a more eligible husband than I could be at the time. Last winter twelve-months, Noel, I made a lot of money by finding an abandoned vessel off the South American coast, which held a valuable cargo, and which I brought safe, thank God! into Southampton. I went after that to China; and again the same good luck, by a curious coincidence, happened me; and on my return the other day I was comparatively a wealthy man. I was at least in a position which gave me a fair reason to ask her to be my wife. But I was too late. She was already married to Charlie Craig of Castle Craig, who is worth two thousand a year. There's my story! Have you much compassion for me?"

"I must say I have, my poor Tom!"

"I do not murmur now; but that shock has altered my whole future. The change which has come over me, Noel, may explain itself by-and-by."

It was about this time that Harold Leyne fell sick; and weary nights Noel had to pass by his bedside. Tom Middleton came to spend with him the evening following the day on which Leyne took fever, and he kindly remained to serve his friend's friend, sending back to his own lodgings for whatever he required for himself. Some rough experience had befallen him during his life; some sailor had dropped from a yard-arm, or the pestilential diseases which assail a ship's crew had brought him in close contact with

the deaths of men. By Leyne’s bedside he was soothing of touch and light of step, ministering noiselessly, and he watched oftenest during the silent time from one till five in the morning—the lonely hours when men are slumbering. After awhile a new face in the sick-room looked up at the Doctor with the most anxious eyes of all—a careworn face, beautiful with patient love. Mrs. Leyne was present when the crisis came, and childlike Harold lay secure since she was by, following her gliding movements with his eyes, looking at her lovingly when she smoothed his pillow; and Harold, thinking of his escape, was very serious and very subdued. He was removed to the suburbs of London, where pleasant apartments were selected by D’Auvergne and Middleton; and Mary besought her mother to be allowed to come over to tend him, but Mrs. Leyne wrote back in reply that they would soon return to Ireland; and accordingly she submitted, arranging every day at home his room, lest he might arrive unexpectedly, desirous to take special charge of him—a duty for which, young as she was, she was qualified by experience. In the garden of his new abode, when he was well enough, he sat in an easy-chair. The fever had brought about a great alteration in him, the result of which was that thoughtful demeanour which his mother silently noticed. If this circumspect, sweet soul whom he called mother was cognizant of

the truth, how forebodingly henceforth she would trust him to himself! In happy ignorance of his late career, she secretly called him her "noble boy!" and to her, indeed, always he would be a boy. In another week she will have him at home, attended upon by skilful Mary. She never thought of Madeleine as ministering to him, but only Mary. Noel, the moment he was set free from his labours in the office, came out and dined with them. Mr. Ducos paid an occasional visit, and, as he was living himself in the neighbourhood, sent daily a present of either fruit or flowers.

"Harold," D'Auvergne told him, "these fine bouquets are sometimes left at the office for you by Kathleen Ducos. She comes with her mother in the carriage, and commissions me to bring them out to you. She always holds the flowers, and I *know* that she goes to the expense of buying them in Covent Garden."

Harold eagerly examined them, and answered, "It is so thoughtful of her."

D'Auvergne then examined the bouquet, and said to himself, "There is a language of flowers."

Leyne that evening was in gayer spirits than he had been since his illness—nay, than he had been since the evening he went from the Killarney cottage and stood desolate on the shore of the lake.

“ Mother !” he exclaimed, “ when do you expect I might come back ?”

“ Goodness gracious ! Noel d’Auvergne, are you listening to that most foolish boy ? You talk, Harold, already of coming back as if you were not nearly lost to us altogether ! What of those wearying law-studies, then ? Ah, no, my boy ! we will detain you a fast prisoner in dear old home until the doctors permit your return to London. I will ask the doctors not to let you depart until winter is over. Next winter, thank God ! is a long way off.”

“ It is nonsense, Mother, to think of waiting so long !”

“ My dear Harold, make up your mind to stay at home until——”

“ Mother, I wish to come back as soon as possible.”

“ There’s a language of flowers !” thought D’Auvergne.

Noel spent with Mrs. Leyne and Harold the greater part of the day previous to their departure for Ireland. The morning and noon had been wet, but the evening was fine and splendid-hued heavenward. The three of them were silent as they sat together before the fire, while the light of day was fading in the sky,—

“ There is a dimness, like a doubt,
That wrappeth earth and sky,

When Day hath in its glory died,
And ere the Night comes forth with pride
Of sable majesty."

They passed a quiet evening, and rather a silent one—perhaps the coming separation, after the long mutual sympathetic attendance upon Harold, made it so for Noel and Mrs. Leyne—and soon after tea Harold went to bed; for they were to start by the morning train to Holyhead from Euston terminus.

"I will not stay," D'Auvergne said then, when Harold left the room. "I know you will want a sound sleep before the journey. Remember me to Mary, and tell Madeleine—my Madeleine—how well I am in every way."

"I will have so much to say to her about you! Now we owe you a double debt: after saving her life, you help in restoring Harold to us. When my poor boy fell ill amongst strangers, what would have become of him but for you?"

"Tom Middleton did more than I did for him."

"From the heart of a mother I thank him! But, Noel—my son, I may call you—you are one of us!"

She pressed her lips to his forehead; and he said, "That is a mother's blessing." Then he went away, turning round when he reached the door to smile and nod a kind farewell. She looked after him with a fearless smile upon her face; and then and there she knelt down and prayed for him in her gratitude. In

sorrow, peace, by night, by day her life was a prayer ; for the possession of God’s love was to her *alpha* and *omega*.

When he met them again it was at Queenstown, where they were spending the rest of the summer. It was here the Middletons lived, for Paul was a merchant in Cork city ; and Adelaide, glad that they had come, made them as happy as it was capable for her sunny nature to make them. For Noel d’Auvergne this town by the mouth of the pretty river Lee possessed several reminiscences, since it was here he used to spend the summer time when he was much younger than now ; and here a height and there an inlet, an island, or a weather-stained face was familiar to him still. He was not idle, though he came for vacation ; and, owing very much to the frequent society of Madeleine, he unravelled all the more keenly some thread of law in a difficult case. Madeleine was ill content that he should spend so much time with his books while with her here : she thought that since he came to take his ease, he was not, by so toiling, quite just to himself. At her bidding, therefore, he studied no more during the rest of his stay ; and he did so willingly, without any entreaty, since he was not strong of late, after the confinement of London. The toilers of the brain are not always very strong physically. She was sorry to see him pale and thinner than he was wont

to be, blaming London for it. After breakfast, when the weather was fine, she would put her bonnet on and stroll with him along the shore, breathing in the wholesome ocean air, and feeling joyous when she perceived the familiar healthy colour reappearing in his face. Lightly she glided, graceful, there by the hedges or by the sea, stepping over the little shells, often running merrily before, and waiting for him to overtake her. And he loved to walk slowly that he might the longer watch her waiting thus with a radiance in her eyes. Sometimes she would break forth carolling the latest song, and cease in order to receive from him a sweet smile. His demeanour with her was gentle, as his manly heart was true. He often spoke to her about himself, making no secret of his inner life; and her delicate mind appreciating the refinement of his, she exulted in the reflection that it would never be her lot to shrink from him; that he would never sweep with rude fingers the chords of her feelings; that she would never have a cause to be ashamed of one word or act of his; that with him she would lead a noble life, always upward in its aims—a dawn of an eternal day to come. Her heart beat with the emotion of pure resolutions. She looked so bright and well that every one said Queenstown was agreeing with her wonderfully. So it was. She was of course anxious for his professional success, while she witnessed him

courageously toiling and smiling just as if he did not feel the toil; just as if books were dearer to him than horses, and dogs, and landscape, and flowers, and pleasant society—which they were not, though he spent so much time poring over them. Her earnestness in his presence used to perplex him before she said to him that her hand and heart was his; for he did not know that watching his face and being with him taught her what goodness was better than volumes on the subject could. Many a time, even when they were no more than friends, a satisfied smile dawned upon her face, as if she had discovered some trait in him which confirmed her faith; and many a time, at moments when he was desponding, he remembered that fleeting smile upon her face, and somehow the recollection of it seemed to make him endure.

They went from thence to Killarney; and Harold Leyne marvelled at the quiet indifference wherewith he gazed again on the spot where he parted from Beatrice Fitzgerald. His heart was not breaking now, or likely to break. Time is a great consoler. Children ran up and down *her* garden; strangers to him and to her dwelt in the cottage. Beatrice herself was but a dream, half sweet, half sad, of the past.

“ She seems a part of those fresh days to me;
For in the dust and drouth of London life

She moves among my visions of the Lake,
While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then
While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
The light cloud smoulders on the summer crag."

By the lake's shore Noel rambled with Madeleine, and through Kenmare demesne. At her bidding—for she loved it dearly—he would row some distance from the land in a boat, he at the oars, and Madeleine at the helm—a figure of the after years when husband and wife—face to face and heart near heart feeling the happiness of the present moments, hoping and planning for the future, when she would be mistress of his house, which was one of Madeleine's chief dreams, as she pictured to herself that delightful life which was yet to come.

There was, meanwhile, a new joy in the even drift of Mary Leyne's unnoticed existence: namely, the companionship of little Adelaide Middleton, who was Paul's eldest and only child, whom they had brought with them on a visit when the Leynes went on to Killarney. The innocent pair spent together guileless hours, taking charming walks, during which they gathered ferns and flowers, and paused to wonder at the beauty of the scenery; while Mary told long stories, looking down at the upturned face of the listening child. When they left Killarney in the autumn they brought Adelaide back to her mother, and the little girl wept for a long time when she was

separated from Mary. “Mamma,” she sobbed, “you don’t know one-half about the goodness of Mary! No one in this house is as good. Will she ever come back again?”

“Yes, darling! next year.” The mother skilfully wove a story about the fairy-queen who held her court in the interior of a beautiful white rose, who was borne through her populous, splendid kingdoms enthroned between the wings of a glorious-hued butterfly, attended by dainty maids of honour clad in variegated robes, and by stalwart knights in dazzling diamond armour. Then the eyelids closed, and the tiny head nestled on the mother’s shoulder, and the child-mind was in fairy-land, with Mary Leyne as queen.

Noel was called to the Bar before Christmas, and it was a proud day, if not for him, certainly for Madeleine, when he was qualified to practise at his profession. Within his secret self he was determined to carry out his cherished endeavour to be as worthy of her as he could be, and in his efforts towards the accomplishment of that object he was often tempted; for human nature—the syren for this Ulysses—would lure him from the mast. He hoped for her guidance, certain in his heart that a wife can do much for good or for evil. A friend living in Paris he remembered—an atheist—who was made a Christian by the influence of his wife. She died when her mission

was done, and he lived on, racing no more with crack animals, driving no more along the Champs in violet scarf and scarlet gloves, carousing no more in yachts and supper-rooms, losing nothing now on the green cloth. What might not Madeleine do for him, who was neither an atheist nor a gambler, but who loved so well the pleasures alone which goodness brings as its inestimable reward? They will go through life true to that which is noble and high. It was about this time he received, bearing the Melbourne post-mark, a long letter from Tom Middleton—too long to be written here, but at the close of it the sailor wrote:—

“Remember me to all who are dear and have been kind to me. I will not return to Ireland for a lengthened period—why, you may yet ascertain. I have given up the sea for ever, and will go back to Europe as a passenger. Farewell to the winds and the waves then! I have loved them dearly, and do love them still the same, yet a sailor’s life shall be mine no more.”

“Ah, Tom,” D’Auvergne murmured, “I suspected that this would come to pass!”

The young sailor had made a resolution, greater than which could not spring from a human heart.

“We have two things to do, to live and die;
To win another and a longer life
Out of this earthly change and weary strife.”

So wrote one who found a pearl of great price, and

who in his own career proved the truth of what is written above. He is gone home before us, but his memory is still a flame in our hearts, and the books that were formed by his pen he has left to us—a legacy we gratefully prize.

The approaching Christmas-day, when it arrived, was ushered in by a bright frosty dawn; but before noon heavy clouds were collecting overhead, and the evening was disagreeably wet. It was a memorable day for Madeleine Leyne. Bells rang the pæan of the Christian’s triumph; the faces of friends wore real smiles; love revived again in hearts the world disappointed; and the story of God’s life on earth was remembered amongst men. The bells gladdened Madeleine; but, notwithstanding the joy of this day, she felt the loneliness of being alone. For two great supports to her every-day existence were absent, and their absence during the celebration of this yearly festival was peculiarly felt. Noel was compelled by important legal business to leave Dublin for the country on the previous evening, and it was a bare possibility his returning to town in time to spend with her even a part of Christmas-day. Mary—that other almost necessary prop to Madeleine’s life—likewise was absent on a visit of charity, which was the only inducement, as might be surmised, that could withdraw her welcome figure from home’s intimate circle at such a rejoicing time. A faithful

friend residing in the city was dangerously ill, and Mary went to her death-bed. Harold, moreover, was leaving for London in the morning, in order to fulfil the broken period of his pupilage in the law-office of Mr. Everard Ducos. And so, on the whole, Madeleine Leyne was rather lonely than otherwise to-day, a sense of desolation possessing her heart.

Noel contrived fortunately—unfortunately, as it afterwards turned out—to accomplish his work thirty miles away from Dublin, and to be back in time to dine with the Leynes, as had previously been arranged between them before this unforeseen trip to the country was necessary to be taken. The Honourable O'Malley Oranmore was the only other guest, whom Harold, as he said to them, found quite alone in his club, and, taking compassion upon him, asked him to come out and dine.

“Every one was with friends to-day,” remarked Oranmore to Madeleine. “I was marvelling, in the solitude of the deserted smoking-room, how I so carelessly managed to be by myself on such a day, of all days in the year! And just as I was thinking where to dine this evening, who should come into the room but my friend your brother? I am exceedingly grateful to Harold. I little dreamt my afternoon would be passed in such pleasant society!” Then he smiled at her, showing his perfect teeth under the bushy military moustache.

Now it so happened upon this particular evening—what never happened to her in similar circumstances before—that after dinner, while the gentlemen were still below over their wine, Madeleine was left alone in the drawing-room, with the duty imposed upon her of entertaining them when they should make their appearance there. Mrs. Leyne had retired to her own room to take some needful repose, much against her inclination, but she had been anxious all day, and for a week before, about Harold’s departure. Nature to-night at last was peremptory; she was compelled to yield as soon as dinner was over, and she and Madeleine had left their guests to Harold’s care. Mrs. Leyne earnestly wished Harold not to go back to London, but he was very obstinate on that point. Madeleine set about preparing the tea; and to-night it came to her mind vividly what a help Mary was to her in her daily life. How she missed at this hour that domestic, unobtrusive, skilful companion who did so much and said so little about what she had done! And then the thought flashed upon Madeleine, what if Mary died? What if *he* died? What if, by one of those sudden, terrible strokes of Providence he should be taken from her and kept beyond her reach in this life? To be deprived of his presence, she felt, would drive her mad. Of all who had sought to win her, he alone she would confide in, with whom she hoped to proceed through

life, unselfishly helping him, and sufficiently rewarded in return for that by his love and companionship. She yearned to have him all her own for ever and ever—never divided from him, his intimate friend and counsellor! To be told of his sorrow and of his joy, to share with him both—his people to be her people, his God to be her God! Madeleine wondered why to-night, because she was alone in the drawing-room, she should be desolate thus. She sought vain refuge from her thoughts by reading; and at length opened the music—some of Mary's songs, lying negligently on the piano. She played one of these, but it was so plaintive in its tone and meaning that she nervously abandoned the instrument and opened one of the windows; not that she needed air, but because it seemed to her a variety to have a look at nature, which was going on as usual, fulfilling its laws obedient to its Author's will, and would go on fulfilling them whether Madeleine lived or died, was happy or unhappy! That thought came to her, too, as the rude air of the cold wet night intruded into the warm sumptuous chamber. The violent rain beat against her face, and the wind, sweeping into the room, succeeded after one or two attempts in quenching the large solitary lamp upon the central table. In the half-darkness which followed, the shadows from the fickle flames in the fireplace played upon the ceiling and the richly papered walls, and

were reflected in the various mirrors, like frolicking goblins. She closed the window, then the shutters, hurriedly, slightly resenting the invasion of the storm outside, which she had to thank herself for its making itself unpleasantly rude to her, and proceeded with an impatient movement to the lamp, in order to have it immediately relit before the gentlemen should come up stairs. Crossing the room, in her unnecessary haste, she stumbled over a footstool, and nearly fell. This incident, trivial as it was, did not lessen her impatience. Just at that moment, while she was recovering again her erect position, a shout of laughter in the dining-room made her pause ere she moved farther. There was silence once more beneath ; the rain persisted in its attacks upon the window-panes ; the wind sobbed and sighed occasionally amongst the trees outside around the mansion, and oftener boisterously roared, hurrying from its strife with the sea. She moved not a step from her bending attitude, she seemed as one startled and riveted there by a spell which had entirely conquered her ; and again, in an agony of suspense, while still she stood listening and surmising, a louder ringing laugh from below smote the girl’s unsteady heart. Whatever suspicion then established itself in her mind it had the effect of blanching her face, her eyes, deadening her lively expression, as if a supreme blight had fallen upon her, as if the light, the breath, had gone

out of her, and a sudden withering taken a fatal possession of her frame. She did not touch the handle of the bell which would bring a servant quickly up to trim the lamp. All thoughts fled from her mind except one thought, and to her it was a most terrible thought. She sat down on the floor in the place where she had been standing, and for two whole hours, never heeding time was passing, she remained there, her hands clasped upon her lap, thinking of that one thought. What if her future husband was over-fond of wine! What if her lover was the same as others, concerning whom she often heard very disagreeable stories; and hearing them, pitied heartily the wives of such men! She reflected somewhat bitterly upon the possibility of it, as she heard his voice at intervals, during those two hours, and listened to the strains of laughter below—laughter which she did not like. In the present excited state of her nerves,—after the gloom of the horribly wet afternoon, deprived of the comfort of having dear Mary with her in the big lonely house, uncertain whether her lover would visit her to-day, fretful at the idea of his not coming, and depressed because of her brother's departure for a lengthened period in the morning,—that one dominant thought loomed out glaringly before her as she sat anxiously on the floor. What if Noel was a slave in heart to this foe of families, this murderer of fathers and sons,

of husbands and wives! She dreaded more than most things, and far more than other women generally would, the possibility of being wedded to one who was a slave of this sort. The terror of the probability of this maintained her free, when surrounded by eligible suitors, several of whom were sent about their business chiefly for that reason, because of a rumour merely, perhaps without any foundation of fact; and no doubt too, in addition to that, because her heart by none of them was too deeply touched as it was so soon and so effectually by him, who, when he came that first evening of their mutual meeting into her presence, was henceforth for her, until tonight, like none other whom she knew; who by “some peculiar mystic grace,” had completely subdued her, and won her willing respect; who, with his unusual sweetness, almost startled her, who had been unaccustomed to believe that such sweetness did exist on earth any where, except in the romantic brains of story writers or poets. Madeleine, in her short life, never having met actually with it before, and therefore meeting with it thus, she, as was natural for one so sceptical of it, was startled. His face, too, betrayed to her the goodness of his heart so frequently and faithfully, that she was led well-nigh to forget there was the misery of wickedness to be encountered in the world, and because of him almost believed no man was utterly bad. At this instant the train of

her recollections, which more or less concerned what is written above, was cut short by a distinct and sharp exclamation which frightened Madeleine. She heard the door of the dining-room opened and quickly closed with a decisive noise, and then some one hurried down stairs. She left the drawing-room with a beating heart, and bending over the banisters, peered terrified below. What meant that anxious cry she heard? All was so silent now, she was inclined to think nothing had happened, but that in her excited state she had merely imagined she heard a sound so unusual in this house. She still peered down, listening for it again. She could see the shining lamp in the hall, shedding its customary brilliant useful light. The large clock close by it clicked and clicked the same as ever to and fro. Against a window by her side the rain dashed, and its drum-like pattering intermittant roll hurt her worried nerves. She listened to the rapid steps coming up the stairs again; some one opened the dining-room door, a whispering of voices followed; and down stairs went the steps hastily once more. Her heart agitating violently, she descended, and stood at the entrance of the dining-room, the door of which was left wide open by whoever went down stairs last. Then at what was revealed to her she sank down to the floor, utterly overcome, but as if a sudden unlooked-for strength was at that same

instant vouchsafed her, she recovered herself, and with flashing eyes, stalked boldly into the room. There before her, pale, helpless, lay her own Noël outstretched along the carpet, and O’Malley Oranmore supporting his upraised head. Their eyes met, and she silently asked Oranmore, in that expressive glance, “Is it true?” He spoke not, but pointed at D’Auvergne compassionately, sorrowfully, half contemptuously, mutely rebuking her for her foolish choice. That was enough. In words he could not have said it more expressively, that her future husband, her choice instead of him, the darling of her heart, was simply lying there because he was shamefully intoxicated. It will be long before she can forget that thoroughly pitying expression, that eloquent, silent answer to her mute appeal, that ill-disguised scorn thrown upon the fallen form, as if this elegant man of gentle blood could not by effort disguise his contemptuous scoffing. O’Malley Oranmore laid down the unconscious head upon the floor, and going to the door, said, “This is no fit place for you, Miss Leyne. Please go up stairs.” What could she do but obey, conquered by her grief, and wild with the agony of it. And oh, the irretrievable shame of it! Oh, the disgrace that had come to that ideal of her dreams, that darling of her heart! She fixed one examining look upon the prostrate figure of her lover, to convince herself that it was really true what

she saw, and then satisfied by the testimony of her own eyes, and not lifting them as she passed him, to behold the smile of unexpected triumph and success on Oranmore's countenance, and which also, had she observed it, would have had a curious influence upon her reflections afterwards, preventing, mayhap, what was to come—she fled up stairs, and took immediate refuge in the silent darkness of her bed-chamber.

CHAPTER X.

HE IS GONE FROM HER.

“To me thou wert a guiding star that led
To God: I was mistaken. Thou art not
Of heaven. Therefore I will not follow thee.”

BY her bedside she stood, half stupefied at the discovery she had made; and it was better for her that there was no light in the room to reveal to her, in the mirror opposite, how like a wraith she was. Can it be that this is the awakening of her beautiful dream of pure affection? Is this the reality of her womanhood's expectation? She will have no more to do with him, for she will not have her lot—as it is the fate of others who are her own friends—cast in with that of him, who, in an unwary moment, reveals his natural bent, and crushes her belief in him. She will not come a young bride to his home, and be therein its gladness for this labourer of the brain who loves her so well. He shall be no stay now for her to lean upon through the perils to come. To all that has been—the trifling episodes which

nourish love, the pleasant sayings, the unexpected meetings, the heart's language in the eyes, the drawing nearer of two souls, the mutual affection for all that is good and worthy of a yearning—to this there must be for ever an end. She will be so decisive in the painful, foolish course she is determined to pursue, that she will not see him again, for she knows there would be danger in that. She might waver and yield, were they face to face, so he shall not even have the opportunity of influencing her. She will write a note to him, and that letter must be so toned as to admit of no compromise, it must be such as shall drive him from her. Drive him! Yes, that is the true word, stern though its meaning be. Henceforth let him continue his way through the world unaccompanied by her. With another, if he chooses, but never with Madeleine Leyne. Another! A pang shot through her trembling frame, making the beautiful little lips tighten at the possibility of another taking her place hereafter. Shame upon him! Perhaps he has trifled with others as he has trifled with her, for he is no boy, indeed! Alas! and he was so dear to her until to-night! She had glided listless through crowded rooms, filled with beauty, and fashion, and rank. Men of position and of wealth sent her splendid gifts of flowers, or clustered round her in city drawing-rooms, in country houses, and by the shore of the



sea, in the idle autumn time. Gentle lawyers regarded her thoughtfully, and went to their work the more earnestly from the study of her. Fair dreams came to them because of her; and silent hopes, not the less magnificent because silent; and many a generous ambition, too, as they toiled through difficult days and nights, seldom taking the hand from the plough, in their worthy exertion to bring forth, for the children to come, an abundant harvest when their own summer is over, and the time of the sere and yellow leaf at hand. But none of these won her heart, though she respected them, and saw they were leading noble lives, consecrated to duty. That conquest was reserved for him, whom she confides in no longer. He said at dinner—she remembers it—that he will be returning to the city in the morning; and before he departs he shall get her note. The fumes of wine shall have left his head, and his brain will be clearer after sleep. He must never re-enter under her mother's roof with the same hope that was in his breast to-day. By and by she may meet him in after years; by and by she may be cordial towards him, as towards any other whom her brother brought to their house. She groped about in the darkness, and found some matches, with which she lit a reading-lamp on the small table by her bedside. She sat down then in front of her writing desk—a dear old desk, bearing marks of age and constant use

about it, the unmolested treasure-house of bundles of letters, written in the unworldly years of school girlhood, when there were few troubles, and Madeleine was seldom unhappy, unless when she failed to say all her daily prayers—and they were very numerous at that time. Unlocking the desk and taking out some note paper—which was dainty and scented—she caught a glimpse of these letters. Even at that moment of perplexity and disappointment, she delayed, for a few minutes, her unwise, hasty resolution, in order to sadly read their pleasant contents. Voluminous expressions were therein of delightful endearment, promised friendships, afterwards easily forgotten, sweet words of advice and trust and love, and too sanguine hope. Young faces had bowed eagerly over these written pages, while the small delicate fingers hurried on the nimble pen in its task of recording the teeming thoughts from the ready girlish brain. Ah! what of them now; the ink itself was turning to a brown, faded hue—a colour suggestive to-night. “Passing away” was the sermon in those beloved sentences—those records of what was for ever gone, those friendly epistles once so full of importance, and cherished still in a certain way. In the desk were some withered flowers too, and Madeleine’s slender hands lightly touched them. Close to the lamp she placed them to find out what they were; a bunch of pale primroses, a small fern, a

few forget-me-nots, a lifeless red rose, blushing like the rouge upon an aged cheek. Years ago they had their natural bloom, and light-hearted girls, plucking them, gave them to Madeleine. Or perhaps it may have been that with a boy's innocent love, some playmate handed them silently to her—the dumb expression of his affection—one who was entirely forgotten, until these dead flowers made him live again a minute in her memory. Though their bright colours were dimmed, around them still lingered some perfume, just a faint odour, which Madeleine felt ere she put them back slowly into their own corner of that old desk, whose history was so familiar to her. The perfumes of dead flowers are their epitaphs, and old letters are epitaphs of our youth. She wrote to him, and wearily threw down the pen when the letter was finished; and in the morning her position came more clearly before her. That gentle and manly spirit—manlier and gentler in her presence—was separated from her; his influence over her was lost, he wielded no power over her to-day; he was an ordinary man after all, and very human indeed. She strove to shake off the load which was weighing her down, and crushing her belief in him. No weakness of purpose, no lingering better prompting shall stay her resolute will. No womanly generosity, no unselfish forgetfulness shall make her forgive and hope by her power over him to

save him from himself. It will be a hard thing to tell him to depart, and love her no more. They were so very much to one another, but no matter, let him depart, bearing the penalty he has brought upon himself, and oh, shame upon him again and again! She arose and dressed herself, and walked about her room energetically, trying, by occupying her mind with little feminine employments, not to think of D'Auvergne. He had been so much in her thoughts since that scene of last night, it was a relief to try and forget him for awhile. Yet she needs must, delaying her toilette, dress slowly; slowly, more slowly; carelessly, listlessly; thinking and thinking; remembering him, recalling his words, his demeanour, his guileless face; picturing interviews together, which were to her, at the time, as links of a chain drawing her to heaven, for she always felt holier and happier after them, and they seemed to make her more secure on earth. That precious chain was broken by—him. Was it not being broken by her likewise? She would not admit that to herself, but the question, nevertheless, perplexed her.

She was dressed so early that Harold was not gone on his journey to London. She went down stairs to kiss him and say good bye. When he drank a cup of coffee she parted with him in the hall; and he was surprised at her loveable earnestness. He went away, and she returned to the parlour, waiting in the

darkness until a rosy sky gradually suffused the east ; the frost-covered windows glistened with the sunshine of the morning ; and then Madeleine went out and took a long walk, in order to reflect upon her new position. The air did her good ; and when she returned she looked healthy and spirited,—so the housemaid thought and said while Madeleine glided by her lightly to her room. Half-way up the stairs she beheld Noel standing in the hall at the parlour door, and, glancing up at her, pronouncing her name. She did not reply, but continued to ascend to her room.

He called the housemaid to him, and said, “ Tell Miss Madeleine I am starting for town immediately. I will wait for her in the conservatory.” He went thither while the maid carried his message. He observed the gardener at work there doctoring some sick plants ; he was a lame old pensioner, wounded long ago in a battle against the first Napoleon, and squaring himself up, met D’Auvergne with a military salute. They were conversing about the famous Little Corporal, when the servant returned with Madeleine’s reply.

“ She is at present engaged, sir, and will not come.”

He glanced sharply into the girl’s face.

“ Yes, sir, I did go up to Miss Madeleine,” she said, straightforwardly, divining his suspicion at once of her not having delivered his message.

“Of course, of course!” he exclaimed. “But go back and say, I will wait a quarter of an hour, if she likes.”

A long interval, and the girl returned.

“What kept you?” he asked; “I will lose the train. Ah! a note for me.”


He broke the slim envelope, and read,—

“Last night, at ten o'clock, I saw you in a lamentable state. After that spectacle I cannot meet you any more, as we have been accustomed to meet. To-day I part with you finally, and the pang costs me as much as it may cost you. I had a struggle to give you up; I have succeeded; and now, though your happiness cannot but be exceedingly dear to me, I must not share it. It is well that I was granted last night's experience before I—before we both—had taken an irrevocable step, which probably might be a matter of profound regret to each of us by and by, when the regret would have come too late.

“MADELEINE LEYNE.”

He tore the note to pieces. His face assumed an expression so unlike its usual serenity—one so harsh, so hard, so unhappy,—that the joyous little maid withdrew from him, timidly, some paces in surprise. He told the girl quietly that he wanted her no more; and in its literal meaning he meant what he said, for it was a great unlikelihood that she

would attend to him again in this house, which he would enter no more, since he was banished from it. His complete separation from its inmates is astonishingly sudden to him. What a note to write to him! What a judgment to form in her mind about him all at once! The merry servant-maid does not understand what can be the matter that he should change so. She concludes that he is slightly out of sorts merely this bright wintry morning; and therefore, to bring a smile upon his face, she bids him a safe journey into town, and a "happy new year to you, sir!" as gracefully as she may, singing snatches of an Irish melody while she trips off immediately to her household work. He listened to her carolling in her maiden happiness, as she removed the breakfast things from the parlour, singing chiefly to rouse his spirits, for she saw that something was wrong. Then he left the house, driven from it by her who had judged him unheard. He thought she was either a great hypocrite or a most selfish woman. He reached his lodgings, and worked at a difficult brief for hours, finding desirable forgetfulness in the mental labour. All day he stayed within; and when the short day was ended, and followed by darkness, he opened packets of her letters, which he re-arranged and directed to her, since henceforward he must not keep them. He possessed a miniature, too, of Madeleine Leyne, and he looked into that beautiful face. The



soft brown eyes seemed full of the light of love for him—a radiance beamed from them; and those smiling lips, he would almost believe, were silently framing his name when the skilful artist caught their form and painted it so faithfully. Before he could recollect himself, from sheer habit, he imprinted a kiss upon the portrait, and tears came into his eyes; but he stood up from his chair resolutely, and did not permit them to overflow; and, carrying his head high, he walked sturdily about the room, which was a way with him whenever under the influence of strong excitement. After to-day he must thrust her out of his heart. She was there still; but he must thrust her out, and let her not trouble his peace. She had separated from him! She deemed him unworthy of her hand and of—her heart; he doubted whether the latter ever had been truly his. He had never taken into consideration the possibility of being bereft of her, even by death; for when we have youth and health death seems far away. It was so terrible for him to give her up now that he was crushed by the news of it for a time. After awhile his more faithful, more forgiving, less wayward disposition made him resolve upon seeing her personally, and “making it up” if he could. For in truth he loved her very dearly, notwithstanding that note of hers, which was such a surprise to him. Accordingly, next day he went out to her mother’s place and saw Madeleine, having

found her walking alone on the road towards the railway, and never expecting his appearing before her where she met him.

“Madeleine!” he said, hoarsely, “do you believe that I am lower than the brute of the field?”

She was silent, and walked on.

“Will you believe me,” he said, continuing by her side: she walked very rapidly from the moment they met, “if I tell you on my word of honour that you have made a mistake?”

“I cannot disbelieve what my own eyes witnessed,” she answered.

“On my word of honour as a gentleman you have made a mistake—a most serious mistake. Your suspicions about me are entirely false!”

“I have no suspicions about you,” she replied, in a hard tone. “I saw what I saw.”

“You will put no faith in my word of honour, then?”

She was very excited, but said never a word.

“Nay; you silently admit that I would now tell a lie in order to clear myself!”

She still was silent.

“You do not reply.”

“Leave me,” she answered wildly. “Why do you come and torture me? Why do you come to me with an untruth?”

“I have come to you with no untruth, Miss Leyne. God forbid!”

“ I request you will leave me,” she said.

He looked into her countenance half wistfully, half in wonder. The hot blood of his fiery nature gathered in his face, and fled again, leaving him deadly pale. He drew himself up proudly, and, lifting his hat, allowed her to proceed on her way ; and then, when he went home, he sent by post to her the miniature, which was a valuable one. The letters he did not send, for he had burned them the previous night, before the idea of taking this last step of speaking personally to her came into his head. When she received the likeness next day, she was already doubting the wisdom of her conduct towards him both on yesterday and the day preceding ; but it was too late to undo her act. “ What have I done ? ” the frightened girl exclaimed, when the miniature came back. What had she done ? Turned blindly, passionately, from a good man’s love, and wilfully saddened her life. What had she done but when it was sunshine bade clouds sullenly arise ? If she could only have been calmer ! In her indignant surprise she lost sight of her great regard for him : her respect for his goodness and excellence fled before that picture of the unconscious figure, lying prostrate on the floor, in her mother’s dining-room, pointed at superciliously by Oranmore, whose politeness was not in the least ruffled. She will not consent to love, honour, and obey one whom she cannot respect. She will meet

him no more with that fearless smile lighting up her face. She will fix no more her eyes upon him with that glance which conveyed to him how she confided in him. He risked his own to save her life; he braved the contagion of her brother's fever; yet the first time he seemed to be wanting she spurned him. In her thoughts now she sought for her act no milder term than that. The figure laid upon the floor was too much for her sensitiveness. So she let him go, since she dare not promise at the altar to respect a man whom her nature revolted from respecting. She did not even give him the chance of repentance and reclamation. He was no longer her hero. But at last, as time wore on, her deep affection for him returned, asserting its sway. Her yearnings for his presence intensified; will her hand never rest in his again? She had felt so secure with him, so fearless by his side; he was so kind to her, so full of solicitude. Ah! like a flood of light the revelation of her loss poured in upon her. Never more to look upon him as her own. Never more to read his letters, which were always so pleasant. Never more to dwell upon the delight of waiting for him. Never more to be gladdened by his smile. Never more to listen to him wistfully. Never more to come under the influence of his noble disposition. Never more to have any thing in the least to do with him, or to be in any way to him the object of interest which she had been

so lately. What sufferings were hers for weeks and months! It was so dreary to wander disconsolate through the great house, standing mournfully at windows and on lobbies, not knowing how to be once more at rest; haunting the darkened corners of rooms; each day dull as the dull day gone; living through every day in a kind of gloomy broken dream. The terrible sting in her sorrow was the knowledge of his innocence now: for Harold, when written to, replied immediately, explaining the cause of Noel's prostration. He had succumbed for the moment to one of those fits of weakness to which, as Madeleine well knew,—her brother wrote blaming her bitterly for her conduct,—he had been subject to since that day his head was cut when he saved her life. Mary tried to comfort Madeleine as best she could. She read by her bedside at night; she chatted gaily when they drove out; she enticed Madeleine to indulge in long rambles, during which Mary shortened the way by devices of her own; for hers was a true heart and her secret sorrow over what had occurred she kept to herself. She said nothing to any one concerning her inward indignation with Madeleine, not even to Madeleine herself. Suitable was the comfort she gave to Madeleine about the loss of him who was driven from their family circle. She too had lost him, and sorely suffered for that loss. Down in her heart lay buried a beautiful dream of him, and

no outward epitaph told of its brief existence. She was of such a disposition that having loved him, she cared to love no other; and so, having buried that dream, she spent her wealth of affection instead, upon the poor, upon her own family, always for the love of God. Her sister's disappointment was not, then, to Mary an unfamiliar theme, and the wise consolation she once gave herself, she shared with Madeleine. She led her sister into regions of calm above human vicissitudes. On the evening of the day Madeleine parted from D'Auvergne on the public road, Mary returned from the death-bed of her friend, and then the tale was told of Madeleine's wilful over-hastiness. Mary said no word in angry remonstrance, but quieted the agitated girl, until in sleep she forgot her sorrow for a while, but only for a while, since not all at once is set aside the love which draws a maiden from her kindred to dwell in the home of a stranger.

“Oh, sleep! it is a blessed thing,
Beloved from pole to pole;
To Mary Queen the praise be given;
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven.”

So sings Coleridge, and so thought Mary Leyne, as she drew together the curtains of the windows in Madeleine's bedroom, and thus shut out the stars in the dark blue sky. In a few minutes she was in the kitchen preparing supper for Madeleine, against the time of her awakening. The servants were at tea as

Mary made her appearance amongst them. A sudden light of joy shone in all their faces, and every one rose to lend her a helping hand; but she sent them all back good-humouredly to their interrupted tea again, and too many cooks did not spoil that supper.

It was on this same evening of Mary's arrival home that Noel d'Auvergne happened to be sitting in the law library attached to the King's Inns, in Henrietta Street. Smiling friends came to talk to him, and went away again smiling more than ever. Others, as the twilight deepened, lit reading candles, and continued their patient toil of plodding through legal mazes, fingering dull statute books, absorbed in prosy reports. A volume of these latter lay before Noel unheeded upon the desk, open at the same page of the same chapter. He watched the young law students studying, and tried to surmise from their faces what their futures might be. Ah! he could not tell that. Some of the books of this library were old friends of his, and he used to come back here, sometimes, to have a secret talk with them once more. Hours were spent here with poets, philosophers, and historians, who taught him to understand a little of them. This evening, when he first entered the library, the sun was setting—from a window he watched it going gradually away, a golden-hued orb, drooping in light behind quaint gables; farther off

rose mountains prominent against the heavens, and Dublin stretched out before him, rearing towards the sky its steeples, and towers, and crosses, like the holy city that it is, inhabited by a great-hearted people who are pleasing to God. He read none of the uninteresting work before him, for that cruel separation from him by Madeleine was chiefly in his thoughts; the wound inflicted was not healing so very soon, the peace of mind not so suddenly restored. He said indeed to himself, in his own forgiving way, that she had acted as might be expected from a sensible woman who looked pre-eminently to her own interests, before what is called love should be allowed to come in for its share of attention—though her conduct certainly was any thing but considerate. But of one thing he was positively sure now, that she never loved him as he would be loved, or she could not have treated him as she did. He was one who could make many allowances, and he did make them. He removed some reproaches against her, lurking in his heart. And before he left the library later on, in order to return to his home at the other side of the city, he had forgiven her for ever; and this he was enabled to accomplish in one of those precious moments when a greater, clearer knowledge broke in upon him of his own utter nothingness, and of his dependence, not upon her, but entirely upon God for true happiness—precious moments

assuredly, when it is given us to discover something of our actual selves—moments which are as beacons we pass by on our life's journey, while we watch on deck, glancing by turns at our ropes and prow, and the delicate sails that waft us farther and farther, and are anxious about how we are holding the helm; in other words, this wayward will of ours, which is the only thing, after all, we can call our own—which, if left to itself, goodness knows where it will send us, but let it be obedient to the pilotage of God, and we are sure to come to the right port when the voyage is over. He arrived home at six o'clock in a cheerful mood, after that inward act of charity performed in the library, and—perhaps partly owing to his charity—with the good appetite, which the servant, opening swiftly the street door,—she knew his knock well, and it made her heart spring up towards him, and her step nimble,—merrily hoped he had.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TRIUMPH OF ORANMORE.

“ Sweet Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
‘ And have you lost your heart ? ’ she said ;
‘ And are you married yet, Edward Gray ? ’

“ Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn’d away :
‘ Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.’ ”

TENNYSON.

A YEAR, sad and slow for Madeleine Leyne, went by ; and once during that longest twelvemonth yet lived through by her she spoke to him accidentally, when travelling home alone, towards the latter end of September, after paying a month’s visit to some County Wicklow friends residing beyond the picturesque locality of Powerscourt, and who, at the private request of her mother, induced her to try the change of air, for she was any thing but well physically. On the homeward journey the train stopped at an intermediate station, and into the

carriage occupied by her, who should come but Noel ! He saw her at once ; he turned his head aside immediately, and looked out of the window ; he made even an attempt to get out and take a seat elsewhere, but generally the train, like the time and the tide, waits for no man ; so he was obliged to remain where he was and "bear it." Eagerly Madeleine devoured him with her eyes, noticing the changes in his appearance, which was not much changed, with the exception of a determined expression in his contented face. Yes, it was contented ; and that spirit of deep content visible therein filled Madeleine with some surprise. It would not be untrue to say that she resented it a little when she saw it ; but then she did not understand its cause, although Mary, without a moment's delay, would have perfectly understood it. Had Noel once during the journey glanced round and confronted her, there is no saying how different hereafter would have been the lot of these two ; for he would have observed her repentant tears flowing rapidly, and the sight of them would have sent him smiling to her side, with his willing hand stretched out to take back hers in forgiveness again. However, he resolutely refrained from observing her in the least after the first momentary glance whereby he clearly recognized her, though her veil was then down, which she lifted afterwards, in order to feed her eyes the better upon him. When the train arrived in Kings-

town, where Mrs. Leyne and Mary were spending a few weeks at the hotel, and who were not on the lookout for Madeleine, not expecting her so early, though aware that she would arrive some time to-day, Madeleine left the carriage, and a crowd being upon the platform Noel disappeared from her view. It was raining so heavily that all the cabs were engaged when Madeleine went in search of one. She was obliged to re-enter the terminus and wait, either until the rain was over, or until the cabs came back. She had not a long delay, for, in less than a minute, a familiar voice behind her made her start and turn quickly around. "She heard it, and she knew the sound full well."

"Fortunately I was at the door in time to secure a cab, which, of course, is at your disposal." It was Noel who spoke.

"Thank you very much, but perhaps you are in a hurry, and I can wait. Thank you, I *will* wait." It was owing alone to her sensitive desire not to inconvenience him in the slightest she pronounced that "*will*" so emphatically and decidedly.

"Then you will not allow me to offer it to you?"

"No," she answered, tremulously, and raised her splendid eyes, with a fire burning within them, which escaped his notice, for with his own glance withdrawn, he lifted his hat the least coldly, and left her. She often after that day looked into the law columns of the daily newspapers to see whether his name

appeared in any of the cases tried in court. She did not frequently see his name, to be sure, but she heard that he was prospering, and the news of his professional success seemed somehow, to her, a sort of consolation whenever she reflected upon the suffering he must have borne, which she inflicted by that hasty conduct which was costing her so dear. She heard, with extreme satisfaction, that down at the Four Courts, where Noel spent so much of his time, he was listened to with respectful attention by the dignified judges and barons, which fact she believed to be an excellent test of his real capacity; for their lordships, she was told, with what amount of truth in the statement it remains for others to say, when addressed for any prolonged length of time by the younger barristers, looked judicially stupid, and closed their venerable eyelids, not in slumber.

She was flesh and blood, and her health suffered seriously from the mental conflicts, the heartfelt desolation which seemed in its avidity to drain the life out of her frame. Grave doctors gave peremptory directions to Mrs. Leyne to hasten to the warmer atmosphere of a sunnier clime if she would preserve the frail existence of her wearied child, an injunction obeyed with alacrity by the anxious mother, who knew too truly the cause of her darling's ailment, and which probably the physicians guessed correctly when they thus advised for the sick spirit of Made-

leine the pleasant variety of strange objects to be met with in other lands, where foreign faces and languages interested the sorrowful eye and the languid ear.

Accordingly, early in the month of the following April, the Leynes were waiting at the foot of the Pyrenees for Harold's arrival from London, which metropolis he had finally chosen as his future residence, for he had now gone over to the English, and Kathleen Ducos decidedly had to do with this alteration in his career.

D'Auvergne felt, after parting with Madeleine at the railway station, a painful return of that bitterness of heart which assailed him at their first separation. He would have resumed their former relations towards one another, but evidently to him she would have nothing more to do with him, else why refuse his kindness so shortly and so decisively. However, he got rid of that bitterness as quickly as he could by devoting himself to hard work in the increasing professional business which, to his satisfaction, poured daily in upon him. Attorneys seemed to have found out what was in him, and began to work the mine in right earnest. What brought gold to them brought gold to him too, and they went very well together in legal harness. It was such a relief, though, from all that pressure of business, when every Sunday came, and heart and soul seemed lifted, without any self-

help, out of the turmoil and the watchfulness into an atmosphere of peaceful forgetfulness of it all—an air we breathe in on this particular day, and which seems to sanctify it and to belong to it alone, as if the breath of God permeated every hour of it in a special way. On Sunday, accordingly, he was happy with the happiness of the labourer whose work is done, and happy with more than that genuine happiness. Between his heart and this day, of all days in the week, there was a tie of sympathy, and on his part, a feeling of unspoken gratitude, because of the joy which came to him from that day, whereon strange faces appeared friendly, and the same smile on many lips, and the same peaceful light in many eyes. Happy Sunday! when the river of life, after six days' struggle over the rough stones and down the rapids, settles for a while into delightful stillness, and we rest on our oars to look up at the sky. There is little need to explain he was happy on Sunday, because he was upon God's side, and that day was God's day. There was no other reason for the sweet emotions, and the noble resolves, and the illimitable charity which then always came. There is a Spanish proverb which says that "he is a rich man who has God for his friend." And what will not religion do for one like him—like D'Auvergne? What will not one like him do for religion? It has conquered proud natures, and the proud nature has revelled in

the freedom of humility ; it has conquered men of genius, and shown them the true God, and they in return have conquered others, and shown them the great secret which is in our midst. Ah ! how often, most gentle reader, in many a smiling reverie you see again the companions of your early days, whom it, too, has conquered as well as you ; and who, not so much because they were more meritorious than you, but because they were called, and almost in spite of themselves, had to leave that which you and we cling to so closely. They

“ Have made the offering of their days.”

So, too, have you, perhaps, but not in the same manner. “*Orat qui laborat,*” if only the right intention is there, if only Christ is within. One especially you remember, one who stands forth conspicuous before all the separated friends of the past, one whom it may have been, that you were attached to with a shy boy-love, one like Beatrice Fitzgerald, one who, when she grew to be no more a child, and yet more than ever a child, parted from father, mother, brother, sister, lover ; and the recollection of that timid girl so fearless for His sake makes you think of one not unlike her, the “*Lilium inter spinas,*” the

“*Dei Mater alma,
Atque semper virgo.*”

The confinement in the courts, combined with the

night labour which followed in his study, was bringing about its natural effect upon a constitution not so robust as it was wont to be, so that as soon as possible during the subsequent autumn, D'Auvergne went to Normandy, strolling into churches, and wandering on foot, not altogether alone during the earlier part of his trip, at least, for Rutherford Everton, whom he met in London, on his way to the Continent, was his acceptable companion for a short period. They encountered each other by chance in the Strand, and Everton besought the pleasure of his society for a week or two, offering a spare bed in his Temple chambers. Noel alleged his pressing need to breathe air purer than London could afford.

“I have been too long cribbed up in a city,” he said; “I am not in that health necessary, if I intend, as I certainly do, to work hard all next winter. Now is my time, you know. I will take mine ease in mine inn by and by——”

“Yes, when the gout comes, and all the ills old age is heir to.”

“Then idleness will be desirable—old age is the time of rest—but not now, at least for me. You know where the devil keeps a workshop?”

“In the idle brain? There's some truth in that; but don't think I say so from actual experience!” he said smiling.

“I’ll tell you the way we’ll arrange it. You say all your fellows are out of London?”

“Yes; some risking their necks up the Matterhorn, a very tolerable number idling in sea-side hotels, and a few in the bosom of their families.”

“Then instead of stifling yourself and me in London, come over to Normandy, Everton?”

“Gladly. It’s a good thought, but it never struck me! Only I must be back again in England before another fortnight is over. They expect me up in Yorkshire,—my father’s seat, you know—he has a pleasant place and lots of company, either in the house or else they are to be had in the neighbourhood. I give you *carte blanche* to come there when you like. If I don’t pay my dutiful respects soon, D’Auvergne, why the governor, according to his custom, will be sending letters down to London until I go, each one a more imperative edition than the last. Would you believe me when I tell you, they think I’m an industrious barrister, deep in briefs, and consultations, and all that sort of thing? You perceive that I’m not, and probably were I to ask your opinion, you would say, without hesitation, that I never shall be. At all events, it is my own confirmed opinion of myself. Heigh-ho! What is the use of killing one’s health and strength? I have money enough without wasting midnight oil and mental material in acquiring more for others to enjoy, when

I am swept away. It's all in a lifetime! Existence is so short, I don't want to go in for shortening it still more, and then descend to my grave before my time, with an epitaph over me, telling what a fond husband, what an excellent Christian, what an astute lawyer society mourns the loss of! Oh! stuff and nonsense! I'm your man, D'Auvergne, for fully a fortnight. Won't we have a glorious time of it! Don't I know where the places are that one should go to! Trust me to be your worthy guide through that land of my forefathers. Not only did a respectable ancestor of mine come over to this country with that clever chap the Conqueror, but I actually am Norman born, having first seen the blessed light of the sun—and God bless it! with all my heart I say—near Rouen, just six and twenty years ago from last May. I'm a May-bird; and, by George! I do take to the sunshine and the summer side of every thing. Why, you too are half a Frenchman! Listen to Frédéric Bérat,—

‘ J’ai vu les champs de l’Helvétie,
 Et ces châlets et ces glaciers.
 J’ai vu le ciel de l’Italie,
 Et Venise et ces gondoliers.
 En saluant chaque patrie,
 Je me disais : Aucun séjour
 N’est plus beau que ma Normandie,
 C’est le pays qui m’a donné le jour.’

I wonder what sort of baby I introduced myself as

to this incomprehensible world! I suspect, notwithstanding that workshop you alluded to a while ago, that the bump of idleness was early prominent in this upper region of mine. I have a vivid recollection of devouring my first books, though not in the allegorical way of so getting rid of them which doubtless wins the regard of schoolmasters and blue-stockings. Ah! this upper region is very empty still, I fear," he smilingly added, and passed a beautiful hand, delicate as a woman's, over his well-developed forehead. His smile was an index to his heart; and that smile was very good-natured. And as he looked at him, D'Auvergne did not consider that upper region empty; nay, he was just wondering at the moment, would he propose, as rumour had it that he certainly would, for Mary Leyne. What a match for her! Noel thought. They passed through Rouen next day; and Everton, who knew Normandy, was most useful to, and a great boon to, his Irish friend, who parted with him with unmistakable regret, at a Norman railway station, when the fortnight Everton allowed himself, and another week added thereto, were over.

The variety, both in scenery and in people, prescribed for Madeleine, had the beneficent results calculated upon by the eminent physicians consulted by Mrs. Leyne. When Harold joined them in the south of France, he was very attentive to his elder sister; and tender, and considerate, and, indeed, both

to mother and sisters, exceedingly like the gladsome Harold of bygone days. The cause of the restoration of this old demeanour, which came like a flood of sunshine in upon the sombre existence of the three women, was explained to Mary first of all, when, the very evening of his arrival from London, he invited his younger sister to stroll out with him for a short walk.

“Mary,” he said, confidently, just as he used formerly to utter her name.

“Yes, my dear.”

“Mr. Ducos has a daughter named Kathleen, who was kind to me when I fell sick that time with fever, and with whom——”

“You are now in love.”

“Yes,” he replied, looking brightly at her. “But I have not told you—how do *you* know?”

“By your manner, and by what mamma said.”

“Mamma! I did not tell her, Mary!”

“No. But she told me of the kindness shown towards you by this Miss Ducos, and then of course I began to suspect how it would end. When I found you so anxious to get back to London, I suspected still more strongly than before. When we met to-day my suspicions were dispelled. You looked so contented, I said to myself it was settled between them before he came away.”

“So it was!” he replied, and held fondly the

dainty little hand lightly resting on his arm, "so it was, Mary; and I am going to tell mamma to-night, but I wanted to tell you first of all!"

Then he uttered praise of Kathleen's gentle disposition, of her beauty, of her continued kindness, so unlooked for by him, during that fever attack. He explained—for he was well aware that his sister Mary was no romantic young lady, who believed love in a cottage complete married bliss—relative to the enviable position enjoyed by Mr. Everard Ducos in the legal profession, that his practice at the Bar was most influential, and that in addition he possessed a handsome private income. And this was acceptable news to Mary; so she said to her brother, telling him candidly what was in her heart about it, with wisdom revealing itself in her blushing face, that money, and plenty of it, smoothed a man's way through the world. Yet Mary, though outspoken thus, was poor indeed in spirit, and would only be glad to have in her own possession thousands upon thousands of those powerful golden coins, for the mere pleasure of giving them away in His Name. She would regret it as much in her way as the most covetous would, should it happen that her brother foolishly took it into his head to marry a girl without means. Of course poverty is a wholesome thing for a young man—an invigorating stimulant to the latent powers of exertion; and perhaps many who have raised themselves to high

estate, have done so because in youth they learned wisdom and found courage in the laborious school, wherein how to earn a livelihood is inculcated by much embittering experience during the acquirement of that species of learning. Nevertheless, in her brother Harold's case at least,—knowing his disposition, familiar with his daily habits, seeing that his wants were many to which, besides, from his childhood, he had been accustomed,—in her wise forethought for his material welfare, she would never have him feel, what so many are obliged to submit to, that a man often is measured by the length of his purse. This projected marriage with the daughter of Mr. Everard Ducos, Harold succeeded in proving satisfactorily to Mary, was, taking a worldly view of it, most desirable. However, there was one impediment which Mary, he went on to say, probably was acquainted with already,—that they did not profess the same religion; and, undoubtedly he admitted to his sister, that object was a serious one: for by and by look at what differences and disputes might arise. No matter how united they might be in every other affair of life, how affectionate towards each other, how reverential and faithful to the one God Who created them both, still a barrier would be between their two lives, causing a division which might yet bring evil consequences. Mary agreed with him in every word he said, admitting to Harold that it was a most

serious obstacle; advising him to pause before he married one who was not a Catholic; which advice she gave, not because she was a bigoted foe to all who did not believe as she did; ah! no: for she loved those dearly who were not in the fold which so securely sheltered her, and hoped the best for them, knowing that God will judge every man according to his works. Then Harold replied that he had paused and deeply reflected upon the step he was about to take, and had asked help from above to afford him support; and that still in the end he was drawn towards Kathleen more and more, so much so, that he felt as if God was guiding him through this business, and had brought them together for some wise object of His own. On one occasion, he further told Mary this evening, Kathleen Ducos said to him, "Our difference in religion makes no difference to me. It is enough for me if you love God. I know that you love God, for you are good in a way which convinces me you love Him. I sincerely try to love Him too. I am very, very happy with you," she continued. "If you were wicked I hardly think I would be as happy with you as I am. You never seemed to doubt about the truth of your religion; oh, I like you for that! I doubt sometimes; I cannot help it! I do not doubt the existence of God! No, no, never that! But as good a Protestant as you may think me, my belief is not in the creed I

outwardly profess, but in the heart within me, which jumps up at the thought of the goodness of the Creator of all things. How can I believe the Protestant religion truer than any other sect of Christians? They all believe in God and His Son, and differ about details which are very trivial and unimportant in my eyes, compared with the great belief in the essence of that wonderful biography of God's life and death upon earth. I find no rest for my soul any where but in the single thought of God."

"You are very nearly a deist, Kathleen!"

"I would be one entirely, only that I *know* the Son of God was amongst us here once; and I believe He is still in our midst in the spirit," she replied earnestly, and sighed and smiled, with a patient expression upon her closed lips, as if her soul was fighting still its way to peace, and had not found all the treasure yet. "I have left the future to God; and I let Him guide me in every thing," she added.

"I never doubt," he replied, "and I cannot doubt. It is impossible for a true Catholic to doubt. And chiefly because of this reason which I am going to tell you. And listen to this, Kathleen, though it may surprise you. *You* believe the Son of God is still with us in the spirit; but a true Catholic *knows* that He is here, not only in the spirit, but in the flesh. A true Catholic is *conscious* of His Presence in the Blessed Eucharist; and knows that in the possession of that

secret he has the sum, the epitome of all Christianity, its *alpha* and *omega*, its beginning and its end."

If Beatrice Fitzgerald had been listening to Harold speaking that mystic and wonderful sentence, how glad it would make her whenever she thought of him again! How she would pray for him more than ever! How she would thank Him whose true and gentle bride she is!

Harold having told Mary of this conversation, the result of her immediate advice in return was such, that when brother and sister came in again from their evening walk, he kissed her ardently, and whispered, "Your good common sense never failed me, often as I have put it to the test: one handful of it is worth a bushel of learning, my darling guide!"

At the mention of the name "darling" she gazed at him child-like and wistfully; and, for one little instant, laid her face on his breast, as if to assure him she was aware there would always be rest for it there.

In Rome, by the Mediterranean shores, in Florence, in Venice, in Paris, in her solitary chamber, Madeleine Leyne gradually forgot to mourn over her sorrow. Abroad it grew to be a pleasure to her, when sated with a greater amount than usual of sight-seeing, mountain climbing, museum visiting, doing picture-galleries and churches, to steal from their temporary residence alone at an evening hour, and

entering some open church, to sit down in a darkened place, either to pray or watch people praying—in itself a sight which did her good : for a face is a very readable book, and a holy face a very pious volume. Troubled countenances were peaceful there ; and so was her own. Sometimes, with elastic footstep, a graceful young priest passed her by, glancing at her with the look of an eagle—“ friendly was he to behold, and glad as the heralding angel ; ”—or else a procession of children—“ with heaven in their hearts and their faces ”—gazed shyly over their lighted tapers at the handsome, solemn, pale-faced Irish lady, who seemed so much alone ; or else a quiet nun, once, it may be, the fairest, gayest maiden in some European court, divined the cause of Madeleine’s sorrowfulness, and breathed a silent benediction. And what joy is that quiet nun’s in return for the joys she has abandoned ? Did she never hope for the mother’s love, the mistressship of a husband’s household ? Is her heart cold, that she can live such a life ? Madeleine knew a great heart beat under that quiet sister’s robe. In some terrible moment of her life, when she stood in awe by the side of a dead companion, when she heard a glorious sermon from eloquent lips, or when some one of noble nature unobtrusively won an influence over her : then she resolved to become what she is ; and for all she gave has received back already more than a hundredfold.

It was thus of an evening, shortly before their return to Ireland, that Madeleine sat and knelt alternately in one of the churches of Dieppe, where the Leynes were loitering for a few days before they crossed over to England. It was "a temple, shadowy with remembrances;" and while she was kneeling some one approached and knelt down beside her, and Madeleine heard a musical whisper, in French, "If Mademoiselle will only permit it, most gladly will I pray with her, in order that her prayer perhaps may be answered!"

She timidly looked in the direction from whence came the gentle voice, and she saw a diminutive middle-aged woman, towards whom she felt immediately attracted, and from whom she expected consolation, as if it was natural for her to receive such from this little person, whoever she may be.

"Thank you!" she gratefully responded. "Pray for one who was once my dear friend, that every happiness may attend him in all he does and wherever he is. He was my very dear friend; the dearest friend I had!"

"Yes, Mademoiselle, willingly!" replied the little figure simply, and became silent for a minute, when she resumed, with rapid utterance, "I have prayed for him who was once your dear friend, and for you also have I prayed. Once, you say? Ah! why not now? why not always, my good Mademoiselle?"

Mademoiselle smiled sadly.

“Yes, yes, now I know,” the little woman added compassionately. “You need not tell me about it. Are you not Anglaise?” she asked.

“No,” Madeleine answered.

“Oh! Irlandaise, then?” she asked again, with considerable eagerness. Madeleine smiled at once, and replied in the affirmative. “I thought so! I thought so when I beheld Mademoiselle! You Irish so love God! I had a friend long ago, who was Irlandaise, a governess in Paris; I am a governess likewise. She died of consumption, poor Marie did!—overworked and underfed was poor Marie!—but she was so patient, and used to send what she could spare from her little earnings to her mother in Ireland. She died a saint—how I do envy her such a death! I imagine to myself that she is in heaven, and I speak to her as we used to speak to each other before she went. I cannot but almost feel certain that she is assuredly up there! Dear, dear Mademoiselle, how extremely glad I am to have met you in this church, for this is my favourite church, and I do love to see people good! Yes, dearest Mademoiselle,” she continued with confidential earnestness, “and you must not be very complaining, not too disposed to murmur; I know by your looks that you have been in sorrow, but you are rising out of its trammels now. Alas! I know what sorrow is!”

she said tenderly and mournfully. "But, *eh bien!*" she laughed lightly, and looked good-humouredly up into Madeleine's rigid face, which at her words relaxed a little. "Do not despair! Mademoiselle must not be always demanding nothing but happiness in her lot on earth. It might not be well for her were she to expect it thus. Mademoiselle will not mind disappointments if she loves God. As for me, I seek to love Him, and see! I have no fear, no doubt, no sadness; I feel only love, and have forgotten myself and the troubles which belong to myself. They are all lost, sweet Mademoiselle, in the sweet recollection of Him. God will surely be good to you," she added passionately, "for coming to the church with your sorrow!" She raised Madeleine's hand to her lips, pressed it to them fervently, and bowed herself away, pleasantly saying, "Adieu!"

Wondering, but with exceeding comfort in her heart, Madeleine arose from her knees and went out from the church, directing her steps towards the hotel.

"Oh, poor heart! love, if thou willest; but, thine own soul still possessing,

Live thy life: not a reflection or a shadow of his own:

Lean as fondly, as completely, as thou willest — but confessing

That thy strength is God's, and therefore can, if need be, stand alone."

Not long after leaving his friend in Normandy,

and returning to the family seat in Yorkshire, Rutherford Everton's father fell ill, and in a month disappeared from the world; the careless barrister became Sir Rutherford Everton, Bart., in addition to the enjoyment of eleven thousand a year and the mastership of a majestic castle. He began, instead of haunting the courts of Westminster, to pay stricter attention to the culture of the fertile acres which were now his own. He likewise went into parliament, and settled down into a much steadier state of existence than formerly had been genial to him; so that in his new position in the land he was a desirable husband in the estimation of many mothers and daughters in London and Yorkshire, who would feel the disappointment keenly if he passed them over unheeded and married an untitled Irish girl—an act he felt himself perfectly at liberty to do if the Irish girl would have him; and an act, moreover, he was bent upon accomplishing as soon after his father's death as might be compatible with the respect due to that deceased relative, provided of course, as just stated above, the lady chose to accept him, concerning the certainty of which consent on her part he was not a little sanguine. She had been always kind in manner towards him, she had been always the same towards him, she always wore a smile, and spoke in a soft voice when they met during his annual wanderings through Ireland; putting all which incidents

together he reasoned with himself, that, if no one else had forestalled him, his chance of winning her to be his wife was a favourable one. He derived a good deal of hope moreover from his belief in the omnipotence, which he had been taught to consider the attribute of a young, handsome, unmarried, wealthy, titled gentleman.

Consequently, in less than a year from the date of the return of the Leynes from their sojourn on the Continent, Mary was sitting alone, busy with her sewing, and contented with her lot, when Sir Rutherford arrived and was conducted up stairs. Secretly surprised that he should pay a visit so unexpectedly and so early in the day, Mary, still in her morning dress, but which appeared to him in its simplicity the most graceful he ever saw her wear, received him with her own smile. She was much more astonished when he told her immediately, without much more ado about it, that he came over expressly from his seat in England in order to ask her to make him very happy—in other words, to be his wife, to be Lady Everton!

Gently and quietly, without hurting him more than was necessary, she refused him.

He had proposed for Mary Leyne! She had partly suspected that it would come to this; and in the critical moment she was prepared with her answer. She had thought of the answer many a time, and

weighed it well. It was a splendid match for her; he might make life more pleasant than ever; she might do much for him in her own wise ways. Yes; she had thought of the answer often, and weighed it carefully many a time. He who was sarcastic, and amused himself with watching—as if he did not watch them—the shrewd tactics of mothers and daughters, was softened down and bettered imperceptibly, and given ideas of domesticity, through the hidden exquisite influence over him of this unobstrusive Irish maiden, with the blooming cheek and mystic hazel eye, in whose depths dwelt peace, as though it reigned right royally there, which in truth it did. He was smitten the first evening he met her, when through Harold's invitation he dined at her mother's table. Often afterwards she was the happiest theme his thoughts desired to entertain. Subsequently, they met every year; for every year he fished the streams down the country, and always stayed a week or longer with the Leyne family. That week or fortnight was for him the pleasantest throughout the entire year.

Her rejection rather astonished him, and when he left her quite crestfallen, with profound respect for Mary and with greatly diminished faith in the omnipotence of his social position, he went not back to Yorkshire but straight on to London by that evening's mail, and thence without delay to Paris,

midst the festivities of which gay city, and the hospitality of friends resident there, he sought and found some solace for his unexpected disappointment.

“ I have lost eleven thousand a year, and I shall never be Lady Everton,” Mary said to herself, with one of her peculiar smiles and upward glances, when the door closed upon Sir Rutherford. She marvels at the enviable match she might have made whenever she recalls the kneeling attitude of the baronet suppliantly at her feet ; for he had, in the moment’s excitement, dropped down stage-like upon one knee. She does not pity him exceedingly. She thinks that for him, and such as him, the wound she inflicted, and which she would fain not inflict, shall not leave many, if any, of its scars. What could she do otherwise than refuse him point blank ? She who was resolutely determined never to marry, since she could not marry *him* who was now lost to Madeleine as well. She whose lot in life she believed to be that dearer to any one than she was at present she never would be ; never nearer or dearer to any one but God. Some people die years before their bodies are put into the grave, so we have read in a book, and Mary Leyne was one of these. Mary Leyne, *as* Mary Leyne, was dead. All her hopes for self in life were given up when Noel was given up, and though her body moved and breathed and aided her in the duties of her state, as the bodies of others help the souls

inhabiting them, yet Mary Leyne was no more ; within the beauteous form that had been hers, the Divine spirit had entered in her place and absorbed all things into itself. This most sweet saint, who once was Mary Leyne, glides about working infinite good with a summer warmth in her mien. Her soul is happy, and has so many secret treasures in its own possession that it needs not the additional substantial worth which belongs to the lady-wife of a titled husband who could make her the wealthy mistress of a lordly castle in an English county, and of a charming mansion in the West End. There is no sorrow whatsoever which hath power to hurt this transfigured soul now, unless the sorrow for sin—for the sin of others. Silently she has suffered much in her early womanhood ; at the time when her fresh heart yearned for the untried consolations of love, and when sorrow was only smiled at as a thing which assuredly would not come to her. But disappointment has made her wise, and the wisdom which was thus given her has enabled her to rise, having cast down her burthen and gained her freedom, above the influence of all human vicissitudes in every shape and at whatever hour of the day or night they assailed her, and to live at liberty from their attendant evils, uncontrolled by them for ever and evermore. No one was a bit the wiser of this splendid offer which was not accepted by Mary Leyne. The Baronet himself was

silent about it, for he was one who when deeply affected by any thing, be it joy or sorrow, kept his emotion to himself, it being his own and not another's. Mary Leyne, of course, spoke to no one about it; she was never accustomed to gossip concerning any thing relative to her own affairs. And this affair above all others she was anxious to remain silent upon for this reason: that what was done by her *had* to be done by her, and the less said hereafter about it the better; and especially because she would find it difficult to forgive herself if by any indiscreet word from her usually prudent lips the slightest rumour should go abroad that Sir Rutherford Everton had been actually rejected by a girl for whom a marriage with him would have been a most excellent match. For a man does not like it to be known that notwithstanding the fact that he had a great deal more than his own precious self to offer in the shape of silver and gold and goodly land, nevertheless the girl at whose feet he laid himself and these has refused to take him with them; and it is not every girl who has such insufficient self-love as to restrain herself from boasting of the conquest she has made and despised. Mary Leyne did not despise Sir Rutherford; on the contrary, she read him through and through long ago, and respected him after the perusal; but she unfortunately, for him at least, had merely esteem to bestow upon him instead of affec-

tion ; and she did not care, by marrying him for his high position, to bring to him and to herself much unhappiness, perhaps, by and by, when the cold truth might dawn upon eyes no longer darkened by love that she whom he had made his wife shared only the responsibilities and honours of his station, and did not give him heart for his heart. There was one, however, who, although he could not say it for a certainty, suspected what had taken place. This was the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore, who, as the Baronet strode from the house down the avenue, met the discomfited suitor, and surmised that Everton had been talking to Mary, and that after all it was not *veni, vidi, vici*, even with him. Oranmore would be amongst the first not to wonder if Mary Leyne had positively refused the Baronet, for she was a very true woman he saw clearly often and often, and a lady with whom *he*, although the brother and heir of Lord Summervale, would, the conviction seemed to him to come instinctively, not have the smallest chance of matrimonial success. O'Malley Oranmore was now a daily visitor at St. Mary's, as the Leynes named their picturesque abode. Many changes in the lives of people had occurred during the past twelvemonths ; that is no new thing to write about, since many know from stern experience how much a year can do and undo. Cares have left their traces, bold pulses have ceased to beat, little children have

been mercifully taken to heaven, maidens and young men have lost their gladness, and in many homes there stands a vacant seat "which none again may fill." But no change was greater, and at one period so completely unlooked for in the general course of existence as it went on in Mrs. Leyne's mansion, than that her eldest daughter Madeleine was cured of her soul-ache so effectually that the public announcement had been made, had already gone forth in her brother's hearing uncontradicted by him, of her engagement to be married next spring to the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore, the brother and heir of Lord Summervale, the latter being, the world was aware, a widower with no children. D'Auvergne having heard the news, in his heart wished her all happiness, and in his heart there was no love for her now. He was successful to that degree in his profession, immersed in such increasing flow of business, that he began to live as it were without the aid of human affection, in the delight of working his profession; beginning to forget altogether as if he had not time to remember how he once so sought support from woman's personal guidance, foolishly imagining that she alone was the star which must lead him to Bethlehem. It may be, too, that the wider sympathies of his nature, roused by his greater intercourse with men in the reality of the struggle to live, began to act and put forth tenderer yearnings

in search of a more extensive field for the operation of their freed efforts; it may be that in his greater knowledge of human nature, acquired in the practice of his profession, a more intense charity for the welfare of his fellows was the result, a charity which burned up all smaller clinging tendrils that would have clung to one like Madeleine Leyne; it may be, too, and this is not at all unlikely, that, just as with Mary Leyne, Noel d'Auvergne, *as* Noel d'Auvergne, was dead and gone; that a higher life than that which was his selfish own now suffused his stalwart frame, making him what he is, and as God would have him to be.

Mary Leyne had never any serious difference with her sister until this marriage with Oranmore was spoken of, and then she opposed it so strenuously, in a fiery manner so out of order with her usual calm disposition, that Madeleine felt quite injured, and refused to have converse with her younger sister for several days, although Mary tried hard to seek a reconciliation; but as Mary never yielded the least in her inexplicable dissent to the marriage, it was nearly a week before the quarrel was ended, and former sisterly relations partly resumed; even then the breach was not thoroughly mended, but only patched up in an unsatisfactory sort of way. Madeleine resented her sister's dislike to Oranmore, and considered it not alone derogatory to him, but a rebuke to herself that

in her choosing she was not wise. Madeleine, in spite of opposition, would have her own way, holding the union to be most desirable, especially in the worldly view of it. She was herself very attached to Oranmore at times and at other times not so. Her long-suffering, and the gradual obliteration, with the pangs of its wearing away, of what might have been had she but acted more slowly, more considerately, in her conduct towards Noel d'Auvergne; that fatiguing operation of forgetting left her tired heart wearied of the sorrow within it. Then the fond regard of one towards whom she once before felt sentiments of affection, came back again like cloudless sunshine upon her desolation, and she snatched at the apparent joy within her reach. Had she and D'Auvergne never met, it is probable she would two years ago have been the wife of Oranmore. She often thinks of that of late; of the home-peace and home-security, the full enjoyment of which she might ere this have had in her possession, were it not for the intrusion of that convincing girlish face, with the manliness of genius and the beauty of virtue expressed in lineaments which sought not how to conceal the thoughts of one who had nothing to hide which would not bear the light of day; that remarkable face—it was remarkable in any crowd, even amongst a group of great men—illumined suddenly and sufficiently her groping way, and by its bright-

ness, and by its mystery—which was no mystery to some observers,—and by its wealth of hopes awakened for her, destroyed effectually at once the earlier affection which had previously arisen for O'Malley Oranmore, and which latterly had begun again to grow in strength, nourished, as formerly it was wont to be fed, by the sweetened contemplation of a maiden woman emerging from the guileless seclusion of her girlhood, from the unpretending care of her mother—who was now for her a woman like herself, and not merely her mother—into the business and duties of more mature years, with which she will have henceforth to be familiar, and be conversant with the evil and the good which may accompany them. From her quick deprivation of the treasure some time ago in her grasp seemingly so securely, and from the bitterness of losing what that treasure foretold, she opened her bruised heart wide for the reception of the old love; grateful to Oranmore for his constancy all through, from the hour D'Auvergne appeared upon the scene to wholly occupy her attention, she now most eagerly yielded to the offer of himself, and resolved, by the sincerity of her motives, to make Oranmore feel that he had not chosen one who, when she was his wife, would compel him to regret choosing her. Oranmore overwhelmed her with his attentions, and obeyed her little word. Her toilette-table was burthened with the quantity of

costly trifles he presented ; and Madeleine believed herself the very queen of his heart, the pulse of his life, the darling desire of this exquisite, who, when he left her side and moved amongst his fellow-exquisites, stepped about proudly with the firm tread of a conqueror. It was curious to see him with his friend D'Auvergne, at whose table he frequently dined, and who quietly congratulated Oranmore on his happiness. It was no pang to D'Auvergne to do so ; it was no untruth he uttered when he said it caused him great pleasure to hear of it ; it was with no sarcasm or envy he added that he hoped she would be to him all that was needful. Out of his heart simply he congratulated him ; and Oranmore knew that what was said came from his heart. That knowledge caused him an uneasy suspicion—which lurked a long time in his breast, for he was slow to believe well of any one, saint or sinner—that perhaps D'Auvergne took the affair so coolly because he was glad himself to be rid of a bad bargain ; that Madeleine Leyne, in spite of Oranmore's own high opinion of her qualifications, was not the cream of the cream, after all, amongst the half-dozen ladies whom he had honoured with a place in the private list of those whom he was led to consider were for him the most eligible prizes of matrimony. He never spoke to D'Auvergne about Madeleine Leyne in a manner calculated to make Noel suspect that Oranmore was perfectly aware of

the fact that D'Auvergne once had the chief share in Madeleine's affection. D'Auvergne, on his side, did not allow it to be betrayed by his own demeanour in the other's presence that Miss Leyne had at any time been to him more than a friend, or, at least, more than one who might have been much more than an every-day friend, if matters had been permitted by both those concerned to proceed somewhat farther.

Oranmore, when Harold was by, actually induced Noel to visit once more the Leynes, for he asked him—it was a clever ruse on his part, for he evidently had some object of his own in view—as if he entertained no idea of there being any obstacle which prevented Noel's visiting them; and D'Auvergne, Harold remaining silent, consented, and went out to St. Mary's that afternoon, and spent the evening there, as he used to do under very different circumstances; resuming thus his acquaintance with Madeleine and Mary and Mrs. Leyne; and the three women were delighted that he should do so—none more so than Madeleine herself, who was strong enough in her regained love for Oranmore to receive her former betrothed complaisantly, and to speak to him as to a kind and valuable friend, who once in his life had saved her life. All love, all possibility of love, between them they both felt confident was annihilated—they both understood that fact; and by their demeanour towards one another showed each

other that they did understand it clearly; and that understanding it they could speak to each other, and laugh, and make merry, as might any other ordinary acquaintances who meet for pastime and hospitality, and part unconcernedly when it is over, not troubled in the least if they were never to meet again.

But it would not be right to say that Mary entertained towards him sentiments so cold as these, when she, with incredulous astonishment, beheld him coming in the old, gentlemanly way into the room, where she sat plying industriously that flashing little needle of hers, which mended or made so many things. It would be hard to depict the tumult of emotion which thrilled her bosom and sent a whole host of tell-tale tears into her hazel eyes. There he was back again face to face, holding her hand for an instant in his own, and speaking to her as he used in the familiar gentle voice, only in a manner more reserved, less unrestrained, less like himself, for much had come to alter him since he was here before. He saw those tears in her eyes, and they so touched his heart, that a dimness spread over his own vision and passed away. He knew then that she was downright glad to see him, that she seemed to become enthusiastic in his presence, as if it was such joy to have his friendship uninterrupted again. He thought her unchanged and Madeleine greatly changed, almost unlike herself; not as he would desire her to become, so soon older

in appearance, in conversation more worldly wise, in manner not quite the ideal she had been to him : all which, while he regarded her, somehow it displeased and pained him to see. At first it had occurred to him that Mary was unchanged ; the contrast with her altered sister helped him to that belief ; but the longer he was sitting there talking to her, the more he felt now that she too was greatly changed, and yet, though it may seem strange to say so, not changed, but the very Mary Leyne to whom he said once he was almost her brother. She was the same simple-mannered, single-hearted Mary ; but in her face he noticed a more peaceful, more serious, more joyous, more earnest, more settled, more childlike look, as of one who had seen much, had felt much, had suffered much, and still, after her experience, had the belief in her most securely-established—that to be like a little child is the safest disposition of all—heart and soul, wholly for ever and ever a docile little child looking humbly up at the great Father, and not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God !

“ It is very good of you to come here again,” she observed to Noel, when he was going, after tea. “ I will never forget this act of yours : I will never forget it to you.”

“ We are all friends still !” he said.

“ I know well we are,—friends more than ever,”

she replied. "You have many claims upon our regard; but your coming here to-day will never be forgotten by me. No, never, never!" She pressed his hand warmly, as if she was his sister, feeling admiration for a brother who was acting nobly and forgivingly. It was as such she regarded him, and as such alone; she saw that he had come to them once more for no other reason than to show how he bore no ill-will, and wished not to lose their society all his life, because of one unfortunate occurrence, which was past and gone, and the happening of which who can say was not for the best. As Mary ascended the stairs that night to bed, it was with her head thrown back, and flashing eyes, and elated bosom, and agile footstep; for she had become stronger than ever in the glorious dignity of her spotless womanhood from the sight again, and the restored society, of Noel d'Auvergne, who was her ideal of a true gentleman—and that word means a great deal.

CHAPTER XII.

A DEED OF DARKNESS.

“ I thank you that the heart I cast away
On such as you, though broken, bruised, and crush’d,
Now that its fiery throbbing is all hush’d,
Upon a worthier altar I can lay.

“ I thank you for the lesson that such love
Is a perverting of God’s royal right,
That it is made but for the Infinite,
And all too great to live except above.

“ I thank you for a terrible awaking,
And if reproach seem’d hidden in my pain,
And sorrow seem’d to cry on your disdain,
Know that my blessing lay in your forsaking.”

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTOR.

FAR and wide the tidings flew abroad of the approaching marriage of Miss Leyne; it was an understood thing amongst her numerous acquaintances that the interesting ceremony would take place some time during the next spring. She was not as happy as she would have been were her future husband Noel d’Auvergne instead of the Honourable O’Malley Oranmore. At the same time she was not

unhappy, but on the whole satisfied at the turn in the tide of affairs, which was bearing her along with its current out of the monotony of the present into that region of married life so many women dream of, and desire, and cannot attain to. She could not complain that Oranmore was not a most devoted lover, anticipating her wishes, and paying to her those tender attentions, to receive which made her so peaceful and resigned, experiencing the grateful feeling of delightful security from the frequent reflection that there was one fervent being by her side, who, through the yearnings of affection, was longing to do a great deal for her sake. Yet at gloomy moments, when she was more downcast,—when he had parted with her to return no more that day, when she was drearily alone, giving way to incomprehensible forebodings, while taking a solitary walk or sitting in an untenanted room,—she would have to acknowledge to herself that, in losing Noel, she had lost the power of loving another completely and unselfishly, and that, in accepting Oranmore, it was as much—conceal it how she could from herself, from him, or from others,—through a growing dread of spending all her days in the present single and, to her, unsocial state of existence, bereft of sufficient sympathy and of objects she would best care to live for, as through any deep-seated or lasting regard for him for whom her love was never fixedly rooted within her, and no more now

than at any former period; for, in spite of his assiduous attendance upon her daily, in spite of all his studied amiability—and it was wonderfully studied,—in spite of his skilful wicked comeliness, in spite of her own self-deceiving persuasions to the contrary, she did not care for him at length except in a cold, calculating, half-friendly, half-defiant way. One look from D'Auvergne would send her into an ecstasy; the offering from O'Malley Oranmore of the rarest flowers in all the gardens of the world, combined with that of the choicest millinery of Paris, would not even now excite in Madeleine one-tenth of the gratitude which used to spring instantaneously out of her sunny heart when Noel was by. She thought at first, when Oranmore began to renew his attentions after her estrangement from D'Auvergne, that she did love him more than a little, that she would struggle to increase her affection for him, that she would devote herself to him as willingly and as entirely as she would joyfully without an effort have sacrificed herself for Noel; but the more she was with him, since the day of his becoming her accepted suitor, the more intimately she became acquainted with his ways, the more she found there was a chasm between them which might never be filled up; the more she studied him and learned to measure him by his true worth, the colder and more lifeless grew her regard for him, notwithstanding her ever-failing endeavour to warm it up into something

of a generous flame ; because the longer they were together, the oftener they were thrown into each other's society, the glitter of his accomplishments grew less and less deceiving, and, to her watchful observation, the real Oranmore was nearly betrayed. But she would not go back with her word and refuse him ; she had already once too often got enough of that ! She was resolved, come weal or woe, to take her chance with him, and if much unhappiness was destined for her, to bow her head submissively, and accept it for the dear sake of such stray happiness which might come to her as well, if she would only wait for it, and appreciate it when present, and remember that life is not made up of much sunshine unless one seeks the sunshine for one's self, and knows where to find it. She had given up dreaming, and if Oranmore was not all that her fastidious girlhood desired, at least he was much better in her estimation than many, he was better than no one ; he would at all events release her from her present disagreeable deadening existence ; and if she could not love him as warmly as she would wish, there was one resource left her—she could love her children. How many disappointed wives are driven by a cruel awakening of a softening dream to this adequate resource of happiness ; and when the cherished ideal in the husband was rudely for evermore broken, have set it up again as beautiful as ever in his children, until

they too, no longer little ones, sweet tempered weaklings no more, in their turn are strong enough to walk the danger-fraught path through life, and need no more the wise mother, who will continue to hunt after the ideal still in her children's toddling children.

Spring came, bringing with it the nearer approach of her wedding-day—that wedding-day which, well for her, was never to be! One wild evening, a fortnight before the expected event, the mail-boat from Holyhead to Kingstown was toiling against the storm through the angry surf of the sea more slowly than was her custom. Very few passengers were on the wet deck, the greater number being snug and secure in their warm berths below. One or two officers mingled amongst the drenched sailors and gave their rapid commands gruffly; these were the only signs of human life visible upon the slippery deck, with the exception of two female figures, crouching from the fury of the wind near the closed door of the entrance leading down to the chief saloon of the vessel. One, the elder of the two, who was dressed in deepest black, the sombre colour bringing out the more strongly the death-like whiteness of her determined face, spoke a word at intervals to her companion, who was much younger and dressed in a less melancholy garb, and who, moreover, clasped firmly to her bosom a yellow-haired boy of seven years. The young fellow appeared frightened at the storm and the dashing spray, which was

wetting him through and through. With many an amazed and upward look at the anxious face of the younger woman, he appealed to her for shelter and protection; the flashing eyes and foreign mien of the latter denoted one born in a more southern clime, and the scared look of cautious love with which she gathered the boy more closely in her arms betrayed the eager watchfulness of the mother.

“I beseech you,” she exclaimed in Spanish, addressing her stern-visaged fellow-traveller, “if not for your own sake and mine, at least in consideration for my delicate boy, to come down below: it is terrible here. See my poor infant darling, how frightened he is! Oh, come if you have any thing human left in your hard heart!”

“Open that door, Dolores Burgos, and descend with the boy; I do not detain you: never mind me; I like to be in the midst of all this wildness about me. How free and grand it is! The winds have their liberty, and so ought I. Go down, Dolores, I do not detain you.”

“Yes, you do. I will not allow you to stay here without me. I could not rest in peace below; I would not know what might happen. I will not leave you here; I am afraid.”

“Afraid of what?” she asked scornfully. “Will the good ship spring a leak and disappear? Will the waters divide and swallow us?”

“It might be better for us even if they did,” sighed her younger companion. “Better for me, who am weary of every thing but my sweet boy. Do not cry, my darling; fear not, my pet! the sea would not be so cruel as to engulf this little innocent. No, it is not that which makes me afraid; the vessel is seaworthy, though she rolls so.” She turned round and looked at the elder lady, saying, “I am afraid of the gleam in your eyes.”

“Ah, ah!”

“Yes, they mean mischief—mischief to yourself.”

“You think that I am fool enough or wretched enough to fling myself overboard.”

“Just so. It would not surprise me. You would do any thing. And *that* as soon as aught else!”

“One day it may be that I will have to put an end to myself,” she answered, with a scowl; “but not yet, I am not done with life. The devil has me not in hell yet for ever and ever! That smooth-faced brother-in-law of mine—your husband—keeps me in the world still. *He* shall go down there before me. Wicked as I am, his bed will be deeper in hell than mine!”

“Oh, be silent! These loitering sailors are listening. Oh, do not speak in that way! Think of my boy; teach him not to lisp the name of that place; he is so innocent, the little dove!” and she im-



printed an impassioned kiss on the parted lips of the boy.

“So innocent! He shall not always be so if he takes after his father, as I dare say he will. You are womanish still, Dolores Burgos!”

“Call me not Burgos,” she replied haughtily,—“that is not my name.”

“You have gone by it a long time, then, if it is not,” the other answered significantly; “but, since you are a fury when roused, I will for sake of peace call you,” she paused and continued, derisively, “the Honourable Dolores Oranmore for the future; especially as we have come to this part of the world. Will that satisfy you, Lola?”

“I have a right to the name. He is my husband, Lady Summervale.”

“Silence! Lady Summervale I have told you again and again is dead! Dead to all in the Ireland we are going to,—her native land,—dead to all the world; dead to you, dead to herself, dead to the past, too, as far as herself is concerned. It has been your fine husband’s doing that I should be counted as dead, and he shall experience how exquisitely a loathed and hunted woman can be revenged; how readily she can turn upon her fell pursuer, and destroy—well, well, I will not torture you, weak, forgiving woman that you are! I will spare you for the present, Dolores. It was

fortunate for us two that in our quiet nook in yonder German village we both may never see again, the English papers sometimes reached my hands. And so at last it has come to this, O'Malley! that you who disgraced me in my idiotic husband's eyes, you who said in his presence that you had found me out, you who injured the only man I could love; but who, alas! was *not* my husband, or you would have tasted his horsewhip more than a dozen times; you who drove me from my comfortable and honourable home, and gave forth the news to the public ear that I was dead, and buried in the Summervale family vault—so at last you are at the top of the wheel, and to be straightway married to a wealthy heiress. Not so fast, my ancient friend, my cunning spy, my ruthless foe, whom from the moment we met I hated, whom if I had the opportunity I would this instant tear asunder limb by limb, and gloat over my task! Going to marry a fortune with a duped young girl attached to it as a necessary adjunct. Ah! not if I can help it; not if Dolores can prevent it, you will find to your cost, my sleek-countenanced villain! Was it not a curious thing," she spoke to her companion, "that you and I, injured by the same enemy——"

"He is not my enemy," Dolores interrupted.

"Fool! hold your tongue. I say he is, and he

will prove that he is again if you place yourself in his power, which you shall not do so long as I have my eye upon you. You are too good-natured : the world has not taught you common sense after five and twenty years, for I believe that is your age. Now I say it *was* a most curious stroke of good luck that you and I should be living in retirement in that German village ; you from Gibraltar, and I from Ireland ; and that we should get acquainted with each other so intimately as to tell each other bit by bit something of the bitter story of our lives. Only *something*," she added, with a disagreeable smile at her listening companion ; "for surely you, no more than myself, blabbed *all*."

"All? I had nothing to conceal ; if I had, and wished to conceal it, you would have secretly worked it out of me. Yes, I know a little of what you are by this time. My life," she went on proudly, "as my name, Lady Summervale, is without dishonour. I have never allowed one stain to come upon his name. I remember that I am a Burgos!—and I trust that I shall always remember it! It is the name of an ancient race," she continued, with some enthusiasm, "and I have not disgraced it. The only grave fault in my life was to have married a man who sought to deceive me ; who, when he discovered that he was tied to me irrevocably by the law and by the Church, flung me with my babe yet unborn into

a river, and left me there to drown and rot as if I were a dog. But I can forgive him that," she said cheerfully, "because of the love which I bear his beloved boy, my own good, obedient child, who is all in all to me."

"You are so forgiving," her companion resumed, "that you would let him marry another, and say never a word."

"No, that would be sin, and I have consented to accompany you in order to prevent its occurrence. I do not countenance sin," she replied, her eyes flashing indignantly. "But for this I would not be with you here this wild afternoon, for otherwise I would not have interfered with my husband. To have deceived me is enough; I must save this Miss Leyne. I must prevent this ceremony which would be a false marriage; I must do so in justice to her, in justice to myself, in justice to my boy—*his* boy—for whom I would give my life, whom I must see one day raised to his proper station. This is yet to come; I will be true to the interests of my boy, my noble boy!"

"You are too fond of him. As for sin! the idea of your coming all this journey to prevent it makes me smile at you. What a goose you are! Do you think the thought of sin stays one from deception and any other wickedness. During the forty-five years I have been in the world I have, from the

hour I came to the use of reason, found only hollowness. Even you, who seem good, how do I know if you are not as bad as the rest?"

"You know what I am. You know I detest that which is dishonourable, you have had many proofs of that when I refused to sanction some of your proceedings. You know that, aware at last of your nature, I would not associate with you even on this journey but that I am a lone woman, jealous of the welfare of her only child, and that you can serve me and be my guide to where my husband lives. I have never been in Ireland; I do not understand the language my husband speaks; I come with you because you are of use to me, just as you accompany me merely because I will be of service to you in some scheme you have in your head, but which, if as I conjecture it is something wrong, and something injurious to my husband, I tell you candidly that I shall have nothing to do with it. Though my husband has sinned against me, I shall not sin against him. God forbid!"

"What is sin?" Lady Summervale questioned, in an incredulous voice. A cry from one of the ship's officers drowned the reply.

"Look sharp there, ladies!" he shouted; "and hold fast, or you are lost! Take care, take care. Oh! God help her! she is gone overboard!"

Too late the warning came! A mighty wave

swept over the vessel, drenching the deck, and carrying away with it ruthlessly the few loose things about. Next moment Dolores Burgos—or rather Dolores Oranmore, which was her true name,—with her boy clasped to her panting breast, was in the midst of the raging sea, and borne away out of reach of human aid. The tossed vessel dare not stay on her course, at least it would have been useless to do so, for before half a dozen had discovered the catastrophe, the lawful wife of O'Malley Oranmore with his child disappeared in the mist and the stormy gloom; and the mother's cry of agony and the feeble wail of the child were stifled by the roaring of the wind through the rigging, and the vain shouts of the peering sailors.

There was great dismay created by this fatal incident amongst the occupants of the vessel, and various conjectures as to who the unfortunate lady was. Much sympathy was evinced for the survivor, and many congratulations were offered for her lucky escape. The wave which had swept away the other and her young boy, had drenched the elder woman; and some fellow-passengers kindly offered an immediate change of clothing, which was rejected with the short explanation that she will easily procure at once some of her own from one of her portmanteaus in the saloon below. They conducted her down into the cabin, and soothed her excited nerves, and brought

her a suitable drink. To their questions relative to the unfortunate lady who was drowned, she answered that she was ignorant of all knowledge of her previous circumstances, stating that she merely travelled in the same carriage with her from London; and further than that knew nothing whatsoever about her. Whiter than ever appeared her rigid countenance, whiter that careworn, sorrow-marked face, not through fear or sympathetic regret, but through disappointment and mortification that she had lost by this sudden misfortune the certain means of wreaking vengeance on him whom she hated the most—and she hated many! “Even so,” she muttered audibly to herself, as she landed from the steamer in Ireland: “he shall not escape me. Rather than stand by quiet, and suffer him unmolested to marry this woman, I will murder him!”

She was perfectly serious, solemnly determined in this; in life there was no other object for her to live for but this one—of thwarting the man who ruined her reputation by his poisoned whisperings uttered close to the ear of her harmless-minded husband, who would be long in finding out for himself her evil ways. She cared not for the law now: its terrors were no restraint upon her; she cared not for the scandal stirred up in society by any revelations about her that might follow upon the discovery of the deed of darkness she had resolved upon ere this: brooding

over it, nurturing it, maturing it, drawing nigher to it, making it the idol of her thoughts until ripe at last to be put into ghastly operation; the news of this bad man's approaching marriage while his deceived wife was actually alive, living in the same intolerable obscurity as herself—this startling announcement settled her fixedly in her awful design, and brought her, with the hunger of a starving vulture, back once more to her native country, thirsty for the blood of her unsuspecting prey. A terrible being was this abandoned woman, who once moved about in an honoured path, the proud mistress of a noble residence—ay, and a very peeress in the land. She was believed to be dead; and, so far indeed as Lady Summervale was concerned, she counted as one dead. How she should come to what she is needs little in the telling, since it is a simple story. The time when the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore sold out, left the regiment in Gibraltar, and took up his temporary residence in the lordly mansion occupied by his free and easy brother, when the latter happened to reside in Ireland, the poverty-stricken ex-soldier, in the idleness of the dull country existence forced by circumstances upon him, discovered—and with no surprise—that all was not right in this outwardly Christian household: that, in fact, "my lady," who persisted in treating him so disdainfully, making him feel to the core that he was no more than an unworthy beggar

dependant upon the alms of her husband,—this elegant lady he found was more careful of the patent observances of social etiquette than of the ordinary rules of morality. It is more than likely that, but for her manifest disdain for him, he would have let matters proceed just as they were proceeding, not interfering with her, rather enjoying, as a thing in consonance with his own tastes, the cunning contrivances of the guilty woman, leaving the careless brother to ascertain for himself the sort of wife who married him for his title, and indifferent as to whether he ever should make that disagreeable discovery; but her continued undisguised, provoking dislike to her beggarly brother-in-law goaded Oranmore until, at last, the revelation of the state of things came from his lips like a thunderbolt upon the startled and insulted peer; and the result was, that my haughty lady had to agree, unconditionally, without a murmur to terms which, for her, were the final ruin of her high social position, and for O'Malley Oranmore the relief and satisfaction which revenge for the moment brings to the heartless. She was compelled to obey whatever her husband, counselled by him, dictated—to submit to the cruel, but not unmerited, decree of these two, that the report of her supposed death should forthwith be published. “I have a fine fellow, a doctor,” the husband said to O'Malley, “my own private friend as well as medical

adviser, who will settle the matter of her pretended illness in a proper manner for a consideration in the shape of ready money." Then the mock funeral followed, the mourning was put on, and Lady Summervale—a wanderer over the earth, friendless, homeless, and nameless—was driven to an obscure village on the Continent, to drag out the remainder of her wretched existence on the liberal allowance which, notwithstanding what had occurred, her injured husband provided for her maintenance. It was there in that distant village she met, a short time after her arrival, the young Spaniard who appeared so careful of her delicate infant child. Into the sympathies of the youthful foreigner the Irishwoman wormed herself, until the recital of her wrongs was told. It seemed to Lady Summervale the express will of fate—such she constantly called it when speaking of this—that brought these two unhappy women together in this out-of-the-way place, in order to plan, and work secretly together, the destruction of O'Malley Oranmore.

"We were married in Gibraltar, and he was a British officer—the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore," the girl said. "I, who am of noble birth too, ran away from my parents' roof to become his wife against their consent. This is my punishment for that act of disobedience, to be as I am to-day—alone, and unrecognized, and cast off by them. He tried to prove there

was no legal marriage ceremony ; and because he could not he sought to murder me ! He did not succeed, or I would not be here to tell this to you ; but I loved him so much that I kept silent, said nothing to any one but you about his treacherous attempt, withdrew myself from the land of my birth and from the unpleasant interferences of friends, and let him go. I have never seen him since."

"The villain ! He is my brother-in-law." And Lady Summervale recounted some—only some—of her past history. Afterwards, while they were sojourning in that unknown village, the one harbouring meditated vengeance, the other harbouring forgiveness and rearing up his child, the news reached them through an English paper of his approaching marriage ; and they both resolved to proceed at once to Dublin, the elder to be revenged, the other to prevent a wrong to her little boy, "and to the poor young lady," she said, "whom he was deceiving." On the journey the Spaniard and the child were taken from her side by the rushing of the strong wave, and Lady Summervale landed in Kingstown alone to carry out her design of vengeance to its last awful climax if need be. Now that she had put her whole mind into it, she was nothing daunted by the loss of the powerful aid of a living wife whereby to denounce him. She proceeded to Dublin immediately after her arrival at the sea-port, and hired humble

apartments in the vicinity of Stephen's Green, where she had first ascertained that the club frequented by him was situated. She was so changed herself she experienced little anxiety about the probability of being recognized by any former acquaintance; and besides, who would think she was the well-known Lady Summervale, who was believed to be dead and buried? After nightfall on the day following her arrival, she went out quietly and stole towards that club, and walked up and down the pavement, watching if he would chance to enter or leave the place. She paced the cold flags for an hour in vain; but her patience in this affair was great, and she was satisfied to continue walking up and down in front of the building until midnight if necessary. In another quarter of an hour she was repaid for her perseverance. A cab rolled up to the entrance of the club; a well-known figure leaped out smoking a cigar, paid the driver, and went with firm and rapid steps in through the doorway. She was now made aware of his being in town; and content for the present with this discovery, she was turning to proceed back to her obscure lodgings when she heard his step, and he came out again. She was standing where the light from one of the street lamps fell upon her white face, alive with its cruel, tigerish expression. He saw her and trembled, and angrily caught her by the arm.

“What are you doing here?” he exclaimed. “What brings you back to this country?”

“To injure you,” she said. “Do not think you can recline upon a bed of roses while I am alive.”

“Look to yourself,” he answered; “you have no power over me. Better depart again and hide yourself, or the world may find out about you more than you would desire it to know—or than any other woman would,” he added. “Return to your concealment, wherever it may be, and let me alone. I will be kind to you, as I have often said, if you accept my kindness, although you are—Well, go away and leave me! Why do you stare at me?”

“I have no power over you? Is that what you would tell me? Ah, ah! not so easily can you escape me, you doubly wicked man; you villain, you destroyer of my name, you who drove me out of my home to be a wanderer for the rest of my life, you—yes, I have power over you!”

“You have not. You are a lunatic. You are mad—I think you would murder me if you could. Woman, let go my arm. Do not drive your horrid nails into my very flesh! Let go my arm, I say!”

“I am not hurting you,” she sneered. “If I am, you are a puny individual. Indeed, I always thought you such! But I will not abuse you—it is not worth the time spent in it. I will do something more than abuse you, if you force me to it. *Murder*

you?" She ceased, in a low tone, with this question, and their eyes met, and she smiled, and they knew then in an instant that they were two evil spirits working ruin, doing the devil's work on the earth. "Murder you, ah, ah! Do you understand the mysteries of the trade? Do you know any thing about that game? I think you do. Murder neatly done is worthy admiration—but it requires experience. You must have done it very neatly!"

"Woman, devil! What do you mean?"

"Yes, neatly. I repeat the expression. I will repeat it again and again if you like. Neatly, for the body was never found. It was a double deed, moreover, because there was an unborn babe in question. Ah! I feel that you are losing your strength. I always thought that you were a puny individual. Do not succumb so. I think your knees are giving way. Recover yourself, my old friend. It is not manly to be terrified thus. It is not worthy of your soldierly mien. Why, you are trembling still more. Do not fall; the people will think you were drunk, and what would you do if Miss Leyne heard of it. Her future husband drunk in the public street! What a shame for you would such a revelation be; and yet you have done worse things!"

"You must be the devil himself come to torment me."

"The devil must be in *you*, O'Malley Oranmore,

since his name drops so readily from your vile lips; besides, if you fall, there is a policeman watching us at yonder corner, and he might ask disagreeable questions."

"She-wolf! begone. Let me pass you, or I will call that policeman. It is all a lie—every word of it!"

"Is it?" she answered, glaring at him; and her thin lips parted with a triumphant laugh. "Then tell me where is your wife? Your lawfully-wedded wife?"

"I am not married."

"Not now, I admit," she replied, glaring at him a second time, "but you were. Poor Dolores Burgos, what a damp grave was yours!"

"Woman!" He clasped her arm, but it was for support.

"She-wolf, if I am not mistaken, was the title you honoured me with a while ago."

"Worse than a she-wolf you are, because the brute knows no better."

"Thank you. I will remember this by and by to you, my old friend. Now listen to me, and let us transact a little sensible business. I am not so bad as I pretend to be, or as you are inclined to believe. I am in your power to a certain extent it is true, but you also are in mine. So far we are equal. There is this difference, however, between us. I am

as it were," she continued bitterly, and tears came into her eyes, "dead and gone, and therefore I have nothing to lose; for even if the world I once courted hears of me again, and hears the worst of me, I care not. I do not wish to belong to it again, nor will I seek to belong to it. It was told that I had died, and I will not prove that announcement a lie. I am dead to society, once I lived for it; I heed not its flattery, its scorn, its judgments, its heartless opinions. So much for myself; now for you. You are at the top of the wheel still, you are a courted man on town, you are 'the Honourable,' you have a tremendous lot to lose, and I have nothing I care for to lose. Thus we greatly differ, my old friend. Now listen to me again." She paused.

"I am listening."

She went on in a lower tone: "I will be silent about that *murder*——" He started. "That murder *you* committed." She pronounced the "you" with a very forcible stress of voice. "Do not shrink, you coward, as if the word was a stab at your heart's centre. I will be silent about that murder if you consent to give up Miss Leyne, the heiress you are about to marry——"

"Impossible! I want money, and I must have it. I am heavily in debt."

"Very well; be it so! You will hear of me again." She glared at him and fled.

He stood like a statue in the street; and tottering towards a cab, which he hailed, entered, and drove to his lodgings. The cabman thought him stupid from drink, and pocketed with a complacent smirk the half-sovereign Oranmore through mistake handed to him instead of the customary sixpence. He spent a restless night, pacing uneasily up and down his room, and did not go to bed, but snatched some little sleep in an arm-chair when towards the dawn of the spring morning he was wearied out by watching and fatigue. All the next day he did not attempt to visit Madeleine; he moved hither and thither as one half-foolish; the shock of the night preceding had been so great that he seemed to have been deprived of his senses. About the same hour the following night he came to himself once more, and then all the terrors of his wicked mind awakened and were vivified to an intense strength: the fitful shadows fleeting here and there before his vision brought to mind the black figure of that terrible woman. Later on he became more like the deep O'Malley Oranmore, calculating, daring, without a conscience, without a moral principle, and staking much upon a chance.

"It is a drawn game between us," he said at length to himself, with one of his ill-looking leers, dragging the even military moustache aside; "there is no other alternative. She has flung down the gauntlet, and I take it up. Either she or I must be

the victor. She has writhed under a good deal of suffering in her day, and the thirst for blood is raging in her. She will one day tell upon me. How did she get to know about that Gibraltar affair? the devil must have put it into her head, for no one else could, since no tidings ever reached me of the missing girl. I thought I had got out of that well, and now in the end it turns up against me. Just like my luck. She has me now in her power, and she will blab unless I——” He was afraid to finish the sentence aloud.

It was a still summer evening, and the May sun was sinking behind the virgin-leaved trees in a flood of glory of its own; the winding stream that skirted the darkening wood behind St. Mary's murmured its song; the sea in front of the elegant mansion seemed to sleep, wakening willingly at times to the light touch of a little breeze, and subsiding again into slumber calmly. Away in the distance Howth hill arose, and the sinking globe of light gleamed upon the earth, while it tinted the celestial-looking sky with a heavenly hue which hinted to the heart of the mystery of an eternity to come, and that soon. St. Mary's was an old place; not one wing of it resembled the other; the very windows were of different pattern; the stone work, of an earlier period of time, lifted itself unevenly alongside a stately modern tower; a cottage porch led into one portion

of the dwelling, and a few paces to the right a marble-pillared portico marked the entrance into the later additions which successive owners had made to the building. Behind, concealed amongst aged trees now lightly clothed in the fresh green garment of the early summer, a mass of outhouses, as uneven and as curious as the mansion itself, constituted what was usually termed "the Farmyard," but which was used by the present possessor as stabling and coach-houses. Harold Leyne is riding this moment up the avenue on a favourite bay mare, very slowly, for by the horse's head, holding the silken mane in one small long hand sparkling with no costly rings, trips Mary. They had met at the lodge-gates, whither Mary had strolled during her evening walk, and until this silent moment, when they both ceased speaking, an animated conversation had kept both their tongues busy; since there was much to be said to one another, many questions to be asked and answered by each, for only that morning Harold arrived home for a short visit from London. The buoyancy of Mary's hopeful heart gladdened Harold, and lifted the cares from his breast, which often were a weighty burthen there. Not that he was not very happy; nay, he was never happier than now, and he told Mary so. He was married upwards of a year; the society of his young and affectionate Kathleen ennobled work, and gave life a high aim to support it and elevate it through

successive days. It was an incentive to labour, that he should feel he was toiling for her. He hardly complained if the brain overburthened with thought made the head ache sometimes. Steady perseverance in professional pursuits was already bringing its rewards. He was becoming favourably known to influential attorneys, and much confidence was reposed by them in his legal abilities. He told Mary, ere this by letter, how he was progressing, and related for her something of the routine of his life, and in every letter he praised his Protestant wife. He rose early in the morning—so he wrote to his sister—took a cold bath, breakfasted at eight, and was in town ready for the day's business at ten. When six o'clock struck, he laid aside parchments and ponderous volumes, gave final instructions to his clerk, left his law chambers, and drove homeward to his villa in Hampstead, where a loving face awaited him. After tea, having retired to his study, in an hour or two a gentle knock would be heard at the door, and then his young wife would enter with a cup of tea and, perhaps, a pretty bouquet of flowers gathered with her own fingers in the garden, and which she would place in a vase where he could see them whenever he lifted his eyes from his work. They were exceedingly happy, this youthful couple, beginning the world together, and sacredly pledged to one another till death took either away. Moreover, a little innocent, a boy, was given to them

lately, and the tiny stranger strengthened the strong bond of union between them. Harold was glad now that Beatrice had been so unworldly wise—for his own sake as well as hers, and for Kathleen's sake too; and though a dream—once a brightly woven dream—would still float through his brain of that which might have been relative to Beatrice Fitzgerald, nevertheless he did not regret. How could he with Kathleen? His wife lived for him and for her infant first-born—"the noblest offspring," as the sacred Book calls such—and she lived for God, too, according to her lights. She, but a girl, though a mother, living in her own dreamland of poetry and purity, saw in her husband some realization of her ideal hero, her Sir Galahad, whose "strength is as the strength of ten" because his heart is pure.

Harold gave the favourite bay mare to the care of the groom, and followed his younger sister into a small boudoir, daintily fitted up, and filled with those tasteful objects which denote the presence of refinement and wealth. The affectionate girl made her brother sit down in her own special easy chair in this her own special apartment. She removed his riding-boots with her delicate hands, and put on his slippers, worked in golden threads and gorgeous flower-patterns by herself during moments snatched at infrequent intervals from other tasks. She made him an exquisite drink of tea, the excellence of which he

acknowledged with a grateful smile. Then when the twilight meal was over, she drew the window-curtains close together, lit the lamp, and brought the glowing luminary near the luxurious arm-chair, and, flitting through a glass door leading into the library, came out swiftly again with two or three newspapers, a book on politics, and half a dozen cigars,—placing which upon a table by his side, she kissed him and left him to himself. In this pretty little boudoir he could read and smoke uninterrupted, and therefore Mary brought him hither; and it is not every sister who would allow her brother to cloud her own favourite room with the smoke of cigars.

The twilight was deepening into the hue of night, and Harold was smoking away and reading on unmolested, when Madeleine stole on tip-toe down the garden. The swans sailing on the small lake seemed to know her as she passed them by, and hastened to follow her, coming close to the shore in their course. The huge Newfoundland dog belonging to Mary bounded after her, in company with a fearless deer, which she had nurtured from the time when it was a timid startled fawn, and which was the gift of O'Malley Oranmore, who had the animal conveyed from his brother's demesne in the country. Madeleine picked her steps not to trample upon flowers springing up around her. She sped along and disappeared; and then, when lost to their view, the stately swans

turned round and sailed back as it were disappointed. She entered a dark grove, through which she glided without apprehension ; and, quickly emerging at the other end, opened a wooden gate, walked across a lane, then over a picturesque rustic bridge which spanned a brawling brook, into another dark grove, through which she likewise boldly went, accompanied by the deer and the dog. At its termination appeared the public road ; and at a wooden stile she stood still, and waited the approach of a black figure with a white, cruel face.

“I received your note,” Madeleine said ; “and I have hastened here. Who are you ?”

“I have come to warn you : beware of O’Malley Oranmore ! it is your money he loves and wants, not yourself.”

And Lady Summervale told her horrid tale, and revealed to the listening girl her real rank and the cause of her enforced concealment ; and when it was all over, Madeleine answered her scornfully, “I neither believe your story nor that you are Lady Summervale. You are some enemy of my future husband ! Why do you seek me thus after daylight like one who fears to be seen ?”

“I have sought you at this hour in order to speak with you uninterrupted ; that I may be secure, especially from the chance interference of him who would turn me out of your house if I ventured in the

open day to show myself there. I do not wonder at your refusal to believe in my story; and I am prepared to prove its truth. Here is the certificate of marriage between the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore and Dolores Burgos: take it, you can read it at your leisure; but do not show it to him or he might destroy it. I will return at the same hour the day after to-morrow, and will meet you at this precise spot, when you can restore the paper to me. Will that arrangement suit you?"

"Yes," she answered dreamingly. "Give me the paper. I do not believe you, but give me the paper."

"On your word of honour you will restore it?"

"I will."

"The day after to-morrow—Friday, the 15th of May—at this place where we are?"

"Yes."

"Here is the marriage certificate; and, Miss Leyne, be guided by the advice of one who has good reasons for giving it, and would save you. Have nothing more to do with O'Malley Oranmore, or, trust my word for it, you shall rue the day!" And the white face smiled ghastly, and the black figure vanished in the darkness stealthily; and Madeleine, incredulous, glided, like one in a dream, back through the groves and the garden to the house, wherein the first thing she did after entering was to read the marriage



certificate ; and was still incredulous, for the story was too horrid and too unlikely to be true.

It was in her own room she read it—that room which looked so unchanged throughout those years ; but what a change had come over her ! There might be some trace of truth in that strange tale ; but she would not, she could not believe the whole of it ; oh, no ! She had heard before now rumours of wild things done by him in the heat of youth, and even were they true she would excuse him ; she could do so now there was so much old pride crushed out of her, she was so unlike her former self : she was so thankful now for little kindnesses and for protection from that oppressive tyrant designated self ; and she was so eager, too, for the sympathy of one not of her own sex—one who could fill up somehow a void which existed in her own inward life, and which she was ignorant how to take away by any other means save that manly influence, and support, and fellowship. She was not quite as young, moreover, as she had been at the commencement of this story ; and the knowledge of that incontrovertible fact made her most forgiving towards O'Malley Oranmore. Therefore not only did she not believe that dreadful story of crime from the lips of the darkly clothed woman with the blanched and terrifying face, but also she was of her own self extremely loath to believe it. Bitterly she repented, although promised to another,

that foolish hastiness which darkened her bright path, blinding her to that which was her happiness, and leading her on to that which already she was suspecting, with despair in her weak heart, would prove in the end a loveless marriage. She met many men since Noel d'Auvergne released her from her pledge to him—or rather since she released herself—but never again did she meet another like him. No other quelled, as he once did, her nature, until she became as a little child, hanging breathless upon his least word, grateful as if it was all the world to her for his least smile if only it arose for her sake, satisfied just to live in his presence. She knew his goodness: she knew it now more than ever since her greater intimacy with Oranmore; she knew what a priceless treasure he would be to the woman fortunate enough to become his wife; and Madeleine repented bitterly, sitting inside the house or roaming through the pleasure grounds surrounding St. Mary's, and remembering a pretty story attached by Noel to some familiar rustic bench, or garden plot, or busy fountain playing in the air.

She told truthfully to O'Malley Oranmore the next day, when he paid her the customary visit, concerning the interview she had the night before with the strange woman; and she showed the letter written requesting the meeting which had taken place, and also the certificate of marriage.

“Not that I believe her story,” Madeleine said, “do I reveal this curious event to you, but because I desire there should be on my part at least no secrets of any kind between us.”

“It is not the first venomous tale about me which enemies of mine have been careful to instil into your ear.”

“No, O’Malley, it is not.”

“And do you put faith in those most slanderous reports?”

She hesitated, and he looked at her reproachfully. She stood in front of him ; she gazed mournfully into his passionless face, and placed her hands on both his shoulders.

“O’Malley,” she answered softly, “I will believe them false if you tell me they are false. If any of them are true, I am one who can forgive and forget.”

“They *are* false, Madeleine, my dear one ; but I have a great many enemies. I have seen much in my life ; and all are not my friends. I would not trust the man who is a friend with every one—a friend with the good and also with the wicked. How can any man please both?”

“O’Malley, you have said those stories are false : that declaration of yours is enough for me. I need only to hear from your lips that they are untrue. I believe you.”

“Allow me to look again at the marriage certificate,” he said. She handed it to him, and he read it carefully. “This, if genuine, would be strong evidence; but it is a copy—a—I mean—I mean, Madeleine, that if you examine it, you will at once discover it is not genuine. It is written by a female hand; see the angular letters: look at that *r*, and that *m* and *l*.”

“Quite true. I observe it plainly. Some woman wrote this; probably that strange white-faced woman herself!”

“You say she was dressed in black, and had a wan, cruel countenance.”

“It appeared so to me as well as I could see. Indeed, I could barely see her, for night had come on. I was very curious though, and tried to examine her minutely,” Madeleine said to him.

“Had she a slight hesitation in her voice? Did she stammer a little?” he asked.

“Yes, I noticed that.”

“I know the woman now. In my brother’s establishment, down in the country, she was a domestic who went out of her mind. Her madness was to think that other people committed murder and were going about unpunished. She took a peculiar dislike to me, and caused me a great deal of ridiculous annoyance; so much so, that I was compelled to use my influence with

Lord Summervale and get her removed to an asylum. She recovered afterwards, and is continually molesting me. Of course she has lost her mind again ; but no one seems to have taken the trouble of placing her once more in a place of security. I blame myself for neglecting to see after her ; I shall have an eye to her doings immediately. I think I know where she resides in Dublin, and will look to-morrow or next day to her welfare. I shall procure her admittance into an asylum again. There is no use returning this certificate to her ; in fact it would be more convenient not. But no ; let matters go on as they are proceeding ; restore this paper to her when you meet her to-morrow evening. She is a tall woman, if I mistake not ?”

“ She is just as tall as you are,” Madeleine replied.

“ Ask her if her name is Harriet Villiers : if she answers to that name it will be a crowning proof that she must be the same insane woman to whom I have been alluding.”

Towards nightfall on the evening following Lady Summervale glided along the lonely country road leading to St. Mary's, in order to keep her appointment with Madeleine. Her small head was thrown back a little, and a smile of satisfaction played upon her thin lips, and her white countenance looked like a dead face set in that melancholy black bonnet,

whose sombre veil floated behind, waving in the slight breeze which blew now and then against her as she walked forward with the stately movement of one once accustomed to command and to be obeyed; of one once accustomed to have had much of the goods of life within her power; of one once high and still haughty. The twilight was departing while she drew nearer and nearer her destination; and no one was visible either in the front or in the rear upon the public road. Ten yards more would have brought her to the end of her journey, were not her cat-like movements suddenly arrested. A man bounded over the hedge and seized her firmly by the shoulder; next instant a long carving-knife sank to the handle in her heart. She uttered one low cry, and sank down upon the ground, to rise no more until the last day, and her guilty soul hastened to its eternal doom.

O'Malley Oranmore calmly stood over her prostrate form, coolly contemplating his deed; then he drew forth the blood-stained knife, plunged it into some loose earth at his feet, and went and washed the blade in the neighbouring brook, babbling as it ran hastily to the sea. A supernatural energy seemed given him all the time; he came back to the spot where the body lay, and carried it over the hedge—a difficult task, for the fence was high and covered with thorny brambles. The white lifeless face still partly wore that satisfied smile: and he could see it in the

indistinct light of the dying day, and it made him tremble; for he half believed his dead enemy—that fiend who had been his terror day and night during those late months—was grinning maliciously up at him even in death. His energy seemed all at once to forsake him, and now he became so fearful that he loathed and dreaded to touch the bleeding body again; but he must touch it, for what if he were discovered? What if some one came suddenly up to where he was standing, and saw what he had done? What if Madeleine should come through the grove by this way, as she hastened to keep her appointment with the murdered woman? He trembled again and again, and shivered as if the icy breath of a winter's night wind was creeping through him. But he must touch the body again if he would complete the awful task he had set himself to do—which he did, to save himself; for he had begun to feel the strong conviction latterly that so long as that determined woman walked the earth alive, for him continually the prison, and shame, and perhaps the gallows-tree, loomed like torturing spectres before his distracted view. He regained, after an interval of suspense, some of his lessening courage. Stooping down over the body he removed the bonnet—the face grinning at him all the while,—then the long, abundant black hair loosened and streamed about the ground in a dark mass; he dragged off the gloomy dress and

shawl, of similar sombre colour, and put upon his own person the dress, and the shawl, and the bonnet, and covered his perspiring face with the veil. Then he cut some branches, with the young green leaves upon them, from a tree in the grove, whither he had first drawn the body. Covering it with these he went away towards the rustic stile; and there Madeleine was already waiting.

“I was thinking of going home; you are a little late,” she said.

The figure dressed in female garb only bowed the head in the affirmative.

“I have brought you back the marriage certificate, Harriet Villiers.”

“How do you know my name?” the figure asked in a low whisper.

“Ah! then you are not Lady Summervale after all! I did not believe, and I do not believe your frightful story. I am aware of your antecedents. I know who you are. Go back to Dublin, and come here no more; if you do resolve to come, you will find that it is useless, for I am determined not to meet you.”

The figure remained silent, and Madeleine went back to the house, and then the figure raised the black veil and revealed the pale face of O'Malley Oranmore.

He tore up the marriage certificate straightway, and scattered the fragments about, and then directed

his reluctant steps towards the grove, fearful of every motion amongst the leaves upon the surrounding trees, and moving timorously on his way as if the ground he trod was red-hot cinders, and the place he was returning to hell itself. He stood still and irresolute outside the hedge, not daring to face that fearful sight so near, and which he must face. While yet in a state of indecision, the sound of approaching wheels was heard, and he crouched low under the hedge; the lamp attached to the passing vehicle gleamed upon him, and the shock of the light flashing upon him stunned him like a blow, so that he was weak as a child until the sound of the rolling wheels was lost in the distance again.

“I thought I saw some one lying in the hedge,” he heard the driver say to his companion.

“I am certain I beheld something like a human being doubled up as if asleep,” replied the other. “Perhaps it may be an unfortunate fellow who drank too much at the public-house, or else, being hard up for a night’s lodging, is weathering it and making the best of it there.”

He listened for more of the conversation in violent terror, lest they should turn the horse’s head, come back, and find him out; in his agony of suspense he flung off the inconvenient female garb, left it there where he had been crouching and hiding, and then he ran away as fast as he could. But they were two

jolly, contented, corpulent County Wicklow farmers, in too great a hurry home to their comfortable hearths after the day's work of buying and selling to trouble themselves about what was probably but a drunken man, and so they did not drive back to ascertain what the crouching black mass might be. When he was sure of their final disappearance, he glided hither stealthily, snatched up the articles of female dress, and crept cautiously and noiselessly towards the ghastly corpse, which was not so warm now. The effort required for this was too much for him; when he beheld even in the darkness of the night the white under-clothing visible, notwithstanding the thick branches he had placed in order to conceal the blood-stained object which lay motionless there, he swooned and sank down helpless alongside the dead body. He awoke as if from some frightful dream; turning his startled and staring eyes to the right, he beheld the blanched cheek of the corpse close to his own. That sight aroused him, brought back his lost energy, and he went to work steadily and swiftly and perseveringly and patiently. He cut down more green-leaved branches from the trees over his head; he succeeded in covering up the body in a manner which would deceive the not too close observation of any passer-by. With some matches which he had brought for the purpose he lit a fire, wherein, concealed by the shrubs and trees in the grove from the view of persons

travelling upon the public road, he consumed as well and as rapidly as he could the clothes he had removed belonging to the murdered Lady Summervale—his brother's wife. He buried the large carving-knife in the ground, having first dug with it a hole sufficiently deep to deposit it in. He washed his jewelled hands then in the stream close by, and after this ablution he returned to town as cool as ever, not having it in his power to effect any thing further to-night relative to the removal of the body, and of every trace, direct or indirect, of the dreadful deed.

It has been mentioned that Madeleine Leyne was to have been married in spring; but the ceremony was delayed owing to some misunderstanding concerning the settlements, and it was found advisable to postpone the marriage until the end of summer. This arrangement was a displeasure to Madeleine; it seemed to her to be a portent of some fresh calamity; but Oranmore was gratified at the delay, for the dangerous woman who had lately crossed his path so unexpectedly might afford serious if not fatal trouble were the ceremony to be performed while the breath of life was in her, and the desire of evil goading her on to the committal of acts of vengeance which would work his social downfall. And if he lost that, he lost the next best thing to his life for which he cared to live. Therefore as soon and as effectually as he could, simply through expediency, and through no

desire of revenge—no, it was not on her he would be revenged, but on him who had at first taken Madeleine Leyne from him—simply and solely through expediency, to prevent the injury she might do him, he got rid of Lady Summervale. It was stated before that he had no conscience—that is to say, the faculty by which we judge of the goodness or wickedness of ourselves was deadened in him to the influence of any sentiment of compunction concerning the evil bent of his life; he saw no more moral crime involved in the deed he had done than would the government authorities in hanging a murderer tried and condemned by twelve of his respectable fellow-men. On the morrow he was in the society of Madeleine, and as polite and considerate and conversable as on the yesterday, although in the very precincts of the house wherein she lived lay the dead body of the murdered woman all stark and revolting and cold in its white under-clothing, and covered up and hidden from sight by the virgin summer leaves which fluttered time to the requiem of the sighing breeze.

Noel d'Auvergne felt a vague uneasiness that he acted not wisely in throwing himself too much into the society of a woman he once deeply loved, so deeply as to think that it was impossible for him ever to love again another thus. And so it was with great reluctance that he yielded to the invitation of the Leynes to come over and pay them a visit in

Tenby, that picturesque nook in South Wales whither Mrs. Leyne and her daughters went soon afterwards. D'Auvergne promised he would spend a week with them there as soon as the Long Vacation released him from the calls of his profession. Indeed, already fatigued after his many months' laborious toil since September last, he was beginning to have a yearning in his breast for idle sunny days somewhere or another. Then at length, when the welcome time came for liberty and idleness, he proceeded to South Wales, and O'Malley Oranmore accompanied him; the latter hating him more thoroughly than ever, and full of mortification that through his own short-sighted instrumentality Noel d'Auvergne was ingratiated with the Leyne family again. When Noel made his appearance, it was evident to Oranmore that an undisguised look of pleasure beamed in the eyes of the three women. It was evident to him that D'Auvergne was far more acceptable to them than Oranmore was, more acceptable, it occurred to him, and he writhed under the bare suspicion that such could be the fact, even to Madeleine, who since D'Auvergne's coming grew more like what she was in her vanished girlhood, and her faithful younger sister rejoiced in the change, and so did Noel too in a guileless way, who vividly remembered, it may be with a passing pang at the thought, what she had been in those brighter days for her and for him.

Yes, she grew more and more like what she had been then, and there was but one cause for this agreeable transformation. The old powerful influence of D'Auvergne's presence overcame her womanly heart, and left her helpless beneath its sway. It was for her a dangerous thing to live under the same roof with Noel, and he should have considered that. He was so pure of heart himself, no suspicion darkened his spotless mind. Yet he ought to have known—lawyer that he was, he ought from professional experience to have known—that human nature is not always strong; that a woman whose heart beat for him once upon a time might not forget that time so completely as he did, nay, might seek to bring it back again by fair means or foul, although herself the promised bride of another man. Never a thought had Noel of her returning to the old love during those quiet rambles together by the waves of that Tenby shore, or sailing and fishing, lunching and laughing through the autumn days, and listening to the musical band that sweetly warbled beneath the ruined tower on the Castle Hill when the sunny day was dead and the people were peaceful and the toilers of the brain and hand resting from labour, and when the moon gladdening many hearts threw her beautiful light on the heaving sea. Mary was the happiest of the lot, noticing the changed demeanour, the enlivened manner of her elder sister. She attributed the gaiety

and improved health of Madeleine to the associations and sea air of Tenby. It was Oranmore suspected the real cause of it, but though it afforded him an immense amount of annoyance and deepened his hatred for D'Auvergne, yet he was by no means inclined to throw up Madeleine; he was firmly resolved to keep her to her engagement, for no matter where her affection was bestowed, it was not that he wanted, but her money, and the latter he must have. It did not disquiet him if she had no love for him; they would only be equal then, and after a short time very probably they would understand—*she* would understand—that he looked upon his marriage with her in the light of a civil contract entered into for their mutual benefit. He would enjoy her money, and she would enjoy his social position, which was higher than hers; and thus they would be quits. It was as a contract for mutual benefit he had always regarded the marriage, and very soon after she became his wife he would make known to her that to him the sacred ceremony was nothing more. He could simulate love for her for the present, since the art of dissimulation came as it were instinctively to him; but he had no real love to give: he only really loved once, and that was when he promised to marry the girl who waited for him, and now lies in a New York grave. All else with him was passion, as poor Dolores Burgos found out to her most bitter cost.

They were standing together—Oranmore and D'Auvergne—on the edge of a cliff, admiring the blue expanse of water, and the yachts wheeling like sea-gulls amongst the more rudely-fashioned fishing-smacks. Many feet below people on the sands were scattered in lazy groups, or sauntered slowly, smoking and talking. The sun shone in the splendour of a cloudless noon; the town looked picturesque, and the brightness of the day pervaded the genial scene. A glad shout from children came at intervals to the ear; a short distance off floated a melody from the harp of a happy Italian boy, who, perhaps, in the sunniness of the hour, traced a resemblance to the fair land of his childhood.

They were standing alone together on the brow of that steep cliff, Noel looking meditatively out straight before him, listening to the music, and thinking of the children smiling and rejoicing near to where he stood, and watching Mary and Madeleine reading or sewing under a rock on the sands beneath him.

They were alone, and no one observed them. The thought flashed across Oranmore's mind that no one was observing them; that there were sharp, numerous rocks and stones down below; that Noel d'Auvergne was alienating Madeleine his betrothed from him; that it would be easy—one thrust forward, one bold push, and no one looking—oh, that

flashing thought! It made Oranmore shudder, it was so easy to——then he would be revenged! then he would be sweetly repaid for the trouble given to him by this rival. Oh, it was a dreadful thought! and it pleased Oranmore, in whom the spirit of destruction was developing, and driving him into a species of madness. For of course the recollection of what had been done that night close to St. Mary's did not leave his active mind free from the uneasiness of one who is daily in fear of detection, and whom the sentence, "Murder will out!" is continually plaguing until his life has already become a hell on earth. That flashing thought pleased Oranmore intensely, while it startled him. A fearful expression to behold stole over his face and vanished. He stepped back a pace or two.

"Come away from that cliff's edge," he said, sharply; "it makes my head giddy to see you there, D'Auvergne. Come away quickly! I do not like you to be there. What if you fell?"

"There would be one less in the world, and the hour of my rest would be at hand sooner than I expected, Oranmore! I don't feel giddy standing here; I used to be a great climber in Ireland. What are these cliffs to those at Kilkee on the western coast, where the broad Atlantic comes rolling and roaring in, and the next land beyond the horizon is America! I have spent some of my days

at the foot of high mountains. I have foreign blood in my veins you know, and friends, relatives of mine, live beneath the Alps. I was a first-rate Alpine guide! No, I am not in the least giddy. Besides, how could I fall that time, stooping over this projecting rock to get at those ferns, for was I not holding your hand? and you, if you could help it, would not let me go over, I am sure!"

Oranmore turned his head away from the honest glance of those searching eyes.

"I see Madeleine beckoning to us," he said, hastily; "she is waving her handkerchief and ascending yonder path. Let us go down to meet her and Mary."

D'Auvergne allowed him to lead the way thither, and followed O'Malley Oranmore down the cliff's narrow path with a firm and fearless tread.

In a few days he left them, and Oranmore stayed behind in Tenby; to the unconcealed disappointment of the Leynes, Noel departed for the Continent to visit some relations in the south of France. And for the sorrow which had chastened and subdued and changed him he was grateful to Madeleine, loving her no more, and yielding to no new love for another, but faithfully fulfilling the end for which he and all of us have been created.

CHAPTER XIII.

THERE ARE NO BIRDS IN LAST YEAR'S NEST.

“And ‘Ave Mary’ was her moan,
‘Madonna, sad is night and morn;’
And ‘Ah!’ she sang, ‘to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.’
* * * * *

Low on her knees herself she cast,
Before Our Lady murmur’d she;
Complaining, ‘Mother, give me grace
To help me of my weary load.’
And on the liquid mirror glow’d
The clear perfection of her face.

‘Is this the form,’ she made her moan,
‘That won his praises night and morn?’
And ‘Ah!’ she said, ‘but I wake alone,
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.’”

Mariana in the South.—TENNYSON.

IT required an amount of fortitude which sometimes he found himself well-nigh in want of, to enable O'Malley Oranmore to live his usual outward life amongst his daily companions while he was carrying a secret in his breast which he knew not what chance circumstance might at any moment bring to light.

After the murder of Lady Summervale he was at a loss how to dispose of the objectionable traces remaining in the shape of the uncoffined body, but devices were not sluggish in his keen mind as soon as he had deliberated a little. He did not go near the grove, where the remains were concealed under the branches of trees, until his plan for avoiding detection was adequately prepared. *Her* voice was silent; that was a grand relief to him; if he could only get rid of the traces of her he would revel in his satisfaction, in the reflection that *she* was not hindering his designs, and could not hinder them any more. When he did return to the grove it was midst the darkness of the night; and it required some effort of courage to walk thither, to stoop down over that stiff and staring object, once hot flesh and blood, to meet the horrible grinning expression of that wan dead face. But he was stedfast in his purpose, and went to his task sturdily, with his designs matured relative to its successful completion. He travelled by train, and carried with him an empty portmanteau, on the fourth evening after the committal of the deed. He reached the grove; he removed stealthily the disguising branches; with a razor which he had previously sharpened he cut off the head, the feet, and the hands; he collected fresh leaves and branches, which he added to the store already heaped in a mass there, and covered up the

remainder of the body, and shut it out from prying observation. He thrust the dismembered parts into the portmanteau, and returned home to his lodgings, wherein having procured for the purpose a suitable vessel from the kitchen, he boiled the head, so as if possible thereby to destroy the expression of the face, to alter the features in a manner which would prevent their recognition. Having completed this strange cooking freak, he gracefully restored the large saucepan to the servant-maid, and locked up the head and feet and hands in a trunk which lay in his bed-room; then he quietly stretched himself upon the bed close by, and slept soundly, having been excessively fatigued by his unusual labour. Next day he was with Madeleine and with his ordinary club friends, and no one would fancy there was any thing gone wrong with him; but there was, and well he was aware of it; the torturing fear of discovery was eating into his heart, and setting him mad with suspense mingled with impatience for the coming night, on which, when it arrived, he removed the portmanteau from the trunk in his bed-room, and driving to the terminus took the train for Howth. It was then some two hours before midnight, and in the second-class carriage with him there happened to be only one other, a rough-looking, honest-faced sea-faring man—the master, doubtless, of a small trading vessel. The night being wet, the rain poured furiously against the carriage windows, and

O'Malley Oranmore sat still and silent, having placed the black leather portmanteau on the seat opposite, and directly under the lamp in the roof above. Not many minutes passed away when the seaman spoke to him about the weather, and then he remarked there was a strange strong unpleasant smell in the carriage. Oranmore only answered in monosyllables, and at length the other gave up the attempt to draw him into a genial conversation.

Oranmore sat with his eyes half closed, and his countenance was calm and pale. The shaking of the train as it sped along caused the portmanteau to slide from its position, and it would have fallen off the seat but for the sea-captain, who caught it in his horny hand readily, and was restoring it to its former place when Oranmore saw him.

“Leave that alone!” he shrieked out with sudden savageness, and starting to his feet fiercely caught his fellow-traveller by the collar. The seaman, taken aback by this unlooked-for onset, dropped immediately the portmanteau, the fastening of which sprang open, and up grimly at the scared man grinned the ghastly dead face between two mutilated hands and the stiffened toes of the slender feet. The hands were opened out as if in supplication, and the dishevelled raven hair hung in black confusion about the cold brow. The strong man dropped down helpless in a swoon at the horrid sight.

Oranmore did not know what on earth he had best do. The train was hurrying on to the next station; it was already whistling the warning of its rapid approach; some new passenger might enter the carriage soon; or the insensible man might recover his intelligence, and with it his lost strength; for Oranmore observed the broad breadth of his stalwart shoulders, the expression of determination upon his countenance, the powerful build of his large frame. A thought struck him during his momentary doubt; his alarm subsided somewhat while he tried the door of the carriage to find whether it was open or would open. It was locked, and in dismay he sprang over the prostrate man and the partition which divided the department Oranmore occupied from the one next to it. He shook the door leading into that likewise, and it also was fastened. He ran over to the door opposite, and there too he only met with similar disappointment. What was he to do? He trembled with apprehension, and glanced hatefully at the helpless form lying upon the floor alongside the open black portmanteau with its frightful contents, betrayed distinctly by the light of the lamp from the roof above. The train was slackening its speed; in a minute or two it would pause on its way at the next station. He looked out of the window, and midst the darkness of the wild wet night saw the glare of the lamps upon the platform towards which he was draw-

ing nearer. He heard the shout of a railway porter carrying a lantern with him; the engine was meanwhile travelling more and more slowly. Another thought struck him; he ran over, caught the senseless figure under the shoulders, dragged the man towards the window, and thrust him out head downwards. The seaman fell over a slope, and sank into a pond of water beneath. The water there received him, and choked the life out of him. He was found some time later floating upon the surface, and it was believed that, having been drunk and the carriage door unlocked, he fell from the train and was drowned. The jury came to some such opinion, when the inquest was subsequently held; for several witnesses, on being examined, gave evidence as to the fact of his having drunk a great deal before leaving Dublin to join his vessel, of which he was the captain. Fortune happily favoured O'Malley Oranmore in this; dead men tell no tales about the hideous objects which can be hid in elegant black portmanteaus. At the next station another passenger actually did enter the carriage, but Oranmore was careful about keeping the small important article of luggage out of the reach of his fresh fellow-traveller, and arrived in Howth without any further molestation. He refused, of course, the offer of an officious little boy who wished to relieve him of the trouble of carrying the portmanteau himself. He walked up the hill of Howth, unaccom-

panied by any one, and when he reached a certain elevation he turned his footsteps towards the direction of the roaring sea, and at length flung the head, hands, and feet into the tempestuous waves. The rocks did the rest. When the mutilated parts were afterwards on a calm sunny day found by a group of simple fishermen, no one could recognize in the ghastly disfigured thing they gazed at with horror, the once handsome face of pampered Lady Summer-vale, and no one could tell that the little hands and feet not long ago graced the stately form of a splendid peeress. Oranmore accomplished his task well, as he admitted to himself with a sentiment of self-congratulation. He cut up the portmanteau into diminutive pieces, and cast them from him one by one, the wind blowing the rain and spray into his face, and blowing the pieces away all the while as he stood near the angry sea. Then he returned to town.

He disposed of the rest of the body in an ingenious manner, and took his time about it, devoting two consecutive night-visits to the grove, over his bloody and revolting business. He mutilated what was left of Lady Summervale, and placed the remnant of her remains in a soiled canvas bag, and bringing them with him into Dublin, dropped the bag before daybreak into an area attached to a mansion situated in a private street, near an hospital on the north side of the city. When the puzzled domestic found them

upon the pavement there early next morning on her journey to the coal-cellar, she hastened up stairs and told her master. He laughed at her, and would not believe. Then he went down with her, and witnessed the truth of her extraordinary statement. The master told the police authorities, and the latter in their wisdom, after a deliberate investigation, assured him that "the remains were thrown down the area by some medical students for a lark." That these wilful young gentlemen, who have not, at least in Dublin, a very good name, probably finding no further use of "the subject," after cutting it up into such minute portions with their dissecting implements, threw it down there ! The master of the house was satisfied, and acquiesced in the truth of their inventive assertions, inwardly admiring the detective genius of the defenders of our country's streets.

Oranmore calculated upon this decision being come to, for he remembered a medical votary—a friend of his—who once or twice got rid of the inutile stock of the dissecting-room in this way. He inquired about the canvas bag with its contents, and he laughed heartily when he heard of the conclusion come to by the intellect of "the Force," aided by that of the magistrate.

It was some days subsequent to the completion of his terrible midnight work that Oranmore followed the Leynes to Tenby, and made himself agreeable there, superintending pic-nic drives and fishing ex-

cursions, and conversing in polished sentences with Madeleine when the band played on the Croft or on the Castle Hill, and young men and maidens and the aged and the infirm idled in scattered groups, and forgot, in the merriment of their fleet vacation and in their pleasant race after health, the troubles of the past, and the anxieties of the future awaiting them in the world outside this quiet nook with the blessings of its Madeira climate.

The Leynes returned from Tenby, and the day was fast approaching whereon would be performed the ceremony of Madeleine's marriage, or rather of Madeleine's sacrifice; for sacrifice she herself deemed it now. She understood better Oranmore's nature than when they were not so intimate, when there were fewer chances of his betraying his disposition; she discovered with some apprehension a few of the motives which actuated his life; the result was that she began to fear she would never be truly happy with him, and yet she did not draw back from giving herself to him. She was sick of her existence, as it went on languidly mid the quiet of home; and in her weariness she was eager to leave it, to change it at once for something else, even though that something was more undesirable still; for the very novelty of it alone she wished to embrace the latter. The expectations of a year or two ago were gone; the brilliant visions of her entrance into womanhood were clouded

over and shut out from view; life to-day appeared to her more in the light of an evil than a blessing—a material purgatory through which she was to pass as uncomplaining as she can, until the bright day beyond the night of death should dawn. She longed for that day now with an intensity of desire which seemed unmeet in one so young, for whom so many years, and joyous ones, might yet be in store. She accepted her lot on earth not gratefully, and still not with murmurs because of her burthens, but passively as a necessary misfortune, which must be submitted to, however unwillingly; and which, since it must be borne, it is best to bear it as indifferently as she may. At times, too, in the midst of her desolateness a hope would shine upon her, and bring forth in her pale face an immediate smile—a hope that little ones would be given her, wherewith to feed her yearning, upon whom she could prodigally spend her idle wealth of love. And another hope, far more satisfying in her present mood than any other, would start into being within her, and stir up her heart, and fill her with gladness such as came not to her in the same degree before. She was not strong; she was weaker in frame than is compatible with a long life, and secretly she was discovering this, and keeping it secret from the others, and more than half pleased that so after all it should be; she was putting implicit faith in the hidden belief that she never

again would be strong; smaller were growing her slender fingers, and valuable rings had to be laid aside, which were too large for those fingers now; and she moved not about with the stately graceful energy of yore. Graceful still she was, but the upright stateliness of mien was drooping, and the energy was dying out imperceptibly, and nearer to her seemed that unknown dawn beyond the unknown night. From her place here of mourning, she watched Noel d'Auvergne when he came to their house, as heaven's exiles on earth might look up at a far-off star. He appeared to her much happier than she was, although, the same sorrow which weighed her down so low, had stricken him too. But the cloud had not settled above him, or at least, he avoided its shadow successfully, and lived in wholesome sunshine; while she was yet under the stagnating influence of the gloom she was only latterly emerging from. He was gone beyond her after that blow of sorrow, wherewith through her he was struck, and she was not much different from what she had been. A little more schooled by affliction, in the lesson of how to live; but, besides that, she was not much different. She saw that clearly herself, and in her frailty she envied him the possession of that fortitude which enabled him to be happy. Fortitude she deemed the virtue, but D'Auvergne would have called it by another name, and so would Mary too. Madeleine could not

understand him, whatever elevating change it was which had altered him, and taken him out of her reach; but she knew that she could love him more fervently, more unselfishly, more abundantly than when less experienced in life and in the requirements of his own soul, he was content to linger by her side, and found rest for his undeveloped soul with her. But he was changed; he was gone far beyond the limited vision of her straining eyes; strain them as earnestly as she may, she could not follow him with her eyes, and she felt certain that she had no power, were she to try, of winning him back. Her power over him was without its vitality; or granting even that it burned within her, with more intense force than ever, so intense that many another man would have been completely subdued by it, yet with D'Auvergne it had lost its influence—he had risen above its influence into a higher region, wherein the power which could overcome him must be stronger than all things else in the whole world, must be flaming with immortal fire.

“ He had been near her,

But he now had gone far onward, and had left her there behind.

“ Yes, beyond her: yes, quick-hearted, her Love help'd her in revealing

It was worthless, while so mighty; was too weak, although so strong;

There were courts she could not enter; depths she could not sound; yet feeling

It was vain to strive or struggle, vainer still to mourn or long!”

How often she had fed upon his words, and found them sweet food; how often she had been raised as it seemed to her, into a state of being, which elevated her nature, while she gaily rejoiced with him; how often she felt that with him her wedded life would not be wearisome routine, but would be adequately satisfied; how often did her dark eyes flash mystically at the mere thought of him. When he was promised to her, oh! no, she did not pause in doubt and anxiety, whether she was doing wisely in confiding her future to him! Ah! in Oranmore's presence, she was seldom without miserably doubting. She had made the saddening discovery, that the one would have lifted her always to that, for the sake of which it was a worthy thing to live; the other would assuredly, if she did not contend hard against him, if she did not make it a determined and unflinching struggle, drag her gradually down to his own contemptible level. The difference between them she saw was this, and no other: that the one lived for the next world, the other for this, which alone to a pure woman is a difference indeed! Gladly she longed to live through a good, a truest career, not inattentive to the lawful pleasures of life, but taking them willingly as the generous gifts of God, and as such taking them gratefully and obediently, and most humbly. Easy it would have been for her to do this, if her husband was like Noel, from whose example and whose manly assistance

courage and fearless confidence would accrue to her, and be a security against the baneful influences, which attack human nature. With Oranmore, she felt her life would be a hard battle between goodness and the reverse, between heaven and the world, between happiness and its phantom. The one would have fortified her by genuine sympathy, by fellowship in the endeavour after an ennobling existence; the other going his downward way would, weakening her better desires, drag her ruthlessly down with him if he could. Though she thought over this, until she seemed to realize its deepest consequences, nevertheless she was quite determined to place her future in Oranmore's keeping. She was weary of her brooding, gloomy, unsatisfactory state. Oranmore she was willing to consider not so black as other uncharitable officious people painted him—people who saw the mote, and not the beam; he was so attentive to her, and so thoughtful concerning her ease and her welfare, that she could not but feel attracted towards him, although, he did not at all approach D'Auvergne in her estimate of his real worth; and meditating daily over her solitary life, she was sanguine of the bliss to be attached to the new life she was soon to enter upon, for she knew not what good might come in spite of her forebodings about the bad. But then, who has all happiness upon this earth? she argued; and why should she expect to enjoy what no other woman

could, laying her hand on her heart, say with truth she had? With D'Auvergne, she would have looked for nothing else but complete happiness; and would be surprised and indignant and deny it, should any one prophesy, she shall not have with him real, continual peace—that real peace, which is true happiness, and which is not of this world. But the remembrance of that conviction once established in her mind, as if for ever, did not occur to her often now. She was dissatisfied by the recollection of it, for it opened out to her too vividly the length and breadth of her loss, and therefore she, a little frightened, drove it away. Yes, it frightened her to think of it, because it betrayed to her her present frame of mind, and the dangers hovering about the irrevocable step she was going to take. She stood one afternoon upon that diminutive rustic bridge, which was built close to where she met Lady Summervale, and the sparkling brooklet brawled under her feet as she devoured and devoured the thoughts of her coming future; and the hardest thought of all to dwell upon, was the fact which came home to her strikingly, as it must to many a waning woman whose ambition it was, and is, to shine in a fashionable sphere—the fact, how stern it appeared! that she was no longer very young. Her eyes were bright and beautiful as before, but her face was not the same, neither her form. In plain words, she must have a sharp look out if she desires to catch an

eligible husband. She need not die an old maid, for there were plenty who would take her for her money's sake; but what sort were they? She would frown barely to think of them. If Oranmore did not make her his wife, who would, unless some needy good-for-nothing? And yet must she in the end descend to the level of such, after all her splendid dreams, after all D'Auvergne awakened into stirring being within her! This probably might be at last her fate, for how was she to live alone, and die a neglected old maid? Or if not neglected, courted by hypocritical relations, that she might remember them in her will. Then she would, mid her reflections, cast a glance at her small hands, and smile to see how they were becoming smaller; and nearly all her precious rings were being laid aside, for hardly one she could find which would fit her fingers now. No, she may never die an old maid, was the frequent conclusion in her mind from the downbent look at those fading hands. In spite of her money, men were getting shy of her; for they were rendered uneasy in her company, ignorant of the sorrow which was the hidden cause of her habitual gloom in society, so much at variance with her once brilliant manner and conversational powers. She saw with pain their altered demeanour with her, and it was a bitter pill for one to swallow who had been amongst the brightest of the bright stars of beautiful women, who lend with the loveliness of their purity a

ray of heaven to social circles, and are as angel guides to men who have to contend with the world. This afternoon upon the rustic bridge, Madeleine Leyne thinks sadly of that cold neglect, which is chilling her heart every time the recollection of it comes to her, and that is often, and as she remembers it, she remembers too the mournful meaning of Longfellow's poem :—

“Maiden, that read'st this simple rhyme,
 Enjoy thy youth, it will not stay ;
 Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime,
 For, oh, it is not always May !

“Enjoy the Spring of Love and Youth,
 To some good angel leave the rest ;
 For time will teach thee soon the truth,
 There are no birds in last year's nest.”

The stars were coming out in the darkening sky, when Madeleine returned home through the grove by a different path to that whereby she had proceeded hither. Her downcast eyes caught sight, as she walked slowly on her way, of the gleam from something dimly shining upon the ground, and half concealed by grass and brambles. She stooped to pick it up, and discovered it was a large carving-knife. Wondering why it should have been lost here, and believing that, as a matter of course, it belonged to the cutlery store at St. Mary's, she brought it back with her, gave it to one of the servants, and thought

no more about it until some days later when O'Malley Oranmore was dining with them.

"I found that fine carving-knife," she said to him, "which you are just after using, lying on the grass and half covered with clay, as I came home through the grove the other evening. I hope, O'Malley, it is a good one. The servant told me after I gave it to her that the butler remarked it was a new comer, a stranger, that it did not belong to any set of knives we have."

"No," added Mary, "it cannot belong to us. I never saw it before you showed it to me, Madeleine. But it is a very fine knife. What could have been the reason of its lying in the grove, as if some one had thrown it over the hedge in order to hide it? Is it a good carver?" she asked Oranmore.

"It is a remarkably good one," he said, growing a shade paler.

"Shall I help you to some more ham? It cuts the slices so exquisitely that really they do look tempting, don't they?" he asked with an unruffled mien.

"Yes; but you take none yourself? Why?"

"Oh! I don't care for ham, Mary."

"I thought you were extremely fond of it?" said Madeleine.

"Yes, but not that ha—not to-day, Madeleine, my dear," he answered. "By-the-bye, if you don't want the knife, and if it does not match with any set

you have, let me take it away with me. It does its work so beautifully, I would like to have it in my possession, if you do not object. Being a bachelor still, you know, I don't care that every knife upon my table should look like one of the same tribe of knives, and bear the impress of the same maker's name."

"You can have it if you please," Madeleine replied.

"And since *you* have been the finder of it, I shall prize it the more!" he said.

She bowed her head and gratefully smiled, and he carried the carving-knife back with him that evening to town. There was a stain here and there upon it which was small, and escaped the notice of the servants belonging to the Leyne family, but which the keenly examining scrutiny of Oranmore vividly and with considerable uneasiness detected. That knife in the hands of a skilful analyst might tell a tale of undiscovered crime disagreeable to the ear of Oranmore. He did not bury the knife this time in the earth, as he did before; he first defaced it by burning it in the fire which gave warmth to his own sitting-room, and afterwards, when it was cooled again and less recognizable, he flung it at night into the eastward-flowing river Liffey, where probably it found a meet hiding-place for itself in the mud and slime so fragrant to the nasal organ of the Dublin Corporation.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEAVING THE EARTH.

“O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
And sweeter is the young lamb’s voice to me that cannot rise,
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.”

* * * * *

“All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.”

TENNYSON.

IT is a trial for human souls accustomed from birth upwards to the ease of uninterrupted prosperity to find unawares their present and their future darkened by the gloom and the depression of exacting poverty. The past—for those, at least, who have travelled it sinless and in peace—is more or less an indistinct dream marked here and there with some noteworthy recollection; and when for such the advent of an unlooked-for misfortune is at hand, it comes like at last an awakening to reality out of the fanciful security wherein they have been calmly

reposing. Then the change comes with a vengeance ! The quiet little daily doings which were done as much for pastime as for any thing else, the unobtrusive episodes which beautified the harmless existence of refined women, the deep meaning of the gentle teachings from the elevating example of a family of sincere Christians, the healthful pleasures of manly exercise—of shooting, of fishing, of regular living—on the part of the men who could appreciate the enjoyment of such,—all these fair charms of educated brothers and pure sisters and of the wise mother—alas ! it is a painful sacrifice to find in an unforeseen moment they must be given up partly or wholly as but impediments, and that those graceful-mannered members of one family in whom one holy spirit of unity reigned, binding them together by deeper ties than the amiable ones of simply natural affection—very praiseworthy, but not enough in themselves for a family's happiness—must go abroad henceforth and immediately into the thick of the battle for daily bread, and be divided, it may be, personally for ever ; and, sadder result still, be divided not by time or by space, but by the separating influences which creep in as new interests and fresh affections are created for one or for the other, until at length those who were all in all come to regard each other coldly, indifferently, unsatisfactorily, and in their aroused worship of later objects which have caught their love,

to turn listlessly away from those who were once the delights of their altered hearts.

“ Sun and moon arise,
But our accustom'd eyes
Have grown more coldly wise
Than at first.”

Happy are they who, when such a separation cleaves the union of a household, go forth on their lonely paths not quite alone, but bring as a lamp to guide them the fire of that true-heartedness whose source is immortal. When they come—mournfully seldom, it may be—across one another again, the sister can gaze into the brother's eyes as of yore, and recognize, in spite of the blighting breath of vicissitudes, the thoughts of youth blooming in him still. Happy are they who are always young thus, for to such the infirmities of old age are only as a fading garment which they patiently desire to cast aside that their eternal youth may be revealed. To them all seasons are as springtime whose following summer is not here.

The Leynes were a united family, and even Harold's absence from the home circle did not seem to break the union altogether, for his heart was with them. Frequently in the year, whenever he had four or five days to spare, he hastened over to see them, bringing sometimes his sweet wife, whose love for him was deepening, although she believed it could not be deeper than it was. The fact was, that her heart was gaining

more capacity for loving; and when she looked back at the first months of their marriage, she understood how little she loved him then in comparison with her regard for him now. Love will grow by what it feeds on, and who can fathom the depth of love which is pure and unselfish, and as true as true can be?

Just as it is not always May throughout the year, neither is it with people always prosperity. Harold paid a very unpleasant visit home about this time. He had left pressing engagements in London, in order to hasten with all possible speed to his mother's place. Astounding news reached him in London the day before he came over to Ireland—news which it was but too probable had already been carried before him to Dublin, and had painfully startled prudent Mrs. Leyne. The London bank wherein the most of his and of her property was invested unexpectedly closed its doors, stopped payment, and ruined many.

She met her son at the hall-door, and Harold, before she kissed him or spoke a word to him, knew by her solemn countenance that the intelligence had gone before him, and made her solemn thus. Then Mary was told, and she closed her lips, and the colour departed from her dear face, and her eyes looked up to heaven, as they ever did when trouble was at hand. Afterwards Madeleine heard of it, and she thought with apprehension of O'Malley Oranmore. He too came in the evening: they took him into their con-

fidence, and asked his advice. Before he left for the night, Madeleine had a long interview with him in the study, and no one interrupted them. She half suspected from the first instant he was made acquainted with the blow which struck the Leynes that he was not quite so attentive to her as usual, that he glanced at her less fearlessly, less lovingly, less humbly, less obligingly. She saw some change come over him, and the suspicion darted like a knife into her heart, and many a hardly suppressed sigh was the eloquent cry of the agony within her. He went away, and she was but little comforted by the interview with him. She had told him then and there that he was free to give her up if he wished, that she would not for an hour longer bind him to her unless he desired to stay and not abandon her in her need, that her poverty should never with her consent be a source of hereafter uneasiness to him. And he had answered her kindly, it is true, and hopefully, and somewhat affectionately; but she was annoyed, nevertheless, at his altered manner, at the want of manliness which broke out in spite of his soft sayings and killing glances. He came to her the next day, and every day regularly for a week, and still she believed him changing; her pride was thereby excited. She beheld such an alteration in him before the seven days had gone by, that she grew at length—it is not too strong an expression to use—disgusted thoroughly

with him. Yet, if he would take her, oh, gladly she would accept him, she was so dreadfully weary and alone!

D'Auvergne also came at Mrs. Leyne's request. And as soon as Harold was compelled to return to his work in London, Noel took upon himself the management of the family affairs. He had humbly begged of Mrs. Leyne to make use of him if it were needful, and gratefully indeed she assented to his proffered assistance. Simply, unselfishly, perseveringly, devotedly he helped her, toiling at night, after his own labour for the day was over. And because he had much to attend to in Dublin, in the shape of his own legal calls, Mary Leyne wrote several of the letters for him, which had to be written to people relative to her mother's property, and Noel treated her in the familiar way he would treat a favourite sister of his own, who knew him thoroughly, and whom he knew. Never a deeper leaning towards her entered his heart beyond that straightforward brotherly regard, which she took as straightforwardly, and repaid as if she was his sister, and not only his sister, but his best friend, and intimate *confidante* too. Then ere long, during mutual consultations, these two wise heads on young shoulders concocted a little conspiracy which they kept secret from Mrs. Leyne and Madeleine, but not from Harold, for it was found advisable to tell him. And Mary entirely agreed to what Noel said, and

accepted his downright kindness with humility, not because his gift was a substantial benefit to her, but for sake of those whom she was so much attached to, and who, but for Noel d'Auvergne, might be thrown upon the charity of the cold world.

"Mary," he said, "you are aware that I am rich. I have much more money than I want, or may ever want."

"I know that, Noel," she replied, and blushed, for she suspected what was going to follow, but she held her peace until it came, which did not happen before a pause had intervened, during which D'Auvergne wrote away at the letter which occupied his attention.

"I have spoken to Harold about it ere he left Ireland," he continued, raising his eyes to hers; "and yesterday I received a letter from him wherein he stated his approval of what I intended to do. There is the letter."

He handed her the letter. She read it, and laid it down on the table before him silently, with an overflowing heart. "I can afford to purchase St. Mary's," he said, "and have in fact already bought it, with Harold's knowledge, though I did not inform him at the time of how I was resolved to dispose of my newly acquired property. I only told your brother I meant to derive lots of enjoyment out of the place—and so I do, Mary, for my way of enjoying it is in beholding it

still the home of those whom I love; and you know well I regard you all as if I were one of the family. Once I was rather near being one of you, but that is past and gone; we will not speak about that. God knew what was best for us, and—well, well, I will be silent! But relative to St. Mary's, I have made it over to your mother during her lifetime, and should you survive her, then it will be yours while you live, whether you marry or remain single. Madeleine is all right, for Oranmore will soon be her husband, and he will be the person to attend to her interests. I also have settled two hundred a year on Mrs. Leyne, which will be yours after her death. Both St. Mary's and this annuity will revert to me or mine hereafter. The only condition I have annexed, Mary, is that if ever you, or Harold, or Mrs. Leyne shall be in a position to repay me, that you will do so."

She had been looking at him while he spoke with her little lady-hands clasped before her, while her whole attention hung upon his words; and what could Mary do, as they sat together side by side in the study, but take in hers his hand, and bowing down her head over it burst into tears?

"Now no nonsense!" he said, starting to his feet hastily.

She gazed at him with the sunshine of her heart in her tell-tale face.

"No," she answered, smiling at him. "God bless

you, Noel, for this! I accept your offer for my own part, because I believe this comes from God through you, that He has inspired you to act thus. Henceforth," she added, softly and earnestly, "I have a new object to work for, and I will work for it to my dying day, if I can, should the last farthing of this debt be not paid before then. My great task in life now is to repay all this debt of genuine kindness—and I *will!*" she continued, drawing herself up and gracefully shaking her pretty head at him. "What from this day forward I have taken in hand, I will endeavour to perform—I will toil and labour like a slave until it is all paid back!"

"You must do no such thing. Be content with the thought that God has been so good to your humble servant, that He should have inspired me to do what I have done. And live on it, Mary, as being God's gift and not mine."

"Yes; but I will repay it too—to the last farthing, Noel," she answered, resolutely.

He smiled mysteriously. "Perhaps you may be able to repay it by and by," he replied, "so have your own way; but always remember that it is God's gift and not mine. *I am only His instrument.*"

"How humble you are!" she whispered, admiringly. "'He who humbleth himself shall be exalted' shall be verified in you."

He merely smiled mysteriously once more, and

went on steadily with his work ; but he appeared to Mary to help her henceforth more ardently than before. His perseverance stimulated her, and they both managed very well together to brighten the gloomy aspect of affairs. But then in what Mary did there was always a completeness about the finishing of her tasks, and a conquering charm in her manner of doing things, which gave to others a deal of satisfaction. She gained D'Auvergne's implicit confidence without willingly seeking it, without making any intentional move in order to gain it, but simply because she was what she was—a storehouse of wisdom. He hastened to confide in her about the arrangement of the intricate business he had taken it upon himself to carry to a successful issue ; and he was every day well pleased that he had Mary Leyne's advice, that she was ever within call and prepared with a prudent answer, that she was ever idle for him, that is, whatever occupation she was for the moment attending to, she would abandon instantaneously and cheerfully, should he require her to help him during the short hour of his hurried evening visit to St. Mary's every afternoon. These flying visits were becoming most attractive to D'Auvergne, and he did not seek to hide from Mary how happy he was when he came and they met. She saw that of course quite soon enough, but she never changed in her ways with him ; she was never warmer, never colder towards him. She was always

the same. And if he evidently appeared happier on one evening than on another, that altered not her demeanour, that had no sympathetic effect upon her. She was always the same—simple, sisterly, wistfully smiling, unconscious of herself, thoughtful about him and about others, never languid, never too buoyant—always the same, always wise, often sweetly serious, always like a happy little child, and yet ever obtaining from others veneration and love, and admiration because of the manifest royal dignity of the soul which looked so innocently at every one from the depths of her hazel eyes.

Ere another month passed by Madeleine wrote to Oranmore declining his hand, and he in his answer to her letter gave her up.

D'Auvergne was not surprised when he heard of it, and Mary was glad. Madeleine only looked at her hands and noticed that they were growing smaller and smaller, and no rings in her possession would fit her fingers now, and so she wore no rings. Those who loved her pitied her, and yet rejoiced that he should cast her aside—should jilt her, in plain language—for it was hardly a matter of doubt whether if she had married him she would not have been more unhappy than she was. She glided here and there, but the shadow of her former gay self; and she watched Noel more than ever, as heaven's exile might look up at a distant star. Only the time of exile was

nearly over for her, and the star might not to her appear so far away. D'Auvergne was exceedingly kind to Madeleine; he saw her life would not be a long one, and the story of that life sank into his heart and took seed there, and brought forth good fruit, as many things did. He would glance at Mary and she would glance at him in return, and each knew that Madeleine's days were numbered. Noel brought her presents of fruit and flowers from the city, and dainty things pleasant to the eye and to the taste, and Madeleine accepted them and prayed for Noel, and loved him, and felt she was dying day by day, slowly and surely; and she grew happy at last in a way she had never been, and her one wish now—she told it to him herself—was to leave the earth—that was her expression for death—when he would be at her side and holding her hand. She entered into a full explanation about the past, and, in spite of his remonstrance and beseeching, asked him for his entire forgiveness; and then, to content her, he said that he forgave her. And it made her delightfully peaceful to listen to this from his lips; and after that interview she was no more unhappy, but waited in holy submission until she was called away, until she "left the earth," as she named it in her own words. Now she clearly understood D'Auvergne; he was no longer gone far beyond her, for she had reached the same height of humility as he did, and she knew that by understand-

ing him at last, this knowledge prepared her for the day on which she was to die. She had lived for the world; too long it had been the dearest thing to her; he did not live for the world. This was the difference between him and Oranmore; this was the difference between him and herself, and which even when in the old days they were so much to one another existed between them, and took at times, she knew not why, something from the perfection of their love. But it was she who had felt this, and not D'Auvergne. That difference no longer was between them, but a greater difference yet than that one, at least, as regards this life. Now all her mists were dispelled. She saw him as Mary saw him, and folding her fading hands upon her stricken bosom, she bowed her head, and forgot herself and that cruel past, and knew at last what the love of God meant.

It nearly crushed Oranmore for ever, when he heard of the misfortune which had happened to the Leynes. He was deeply in debt, and had sunk deeper and deeper into that pit of anxiety and miserable meanness, because of the hope of enjoying Madeleine's fortune, and thereby extricating himself from his difficulties soon. Now that hoped-for expedient was gone, and he was worse off than before he had a design upon the woman he was after despising. He must begin again—and he writhed under the necessity—the delicate task of gaining another heiress.

To him it was a specially delicate task, for he did not go about his work as others would. It was with him a profound game of chance, requiring practice, and consummate vigilance, and intense study; while to many another it would be no more than the expected conquest of true love offered in all simplicity and generously received. He put little faith in the existence of true love, and so he could not woo and win as you would, Reader. What was to-day an impossibility for himself, he believed an impossibility for others. Love to him was a myth, or a passing passion, or a blushing happiness of two young hearts which with the flush of youth would fade for ever. As a guiding principle, as a source of nourishment for life, as a mysterious abyss of attraction which on earth one fathoms not, although it delights him and changes him into a little child of the Most High—as such it was beyond the bounded comprehension of Oranmore, or if his comprehension was not a bounded one, at least the secrets it sought to know, and which it found, were hidden from the innocent in the illimitable midnight of evil wherein those revel who must be the enemies of the good. He held every one's god to be self-interest, because it was his god. Even concerning the more perfect souls on earth, if in better moments he gave them part of their meed, he would assert that self-interest made them be as they are, because he did not understand their annihilation of

that self which was lost in the light of the knowledge of the true God. Religion to him was oftenest the hypocrisy of others. To him the sacred Books of the old and the new time were no more than the fanciful productions of clever men of peculiar intellectual vigour, who had given themselves up in their day to the contemplation of such matters, which from the refined, superior bent of their nature was pleasurable to them, and therefore pursued for the reason of that pleasure derived, and for no supernatural or other motive beyond it; much the same as a novelist of the present period might indulge in the dreams of his brain, and paint them in words, and print them in a saleable three-volume form, and, lucky fellow! make lots of welcome money thereby. The Scriptures, so beautiful and so sublime to such as have hearts, were to him but a story concocted by those who jesuitically knew human nature, in order to allay the desires of unsatisfied humanity, to console the murmuring poor, to better the races of men politically, materially, by an education of ideas suitable to be instilled into beings who by a law of nature were the acknowledged lords of all things upon the globe. His scorn of the unseen was undisguised, and of those whose hearts were in the unseen. As a rule, unless through a great effort of self-control, he could not hide this outbreaking scorn, it was so wide and universal, and direct in the straightness of its envenomed thrusts. Things

sacred were his antipathies, for they were the merciless condemnations of his loveless, cunning, passionate life. The appearance of a darkly-clothed priest was to him the incarnation of a devil from hell; but a nun he pitied more than hated, considering such a gentle, timid, fawn-like, unobtrusive one at most merely the dupe of an artful priesthood, whose weaker nature, afraid to lean on itself, cowed in idle fear before the teachings of a sanctimonious hierarchy. A very saint in female form—and he often met with the like in society and elsewhere—he regarded as one who cared not much for flowers might examine an eloquent lily or a mystical rose. And when a religious met him in the streets or on a country road in the fresh early morning, when Oranmore walked away from the city caring his bodily health, or in the earthless evening hour, when peace broods over us so sweetly, and the silence of rest comforts the toilers of the brain and hand, then a flaming hate fired the daring man who feared neither God nor devil, but only the law of the land and the opinions of his fellows; for the meek, contented face of the religious galled him and reproached him, unwittingly, but sorely; for to him the aspect of a religious was not what it is to others—like the cloud which we look up to above us, gloomy to the world's eyes, but smiling under the sunshine of heaven. He saw the gloom, but not the smile. He was discomfited to such a

degree by the loss of Madeleine, and the imperative necessity laid upon him of making a move at once towards effectually warding off the pressing impertunity of impatient creditors, that he left Dublin in disgust with these latter intruding visitors and went down to his brother in the country. Lord Summervale was in London, and Oranmore found no one to meet him when he arrived except the servants. He did not stay long there, consequently. The solitude of the fields was a bore; the society of the county was stationary in its spirit, and drearily uncongenial to his restlessness; after the gossip of the club-room, it was productive of yawns to be compelled to sit and listen to the clergyman's rotund and mellowed wife about the progress her newly-opened school was making, and of the delightful lecture delivered therein for the edification of the capering country children, just before her esteemed friend O'Malley came, by the Very Reverend Doctor Weathereyeopen, upon the intellectual capabilities of the Patagonians for the reception and appreciation of the truths of the Gospel.

"He had a real live little Patagonian with him, my dear O'Malley," she said.

"I thought the Patagonians were big people," he drawled.

"So they are, but this was only a boy of twelve years, and *so* intelligent. What a pity you had no

opportunity of making his acquaintance! He knew his Scripture *so* well!"

"Ah, indeed—what a pity, Mrs. Bouncing!"

"Yes, my dear. He told me how long Noah was in the ark the moment I asked him, and how long Adam lived on the earth. And several passages in Scripture he gave me his own commentaries upon."

"What a genius!"

"Yes, a genius truly, my dear. All this comes of a man's having the liberty of reading the Bible his own way, and pronouncing his own opinion upon it."

"Has not every man that right, Mrs. Bouncing?"

"I have heard not. What a blessing it is to keep one's mind to oneself, and not have to tell it to any man living!"

"What a blessing it is, you mean, to be able to do what you like!" he answered, sarcastically; "not to have to keep from sin because confession of it to another must follow."

"Are you a papist?" she asked, hurriedly.

He laughed at her. "No, Mrs. Bouncing; don't be uneasy! The world would not fall to pieces if I was a holy Roman. I believe in no religion—not even in yours!"

"Oh my!"

"Has that fact taken your breath away? I will wait till it comes back, for it will come back again."

“ Good-bye, Mr. Oranmore—there is the door ; you can leave.”

“ Thank you, I am going ; but one word before I go. There is a deal of humbug in the world, and your learned lecturer on the intellectual foolishness of the Patagonians is a sham. I know him. I know his game. Dear to the converted Gentile is the gold of the Heathen——”

“ The door, Mr. Oranmore,” she pointed to it, with a flaming face.

“ I am leaving, my dear lady—and leaving on the best of terms. You will think the better of me when you have cooled down. Perhaps you will agree with me in my opinions then, if you do not already, in spite of the righteous indignation becoming your position. But I hate humbug, and I am outspoken. And—one word more ere we part—if I could be any thing in the religious line, I would be a Catholic. I have seen many forms of religion, and the Catholic is the best of them all. Farewell !”

The good lady never saw him again, but her gossipping propensities were fully satisfied during the next month, and she gave a select tea-party whereat the faults and virtues of the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore were discreetly weighed, and, alas ! the virtues were found wanting.

Oranmore returned to town in a week after this conversation, and on the following day paid a visit to

D'Auvergne. He had found the loneliness of the country most unbearable, since such was incompatible with quietness for one who had many unpleasant matters on his conscience which it was terrible to reflect upon. D'Auvergne received him, when he entered the room he was writing busily in, more coldly than was customary with Noel to treat other people. He was incensed with Oranmore for acting in such a callous and heartless manner towards Madeleine Leyne. Oranmore pocketed the coolness of the reception, and spoke to D'Auvergne of the current topics of the day; but he went away from his door with angry hate in his breast, and in his brain an awful design against D'Auvergne's useful life. He had done dark deeds before through necessity, as he deemed it; he could do them again, and this time for the gratification alone of the desire of revenge. He called at D'Auvergne's residence later on the same day, and told him of an old friend who lay sick in Sir Patrick Dun's hospital.

"He has no relatives in this part of the world; they have all gone to Australia," Oranmore explained; "so when he fell sick they brought him to this hospital. If I had been in town I would have seen to his comfort. I only heard of his illness after leaving you this morning. Will you come with me and see him? Oh, but perhaps you cannot spare time, He is an old companion of yours."

D'Auvergne went out with him. They proceeded to the hospital to pay a visit to the sick friend whom they both knew intimately, and at whose table they both had frequently dined. They arrived at the hospital. While walking along a corridor Oranmore said to Noel, "Stay here until I come back, I shall not be five minutes. You can stroll through that ward there, if you like, while waiting for me. I have heard that Doctor —— is below, and since he is my own physician I wish to speak to him for a moment."

"Very well, I will wait. But as my time is not my own, do not be long absent, like a good fellow."

"I shall not. Thank you, D'Auvergne. Go into that ward yonder and have a look around it. You will find plenty of the dark side of humanity to interest you while I am away."

He departed, descending again the flight of stairs they had both a minute ago mounted together. Ere he disappeared from view, he glanced back at D'Auvergne, while his eyes glared with a mischievous look which haunted Noel and made him unaccountably ill at ease. O'Malley Oranmore, he was well aware, disliked him, and D'Auvergne had no ungrounded suspicion of the cause of that antipathy towards him which existed in the ex-officer's breast. He had once gone between Oranmore and Madeleine Leyne, and to have done this once, he felt, was to have done it once too often, when he had to deal with one

of Oranmore's stamp. Oranmore was present, he likewise knew, in the dining-room that unhappy night, so pregnant with unlooked-for consequences; and to Noel he never would give, although repeatedly entreated to explain it, a satisfactory account of what took place there, when Noel lay unconscious upon the floor. Oh, that demoniacal look! D'Auvergne had observed it once before, when they stood together upon a cliff at Tenby. It was not the first time it troubled him by lingering in his honest mind, to which it was not a usual characteristic to suspect any one.

At the entrance of one of the wards an hospital nurse accosted him.

"Are you a new student, sir?" she asked, politely.

"Oh, no!" he answered; "I am merely waiting for a friend."

"I thought you might have been a new student, sir, from Trinity College. You ought to be careful," she added, "about where you go in this place of sickness and death. For instance, sir, in this very ward there are several bad cases of small-pox."

He was startled by her announcement, and he moved away frightened. He vividly recollected the expression of Oranmore's face, while the latter was proceeding down the stairs and looking back sardonically at him. A horrible suspicion seized possession of D'Auvergne. He remained alone in the corridor, pale as death, filled with strange uneasiness, thinking

of the small-pox in the ward yonder, and recalling the warning remark of the hospital nurse, that he ought to be careful in this place of disease, this abode of the dying.

Next day he was confined to bed, a victim to the small-pox — that contagious, eruptive distemper of great malignity. Neither did O'Malley Oranmore arise that morning from his luxurious couch. The net he laid for his companion he was caught in himself.

Harold Leyne, who had returned for a short visit to Ireland, brought home the news he heard in the city, of the illness of both. They were two who were well known, and the intelligence had therefore spread like wildfire. Madeleine was deeply afflicted about D'Auvergne. The following day Mrs. Leyne found this note lying on the deserted breakfast-table :—

“ DEAREST MAMMA,

“ I will be in Dublin when you receive this. Please don't be frightened about me. I am going to be of whatever use I may to poor Noel. He has no one to minister to him, and I, you know, was at one time to have been his wife. I will not leave him until he is out of danger, or is dead. Forgive me for stealing a march upon you. If I told you beforehand, you would not have permitted me to go to Noel, and I would have had to disobey you, for I *must* go to him.

“ Ever your affectionate

“ MADELEINE.”

“The foolish, foolish girl!” she exclaimed, excitedly. “To do such a mad thing! And she so seriously unwell!”

Mrs. Leyne was not very angry, however. She drank a cup of tea, and hastened into town to where D’Auvergne lived. She found Madeleine—her bonnet already off—supplicating energetically with the celebrated Doctor ——.

“Now, my dear child,” he remonstrated, “this foolish conduct decidedly will never do! I put my veto upon it at once. What will people be saying about you? Answer me that question, you silly child! The world will make all sorts of stories out of it. Fancy, a well-known young lady, of highly respectable family, and nothing on earth to him—no relationship whatever between them—acting the nurse to a rising young barrister! I wonder your mother allowed——”

“Don’t blame my dear mother, Doctor. I assure you it is not with her permission that I am here. It is all my own doing. She did not know one word about my coming until I had left home. I wrote a note before I went, telling what I was doing. I arrived here just before you knocked at the hall-door; and I informed nobody about my proceeding hither. I want to be near him, Doctor, and to be of a little use to him,” she sighed, “in his friendless condition. He has no one, you know, to really attend to him,

and I—and I——!” Madeleine broke down, and began to weep.

“My dear child, Mrs. Leyne, your mamma, who is an old and valued friend of mine, would never forgive me were I to yield to you and wilfully permit you to run the eminent risk—and the risk is very eminent, my child, believe me—of catching this malicious disease, which might blight your beauty for life! Think only of that catastrophe, Miss Leyne! How fortunate I happened to be paying my morning visit, you hasty-headed child! By the merest accident I came to see Mr. d’Auvergne at this hour—or rather Providence”—and the old white-haired gentleman looked up towards heaven reverently—“sent me here to guard you from danger. It is all on account of your loving heart, of course, that you desire to nurse him, and cure him, if you can. But you must take assiduous care of your good looks, for Mr. d’Auvergne’s sake.”

She shook her head, sadly, in the negative.

“Not for his sake?” he asked.

“No,” she replied, and looked at her fading hands, and looked at him with a solemn meaning in her beautiful face.

The aged physician stroked her head, and was silent. From the first instant he entered the room he knew *that*. And an inexpressible sorrow brought tears into his old eyes, as one must needs mourn who

sees the young taken away in their loveliness, while he with white hairs upon his brow is left to work on and be patient.

“Dear Miss Leyne,” he said, more kindly and respectfully, “you must consent to come with me in my carriage, which is waiting at the door below. I will go up-stairs now and see my patient; you can go down and enter the carriage meanwhile. Every minute of this morning is most precious to me, my dear, yet I will not stir one step past the door of this house unless you shall accompany me—why here actually is Mrs. Leyne herself! I give you over to her charge. I must be off up-stairs at once. How do you do, my dear Madam? It is a century since I have had the pleasure of seeing you!”

“Not quite a century, Doctor. If you remember, it is not long ago since my son Harold had the benefit of your skill. We are healthy people at St. Mary’s,” she replied, taking his proffered hand with a smile of kind recognition. “Is it not too bad, Doctor,” she went on, “for one of my children to run thus into Dublin upon a wild errand, fraught with such downright unmistakable danger? Oh, Madeleine! how am I ever to forgive you? What must I say to her, Doctor? I have been thinking, while I journeyed hither, of so many harsh reproaches to pour out upon her, and now I don’t remember one of them, or rather,” she added, softly, “I have not the heart to hurt her with one bitter rebuke.”

Nor did she say any thing harsh to her declining child; not even one reproach that could be felt as such; but she kissed her daughter very, very tenderly, and at the Doctor's bidding brought her down stairs and conducted her, without resistance on Madeleine's part, into the carriage, wherein they sat awaiting the advent of the famous physician.

They had scarcely seated themselves in the carriage, when the Doctor came running in haste downstairs, shouting out, "Mrs. Leyne!" In a moment he appeared at the hall-door, holding unskilfully in his hand a shawl and a fashionable bonnet.

"I am just after finding this thing, and this," he said, holding them up to view—not as a milliner would, "on the small table outside the door of the sick-room. Do you know any thing about them?" he asked.

"They are Mary's!" exclaimed Mrs. Leyne, in deep astonishment. "Sure enough, I did not see her at breakfast this morning, and in my extreme hurry did not mind that strange occurrence—it is very unusual not to find Mary the first down to breakfast, for she is our housekeeper. Well, well, wonders will never cease! She must have come here last night."

"So she did, ma'am," said the servant-maid, who while Mrs. Leyne was speaking had made her appearance in the hall. "The kind lady was up all night, watching by my master's bedside. God be good to

her and hers! Ay, and another lady came along with her, and went away, and came again this morning, who was no other than Mrs. Fitzgerald, the Sister of Charity, whom many and many a poor man and woman in the wide city of Dublin knows and loves, as well they might, if they have hearts at all within them! The other young lady never left his room, ma'am, since she came—no, not even to take a mouthful of air!”

True enough, Mary had come into Dublin secretly upon the previous evening, and went on her arrival first in search of Beatrice, and brought her with her to D'Auvergne's residence; then Beatrice went back to her convent, and came next morning, and was lovingly helping Mary at this moment in her self-imposed and self-denying and most heroic labour of truest charity.

The old Doctor stared at Mrs. Leyne, and the two women stared at him, and all were silent; the servant-maid waited at the half-closed door to see whether they had any commands to give her. Suddenly, while the Doctor was looking at her, Madeleine stepped swiftly unawares out of the carriage, ran upstairs with agile feet, and entered the room where Noel d'Auvergne lay.

Mary and Beatrice, turning their calm faces towards the door, saw Madeleine coming in. They both rose simultaneously, as if the same thought struck them

at the same instant, and taking Madeleine by either hand, they led her out of the room, and Beatrice closed the door and locked it, with Mary's silently nodded consent, and left Mary to deal with her sister outside.

"Madeleine," Mary said, with a beseeching face, "you are not accustomed to sickness, and you must promise me not to stay here, if you love me, if you love us! Where is Mamma?"

"Down-stairs—but let me in! Let me in to him! Mary, why do you prevent me? Do, please, dear, let me in to him!"

"No," she replied, imperatively. "Come down-stairs, Madeleine, I implore you! You cannot do him any good—and you may catch the disease!"

The Doctor and Mrs. Leyne by this time arrived up-stairs, but all their combined entreaties had no effect upon Madeleine. She would not go home; and consequently they were obliged to permit her to stay in the house, although they successfully prevented her from attending upon D'Auvergne. Ah, she was soon helpless enough in their hands! That very night the malignant disease Noel d'Auvergne suffered from struck her down fatally, and laid her on her deathbed, thus cheating of its prey the consumption which was less swiftly killing her; and so poor Madeleine lay dangerously ill in another room next to that one occupied by Noel, and Mary and Beatrice had two invalids instead of one to bestow their solicitude and skilful

experience upon. D'Auvergne recovered: his face was not disfigured; that countenance of his so pleasant to look upon, which gave rest to the eye of the observer, remained in his humble possession still. In his illness he saw the selfsame ladylike, lovely hands hovering about him which he remembered having attracted his confused notice that day when he was stretched in the cottage, after the fall whereby he saved the life of Madeleine Leyne. And now he thought at first that it must be Madeleine Leyne who was his nurse, and a flood of tender memories and long-suppressed yearnings came back again, especially when he reflected that Madeleine was going away from the earth. He knew that as well as the old Doctor, as well as Mary, and as well as Madeleine herself. Then he caught one of those dainty hands, and would not let it go until its owner revealed to him her fair face. And when he saw that it was Mary and not Madeleine, an intense sense of confidence settled in his heart, and he only said, "I expected as much from you," and kissed that delicate, skilful hand, and fell asleep; and from the moment of that discovery rallied, and began to grow well. When he was able to move about his room they told him about Madeleine, and he marvelled greatly. They would not have told him so soon, only they expected Madeleine's death, and she had said she would wish to die holding his hand, as if that loving clasp would give strength

to her at the last moment. So they permitted him to leave his room and enter that occupied by Madeleine, which was close by on the same floor. The day he saw her was the day before she died. She was conscious and recognized him, and spoke not of the past—she had, it seemed, entirely forgotten that—but her talk was all about the goodness of Mary. It appeared as if with the nearness of her end came a clearer vision of things worthy of love, and accordingly a more distinct appreciation than hitherto of Mary's merit and holiness. And all her talk was chiefly about Mary's self-devotion to others, and poor Madeleine could have spoken upon few subjects more pleasing to Noel than that which concerned Mary and contained adequate praises of her. Poor Madeleine's death-song was Mary's pæan in Noel's ears, and Mary, who was present, blushed, and sought to silence Madeleine, and at length ran out of the room, hurt by her own praise. To do things worthy of praise was part of her happiness, but not to be praised for them; that spoiled the delight of doing good, which was always done for sake of the love of God alone and by that love.

The next day was a memorable one for all, and above all for Madeleine. In the morning Mary had placed in a vase in D'Auvergne's chamber a bouquet of fresh primroses, gathered by herself while the dew was upon them. Noel, about twelve o'clock, brought

them to Madeleine and presented them to her. "Thank you, Noel," she said, gratefully; "they are the last I shall ever receive, and it is meet they should come from you. How sweet is their fragrance! to me it is like the odour of sinless souls when they come from Communion. Well I remember it on Sundays, on the first Sunday of the month especially, or on a great festival of the Church, such as Christmas-day, or Pentecost, or Corpus Christi. Oh, Corpus Christi! what a shower of God's grace rains down on us in the morning of that day, when the world goes on making money as if nothing extraordinary was happening! To-day is the day of my last Communion, and I feel as I felt on my first, and as if all between was a useless dream, excepting the Communions I have during the strange interval made. To know God in Communion," she whispered, as if the approach of death made it certain to her, "is not allowed to every one, for it is the Mystery of Purity. I hope I shall not die before He comes!" she exclaimed, in a louder voice, and with an eager anxiety which proved that this was the greatest matter in the world to her, as in real truth it was, though there was a day when it was not. "Hush!" her eyes brightened—some one was approaching whom she knew; "I hear a step upon the stairs. He is coming to me. Oh, *He* is coming to me, and I shall have no pain, because of the sweetness He will give me

before I go! I have no fears now, and no trouble is on my mind: He has absorbed them all. Hush!"

Those present in the room listened attentively, and every one there knew Who was coming. Even while He was yet on the stairs they felt Him. A step was heard upon the landing-place outside. Mary went to the door, opened it, peered out, and straightway knelt down upon the floor, with a smile upon her face which had nothing of earth in it. The stalwart form of a stately young priest entered the room. That dashing figure, so powerfully knit and so graceful, was familiar to those in the room, and his hair was still flowing back as though the winds were blowing against it. Yes, it was Tom Middleton, the daring, careless sailor once—a priest of the Most High now and for ever, and for ever. No one greeted him, though to each one he was so well known, for he was bearing with him, concealed from the savage gaze of the unbelieving spirit in the streets abroad, the true, the real Ruler of Europe, of the World—the Emperor of emperors. These are no idle words.

The young priest paid no attention to the persons present, but went directly up to Madeleine where she lay in bed, and, stooping down, refreshed her with a Divine look upon his face, and then he spoke to her for a few minutes, in a voice unheard by the rest, nor listened to by them. He gave her the Viaticum, while those around the bed—His earthly courtiers—

attended upon their King. With a smile and the faintest bloom beautifying her delicate face, she received Him within the palace of her pure bosom, and held out her hand to D'Auvergne. He clasped it in his own. The fragrance of the primroses upon, and the fragrance of the Blessed Sacrament within her breast, mingled, and through the air in the room floated the perfume of the Host.

Consummatum est! Her earthly sorrows are over; her human heart is satisfied; the soul is lost to itself in union with its God. Overpowered by the sweetness of her last Communion, she sinks into the depthless abyss of Eternal Love. She is gone with her glory to add to the glory of Heaven, and her angel-guardian need tremble for her no more.

CHAPTER XV.

“WHAT DOES VICTOR HUGO SAY?”

“Patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once : her smiles and tears
Were like a better day. Those happy smiles,
That play’d on her ripe lip, seem’d not to know
What guests were in her eyes ; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp’d. In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most beloved, if all
Could so become it.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE small-pox, although it did not send O’Malley Oranmore into his grave, still left behind it ravaging traces of its fearful malignity, and annihilated his claims to the right of being called henceforth a good-looking man. In the keen and jealous eyes of that world he flattered and fawned upon, the loss of his beauty lowered him. He recovered, and was able to walk idly about again. Many a familiar acquaintance who greeted him, and offered hollow congratulations upon his fortunate recovery, scarcely

concealed his surprise at the alteration which severe sickness had effected in that dreadfully pitted countenance. He could not stand it long; the public compassion proved too much for him, and at length hunted him from the city to the country, from the country to the Continent. What charming heiress would take him now for better or worse? He left Dublin, irritated by the ill-concealed remarks passed behind his back regarding his personal appearance. He fled from Ireland. He crossed to the Continent, and lost his income—all of it!—at a gambling-table in Homburg one evening, when sullenly heated by wine. The world dealt with him harshly henceforth. He spent a twelvemonth in a debtor's prison—the peer, at his ease upon his ancestral estate, refusing to credit the broken-down brother's story that his little property was so suddenly lost. The noble lord would not have been embarrassed by the deprivation of the sum required to set O'Malley once more at liberty, but of old he had had sufficient experience of his brother's veracity, and somehow distrusted the piteously described account of his unexpected poverty. Moreover, he was not by any means filled with regret because of the stroke of ill-luck which had overtaken this clever younger brother, who, in spite of his cleverness, was so unfortunate on his way through life. To Lord Summervale it was a desirable turn in the tide of affairs that O'Malley should be compelled to retire

from public for a while—for ever, if such were possible—for he possessed a secret which was a secret in Lord Summervale's breast likewise, and which placed the peer in his brother's power in a manner which the former did not like to reflect upon. Before his year's imprisonment was over, he wrote to Lord Summervale that he would reveal to the world the circumstances surrounding the mock funeral of Lady Summervale, unless he was forwarded a sufficient sum to set him free and place him on his legs again. The exasperation of his continued confinement drove him to adopt this course with his brother, and Lord Summervale, frightened out of his wits, conceded to his request without delay, and sent him a cheque for five hundred pounds.

O'Malley Oranmore had been a soldier in his glad youth. Once more he took to soldiering, when at length set at liberty from the galling custody—the bitterest sting of which was not the shame of it, the social stain of it, but the solitude which imprisonment inevitably entailed; which solitude was ample enough, and long enough to give full play to the powers of memory as they grappled with, and writhed under the conscience-stinging incidents of the dead past, which was not dead for him, but keenly alive, with a kind of maddening eternal life of its own which no self-control of his could keep under. Oh, often as the white walls of his cell stared at him he was

tempted to dash his brains out against them! but the instinct of self-preservation was stronger than the temptation to commit suicide, and the terror of what might come upon his disembodied spirit when the wild leap into the abyss of eternity was taken kept its powerful grip of him, as if a merciful God yearned for him and gave him chance after chance ere the devilish intelligence of the God-ransomed man was hurled into hell. He began his career as a soldier; he would like to die now in warlike harness. The taste of human blood seemed congenial to him; and his happiness—rather his madness—would consist now in plunging into scenes wherein swords flashed and cannon thundered, and ensigns waved, and the souls of men followed swiftly after the yells of triumph or of pain which their oath-accustomed lips uttered. There was a war in Europe at the time, and men were drunk with blood. The genius of the age created a phantom of liberty, and laughed as fools bowed down before it and threw themselves under the wheels of its triumphal car. People are either of two things in this world—wise men or fools. Good-natured fools and bad shouldered the musket alike, and stepped lithely side by side, and showered their deadly bullets and balls into the heroic hearts, brains, and limbs of the defenders of Christian civilization, and because they were fools thought that they were doing thus a genuine service to God. Oranmore,

although he hated true liberty, could lay down his life for that which looked like it, and so, viewing it in an indistinct and half-thoughtless way, he was willing to atone to the Great Spirit—his idea of God—for the crimes of the past by a sacrifice of himself on the altar raised in wide-awake Europe to the false ideal of Freedom. All self was not sacrificed in this self-sacrifice. There was a pecuniary consideration at the bottom of it all. Money was the lever which lifted this doubtful hero to his disposition of more than doubtful heroism. He would have to fight, of course, but if death, or if dangerous wounds did not fiendishly clutch him, he looked to walking by-and-by on military stilts of some kind. Of noble birth in his own land, and holding a commission in the army of another, he might recoup himself yet, although that face of his was so disfigured by a horribly virulent disease. Heiresses were not confined to Ireland. But he had to commence very low; in fact the lowest step upon the ladder of martial fortune. His brother could not help him much with his influence, for Oranmore hastened to the scene of warfare before he thought of making valuable use of it. He took to soldiering once more, but it was a knapsack he carried now, instead of the gay gold lace and the flashing sword of an officer. With a bitter and a breaking heart he half reluctantly took to it, sick and sore with the world for its indifference to him, pour-

ing oaths out upon his creditors, upon his rich relatives, upon himself. He joined the Garibaldian Volunteers, and was severely wounded in his first battle. Italy drank up his blood and thanked him not. Those who first found him helpless upon the trampled earth rifled his person, and took away with them the few coins in his possession. Near his heart they discovered a locket, broken and battered in by the bullet which shot through him, and which would have made his heart cease beating but for that trifling trinket, which turned aside the iron messenger of death, and sent the lightning-winged musket-ball careering through his unopposing flesh by making a different passage for itself. They opened the locket, with a careless laugh and a rude jest, and then they saw the sweet face of a beautiful young girl. It was her fair likeness who at that far-off seaside hotel, upon a seacoast of Ireland, waited for him once upon a time, thinking in her charity the very best she could of him, catering wearily for the thirsty lips of reeling Sunday tourists, and who died at length in the widowed sadness of her single-womanhood, where her lonely lodging was in the populous, unheeding heart of a great American city. The bruised and inexpensive locket—it had been her gift, and she was extremely poor in those days—was of no use to the stooping prowlers of the carnage-strewn field of battle, and so they threw it scornfully from them

back towards him where he lay painfully bleeding. He stretched out one feeble arm, and clasped the locket in his weakening fingers. He is regretting now, as the blood flows from his wounded side, that youthful, despised love; and sorrow, like rain in dusty summer weather, refreshes his parched-up soul. Who knows how, as he lay powerless, with his face to the sky, in his agony, feeling that golden relic within his helpless hand, he travelled swiftly back in memory to unworldly days? Who knows how his soul, as he gasped for slowly-returning life, and thought it going from him for ever, hastened to God at last, begging mercy—oh, not too late!—full of chastened recollection of the pure girl whose graceful image he treasured faithfully thus? Who knows what that pure girl may have done for him from her lovely place in heaven? Was it her prayer which intercepted the course of the rapid bullet, and directed it by means of that unpretending locket away from his unprepared heart, in order that since he treasured so the memory of one of God's own, he might, before he died, treasure the memory of God, and bring it with him to the Judgment-seat, to be his pleader eloquently there? Who knows what God forgave for the intense beseeching of that suffering glance, as the blood-drained man lay with his back to the earth from which all flesh comes, with his eyes upon the evening stars, which shone silently out in their scattered

beauty from that placid southern sky? A thief went from the cross to paradise—but God can do even greater wonders still!

When Madeleine's spirit was gone, the feeling came to Mary Leyne which came to her seldom, of weariness of her life. It seemed so hard, after witnessing that holy departure, to realize that she was here still, with the duties of her position to be performed steadfastly and faithfully, and without reluctance, that the routine of her days was woven round her like a chain which must not be broken by her, no matter how its familiar heaviness might weigh her down and mark her brow with care, and blanch her blushing cheek with time and the pains of bodily sickness! Madeleine perhaps was gliding free and blissful amongst the glad groups who shall die no more, while she in exile down here must continue her existence, and carry her yoke, and one day die! They had all withdrawn from the chamber of death wherein what was earthly of Madeleine lay motionless but beautiful, for no devastation of decay had dared to spoil that lifeless loveliness yet; they had all withdrawn except Mary, who, after restraining outward tokens of her inward grief so long, so bravely, now gave vent to her flood of pent-up tears, and knelt by the still bedside, praying and weeping like one abandoned. They did not interrupt her as she knelt in bitter mourning there, because they understood how deeply she was moved by sorrow,

and with charitable pity they let her alone. Twice had D'Anvergne returned to lead her away, and twice he only stood at the door, and silently went back to the rest, who were waiting and devising about the funeral in the sitting-room below. For the third time, after the lapse of an hour, he went up-stairs again; and Noel, entering the room, at length walked over noiselessly and laid his hand lightly on Mary's shoulder. She looked up, and saw the kindness beaming in his countenance; and seeing it, she hid her face in her hands and wept bitterly.

"Come with me, Mary," he said, gently; "you have been long enough in this place; you will be tired; you have been on your knees two hours!"

"Two hours ago and she was here!" Mary answered. "Oh, Noel, my heart is breaking!"

"Come with me," he said, more gently, and taking her hand he raised her up and led her from the room. At the door she turned round and gazed with an unutterable look at Madeleine's peaceful face.

"She is in heaven," she whispered to him confidently; and, clinging to him in her new loneliness, she suffered him to conduct her down-stairs; then, in gratitude to him for this and for every thing else he did for her and hers, she lifted his hand to her lips, and imprinted a fervent kiss upon it. And Noel knew that this affectionate act was done through gratitude alone, and as such he accepted it.

The death of Madeleine was only the beginning of Mary's troubles, for ere the grass around the tomb of the former had grown an inch high Mrs. Leyne died, and was buried beside her eldest daughter. Mary was the solitary occupant of St. Mary's now, except the one or two faithful domestics who were retained for the present. But she did not remain there longer than was absolutely necessary, and as soon as circumstances permitted it she accompanied Harold to London, and took up her abode with him and his young wife. She had nothing to live upon but what was derived from the charity of others, and upon that she was firmly determined not to support her days, but to work for her own livelihood in an honourable and, if she could, a lucrative way. From Noel d'Auvergne she refused to receive the least pecuniary assistance, though it was generously offered and persistently. The death of her mother had entirely altered her views regarding the desirability of accepting the considerate aid which was supplied by him. She would neither live in St. Mary's, and regard it—it was his wish that she should—as being her own property, nor would she have any thing to do with the two hundred a year he had secured for her mother, and for herself, should she survive Mrs. Leyne—a contingency the possible nearness of which they little suspected when she had accepted for her mother's sake D'Auvergne's substantial kindness. So she

went with her brother to London as soon as she could, and began to look out for some means of supporting herself by her own exertions. She first tried her pen, and wrote articles and short stories and poems, which she sent to the magazines, but no success attended her efforts, to her surprise and disappointment. Then she went out as a visiting governess, and in this she met with some success. Her personal appearance was in her favour, her manners were exquisite, her temperament saintly, so that soon watchful mothers discovered her merits, patronized her, paid her handsomely, and spoke well of her. She was her own advertisement, and none could be more eloquent or more truthful. Her success gave her additional peace of mind, and since she was able to pay her own way through the world she did not hesitate in accepting her sister-in-law's invitation to live with her and Harold in their Hampstead villa, where she guarded with her own wise love the two little children, her tiny niece and nephew—the son and daughter who were light and joy in Harold Leyne's life. Mary quickly found herself courted and admired by the society to be had in the vicinity of her brother's residence. She was not regarded in the same way as an ordinary governess. Her brother's social position was good, and people only admired Mary all the more for honestly earning her own bread. She obtained by this time much

more experience of the world than it had been her lot hitherto to meet with. It made her more thoughtful, but not more circumspect or more humble, for she was that before she came to live in London. She was a true Christian, and perhaps this was the secret of her popularity with many families in the neighbourhood, perhaps this it was which made her one of the surrounded stars in many an innocent home. Children loved her, for she was like them in most things, and the beauty of her humility was like the beauty of the innocence of a child. The recent scenes of death had taught her much of the lesson of life, though she knew no little of the teachings of it before Madeleine died, and now living more in immediate contact with the world than ever previously, she was less in the world than ever. She was dead to herself, in plain language, and her whole wish was to win heaven. Offers of marriage were made to her; two of them, if either was assented to by Mary, would have enabled her to roll at her ease in a carriage and pair, and live in a Belgravian palace. But Mary Leyne had a wonderfully strong contempt of the luxury of life, and so all suitors were met with a gentle but firm refusal. She did not want them, she had no love for them more than for others, and she could live without them. She was earning sufficient to support herself comfortably, and so long as she enjoyed the society of Harold and his family she was

more than satisfied. If Noel d'Auvergne should come with a story of love, to be sure, she would listen to him, and she might—but ah! he never spoke of love. And yet he did come over from Ireland, often and often, to see her, and to stay with Harold for a few days. But he never spoke of love. Noel d'Auvergne, why do you do this—why do you make yourself so beloved, and then go away, leaving her to dream of you and to think and plan for only you whenever she does not think or plan for her God, whom she loves more than you? When you come she seems to those living in the house with her to have changed into another and an airy being—when you are gone she is wistful Mary Leyne again. Ah!

“ Si vous n'avez rien à me dire,
Pourquoi venir auprès de moi ?
Pourquoi me faire ce sourire.”

People were wondering why she did not take advantage of her good looks, and chain to her side in matrimony some city prince, or clever author, or advancing lawyer. Some said she was married already, and compelled to live apart from her husband, who was a terrible man, hard to deal with. Others said she was the widow of an officer who died in India. Others declared they knew for certain that she was crossed in love, and had taken a vow never to marry; and one of her pupils, a sentimental young

lady, wrote a poem upon Mary's imaginary disappointment, and when she showed it in secret to her most intimate friend, the sentimental young lady and the most intimate friend held Mary in profound respect, and envied her the luxurious sorrow of being the uncomplaining victim of unrequited affection. People wondered all the more, when wealthy offers were made to Mary, and refused; and Mary Leyne became an object of unsatisfied curiosity, and therefore of intense interest, to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Mary Leyne was unconscious of all this stir about her; all this scrutiny of her ways and motives. Or, if she was somewhat conscious of it—which she could not help being, if she was the least attentive to those around her—she did not pay much heed to what others said or thought of her. She desired to live and let live, and pursue unmolested the even tenour of her way. She would not thus be even amongst her present numerous friends at all, were it not for the necessity which she felt within herself of doing something which would make her independent of her brother's charity, or of that of any one else. For Mary's nature was full of the inclination to withdraw herself from observation and much contact with others. Her sources of amusement were within herself, and not from without abroad she found indeed, for the most part, but causes of uneasiness and danger to her goodness of heart

within herself there was the kingdom of God, and to extend its sway everywhere was her enjoyment and her glorious ambition. And with those alone she loved to be, who would aid her in her magnificent task. D'Auvergne was one of these, and very few besides him—very few after her own heart. Her London friends told her frequently she was beautiful. She would shake her head doubtfully, and her eyes would shine brilliantly, and she would answer, “ Handsome is, that handsome does ! ” She wished to hide her beauty, that it might not by others noticing it trouble her, and that she might have her secret peace to herself, feed upon it more fully and understand its meaning all the more. She was in such friendship with her good God that she had no wish of her own, that she took without a question whatever He gave, and was quite content with it—nay, more than content with it—grateful humbly, earnestly, entirely for it. It came from Him, therefore it was sufficient for her, who was so satisfied to wait so long as He willed it, in the wearisome or pleasant place He had allotted to her, until she was taken out of it, until she was brought out of this life wherein, while living therein, she found happiness which supplied all her cravings, and they were so many, and in their demands so irresistible, that no designation could name them properly, other than to term them infinite in their number, in their nature illimitable. Her soul

asked God for peace and fulness, and God, who alone could give it, gave it. She knew that generous Giver so well—because she sought Him so much—that when sorrow crucified her she heeded not the hurt, nor wondered why He sent it to her and let others go free from it on their smiling way; nor did she reproachfully look to Him for the explanation of the pain He caused to her who loved Him, but she smiled at Him, and said, shyly, “Do what you like—you will not make me love you less. Do what pleases you, for I am caught in your net. In all your chastisements I see the signs of love.”

She knew Him too well to murmur, or to do any thing except smile at Him. She was all love, and nothing but love, to all, from Creator to creature, from the Author of Nature to the modest wild flower wasting “its sweetness on the desert air.” Therefore no wonder she had some enemies amongst many friends; therefore was she hated by those who were not “of good will,” with the satanic instinct of the flesh-clothed devils who shrieked, “*Crucifige!*” when Cæsar’s viceregent tore the bandage from the eyes of Justice, and made her blush at the Deicide done in her venerable name. And therefore, too, was solitude so sweet to her whenever the happy opportunity was at hand of withdrawing herself from the society of others. Eugénie de Guérin says, somewhere, “It may be beautiful to soar, but looking into one’s heart

is very useful. One discovers what is going on within ;” and Mary Leyne was anxious—anxious is not the word, she was never anxious, desirous, rather—to daily gaze into the innermost centre of her own heart. And what saw she there, but Him reigning royally over her, the Principle of her life? Solitude to the good is like home to the bridegroom: one can sit with a beloved there, and go forth afterwards to the daily difficulties stronger-hearted; and to her who had now no other real home, solitude was a home indeed, and inhabited by One dearest beloved. Mary’s motto was not that of the old Rohans of Brittany: “*Roi ne puis; Prince ne daigne; Rohan je suis.*” This is the humility of pride. Hers was the pride of humility. *Con Dio posso tutto*; and the greatness of her littleness was the secret of her marvellous strength, when trials endeavoured to crush her down and failed. The sweet fragrance of her purity was felt by those who were near her; and, like steel to the magnet, the hearts of the good were attracted to her, and sought not willingly to be drawn away from where she stood in their midst, smiling serenely and conversing so affably. She had a kind word for every one, and a frown for none—not even for those who deserved frowns, whom she pitied but judged not. She would not be condemned, and therefore saw not the mote in neighbours’ eyes, so afraid was she of the beam which might be in her own. In a room full of company, many, when she was present, seemed to

themselves to know that she was there, and in a hidden way to be extremely glad of it, and although they spoke to one another on far different subjects, and appeared not to take heed in the least of Mary, yet all the time they were thinking of her in their heart of hearts, and deriving wholesome pleasure from the thought. If she left the room, it was to them as if a sudden chill pervaded the atmosphere, which was so genial a moment before; it was as if a part of the support of their inward life was unexpectedly withdrawn, and straightway there came back to them the hunger and thirst which nothing of the world can appease, but which one little look at Mary allayed. And Mary was so humble within herself, so designedly forgetful of herself, so stricken with the truth of her utter nothingness, that she wisely lost vain recollection of the admiration which she excited the moment the consciousness of it arose in her mind. She did not want it. She wanted nothing, but the means of living and of doing good. Down in her heart lay still that buried, beautiful dream of Noel, of which no outward epitaph told the brief existence. As was said before in an earlier chapter, having loved him, she cared to love no other, and spent her wealth of affection instead upon the poor and upon her own family. She loved the poor so much, she would toil like a very slave for them; and now it was one of the motives of her life, since she came to London, that, having discovered it was possible for her in her own

quiet, unintruding manner to earn a good deal of money, she might by her intellectual labour realize a handsome sum yearly, and then bestow the most of it upon the forlorn poor in His name. When this idea dawned, it was not long ere it shone with noontide brightness, and shed a new sunshine over her face and eyes and whole mien, permeating her, delighting her, invigorating her, disarming every cross of its sting, and bringing down heaven to earth. To lonely men, her friendship was a joy too deep for words to express, though not too deep for tears. Soldiers of the Cross blessed this smiling *vivandière*, who refreshed them with the best wine, and surely healed their invisible wounds. The sight of her braving the danger as well as they, sent a thrill through the breasts of heroes, weary with the strife; and with voices no longer faint in sound the sons of a King glancing southward at the throne of an immortal Viceroy, shouted, "*Tu es Petrus!*" distinctly as ever. Eighteen centuries ago those words were divinely spoken first, and millions believe in them to day. Dynasties rise and fall, like waves, around that imperturbable Rock, and still it moves not, and the wildest winds only cover it with vanishing sea-spray. No blithesome *vivandière* ever served the brave army of sunny France more faithfully than Mary Leyne waited upon the fighting-men of her native land, which was the Catholic world. She was an Irish-

woman, if you will, but a Catholic still more. And the truer she was a Catholic, the more really was she an Irishwoman. To love Rome is to love Ireland; but English statesmen seem not to understand this, and therefore are they so sadly at sea when they seek to legislate for this country. For us, true maternal affection can never exist across the channel, until England becomes imbued with the soul of Catholicity. Things are as they are, and there is nothing for us but to do the best for ourselves; and Ireland is a child no longer, as she will walk henceforth without a stepmother's leading-strings. And not with the sword of a rebel, but with the voice and moral strength of the manhood of a most Christian nation, she is determined to go forward, cleaving down all inequalities, with the help of the “irresistible genius of Universal Emancipation,” until Irish orators charm Europe from their natural pasture-grounds upon College Green, until, before the seven-eyed world, Ireland stands, shackle-freed—the independent Bride of Alfred's nation, the prolific Mother of all that is greatest in Art, Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, and Truth!

Amongst the numerous acquaintances whom Mary Leyne made, was an elderly lady of high family in one of the Midland Counties of England; and through her influence, she obtained for a pupil the Lady Marguerita Dashbrook, daughter of the Duke of Merton. The town-house of this nobleman was

situated in Park Lane; and Mary three times a week drove thither from her brother's villa in Hampstead. Mary, being a skilful musician, the music lesson was ostensibly the duty which was to be superintended when she arrived, but the Lady Marguerita, who ere this had had the advantage of being taught by the best masters London could afford, soon looked forward to Mary's coming for sake simply of the pleasure derived from her society. Like others, she was attracted to the magnet, and could not keep willingly away from it. The old lady, indeed, who had introduced Mary to her, did so more to bring Lady Marguerita under the influence of this open-hearted Mary Leyne, than from any consideration relative to the increased manipulation upon the piano keys to follow from Mary's tuition. The old lady had been charmed and bettered, and she desired her young friend to be charmed and bettered too, and accordingly she brought Mary Leyne to Park Lane, and had frequent reason not to regret so doing. This was an extraordinary rise in the world for Mary Leyne, her Hampstead friends said, and envied her good luck. Mary thought of her beloved poor, and made herself as gracious as possible to her new pupil—and she was one who could make herself very gracious when she liked. Sometimes she came in the evening, and slept in Park Lane, returning to Hampstead the next day. Lady Marguerita, who was past

one and twenty, had tasted for three seasons the sweets of London life. She was no more the impulsive maiden who enthusiastically loved the free air of exquisite Nature, in its fairy scenes of bird-singing solitude, because her Norman bosom experienced ready sympathy with all things guileless as herself; she was a worldly-wise woman, after those three successive years, who had mingled amongst many varieties of human beings, and had learned knowingly to appreciate more than aught else the transient treasures with which misled imagination endows the gilded advantages of exalted rank and immense wealth.

“You look forlorn to-day, my Lady,” Mary remarked, during one of these visits.

“Forlorn!” she answered, regarding her wearily. “Yes,” she sighed, “sometimes I do feel so. I am not always happy. Who is?” she asked, cynically.

“I am.”

“You, Mary! Quite true, I would say; and yet I often wonder why. You are almost alone in the world. You have no one to look to for kindness, but your brother.”

“Yes, I have. I have one other, my Lady, who would never see me want for the least thing, if he could help it—God bless him! But he does not live in this land, my Lady.”

“No? then where? Are you in love, Mary? Ah,

why not? you are so beautiful and so good! I am beautiful—at least, they tell me so,” she added, scornfully—“but I am not good. Yet, if my heart were let alone, to go its own way, I daresay it might be good; for I have a mine of love within me, which is lost to me for the want of working it. So there is one who would give his heart’s blood for you?” she inquired, with strange earnestness.

“Yes, I am sure he would do that. Even for my brother, and for my dear sister who died, he was willing to give his heart’s blood. He would also give it for me.”

“It is well for you! How I envy you! When are you to be married?”

“He does not love me, Lady Marguerita.”

“Not love you! Would give his heart’s blood for you! What do you mean?”

“He loves me as a brother. He is almost my brother.”

“Is he married?”

“No!” she said, indignantly.

Lady Marguerita, with a curious expression of scrutiny, regarded her thoughtfully. “Ah,” she said, at length, “I see how matters stand now! You love him, and he is silent. What does Victor Hugo say? ‘*Si vous n’avez rien à me dire,*’ &c., &c. Take courage, Mary. I know you have patience; but take courage, and wait!”

Lady Marguerita became thoughtful again; and this time her brows knit, her eyes sparkled, and a flush vivified her nobly-cut face, so haughty and beautiful in its subdued still-life. “Does he ever come to London?” she asked, unconcernedly.

“About once every two or three months, or so, and always stays with my brother. He would come oftener, he says, but his increasing amount of business in Dublin prevents him.”

“What is he? You say business—in the tea or wine trade?”

“He is a barrister.”

“Indeed! I should like most certainly to see—to make the acquaintance of one who is so very dear to you. When will he come again?”

“I cannot say. Perhaps next week, perhaps tomorrow, perhaps not for a month, or two months, perhaps never, my Lady. If you would like to see him, I will ask him to call for me here, and then he can be conducted up-stairs. His name is Noel d’Auvergne. He will charm you. Good-bye!”

“It would take a great deal to do that!” she answered, good-humouredly, as Mary left the room. The thoughtful expression which had vanished stole into her face again, and remained there a long time.

“*She* would not be attached thus to him,” she said, aloud, glancing towards the door through which Mary Leyne had passed, “if he was one of the herd.

Oh, I am weary of my life! weary, weary indeed!" She rang the bell, and the maid came to dress her for the afternoon carriage-ride round and round over the Hyde Park roads—the monotonous rolling listlessly along which is the same to-day as it was yesterday, and which will assuredly be the same to-morrow. Hyde Park cannot satisfy the soul of even a duke's daughter.

It was about two o'clock on a fine summer afternoon when Mary parted with her high-born pupil, and, ere she drove homewards to Hampstead, she was tempted by the sunshine of the lovely day to take a stroll through Hyde Park. She walked sedately by the pleasant shore of the Serpentine—that mirror of the blue sky above it, that gem of varying colour set in the midst of London! Young faces rosy with health passed her by; valetudinarians, wending fearfully and slowly, gazed at her beauty with a melancholy smile, envious of her clear cheek and unhesitating footstep. Dogs ran before their titled mistresses and revelled in the balmy air, or else with aristocratic indifference contemplated foot-passengers from the windows of stately coronet-emblazoned carriages. Carolling songsters flitted from tree to tree, heedless of duchess and countess or world-renowned statesman—the noise the latter made amongst men was, taking eternity into consideration, just as fleeting as *their* unthinking chattering. A

group of vociferous boys watched, with eager interest and clamorous exclamations, a race upon the waters of the lake between two miniature yachts. Proudly the toy-boats wheeled hither and thither—the play-things of the light summer breeze—as if conscious of their graceful beauty. One thoughtful girl sat alongside her waiting-maid on a park seat, thinking maybe of him she loved, and imperceptibly forgetting herself for his dear sake. Mary’s face was thoughtful too, as she gazed about her, but there was a sweet contentment settled around her firm mouth which was characteristic of it. Her placid expression broadened into an open smile, as some one approached from the opposite direction to that which she was pursuing. She held out both her little gaily-gloved hands, and they were clasped immediately in those of Noel d’Auvergne.

“Who would think of meeting *you* here?” she said. “When did you come?”

“This morning. I was just on the point of starting for Hampstead. Nay—who would think of meeting *you* here?”

“Oh, I have become a great lady since you were last in London! I teach in Park Lane, and my pupil is the daughter of the Duke of Merton! Will you stay with us many days, Noel?” and she sighed, and looked gently into his pleasant eyes.

“No; I am going over to France in search of

information relative to an important will-case about to be tried next term in Dublin."

"When will you leave London?"

"To-morrow evening. I will return in a week."

"But not to remain for a while with us?" and she sighed again.

"I will come over when the Vacation sets in, Mary," he replied, with a smile. "Tell me," he added, "do you miss me when I am gone?"

"I do," she answered. "But what am I that you should consult my wishes?"

"You are ——" he checked himself, and said, with a flush in his face, "do you like your new life over here?"

"I have to like it. I must earn my bread."

"You need not do so," he answered, half-reproachfully. "I told you before that I am wealthy. Two hundred a year is nothing to me. Why, by my profession alone I am making twelve hundred a year already!"

"That says a great deal for you. I congratulate you on your rapid success!"

"Yet I am very lonely, Mary. I live in a large house in a fashionable square, and the solitude of a monastery reigns therein."

"Why don't you marry? Many are to be had for the asking."

"Madeleine is not so long in her grave," he replied.

She stood still, and tears came into her eyes. “Then you loved her all through to the end, in spite of all?”

“She was hasty, and I forgave her.”

“And loved her to the end?”

“Yes,” he answered, slowly. “But not as I loved her in the beginning. I would not have married her when she drove me away. And now you ask me why I don’t marry, and I reply that poor Madeleine is not so long in her grave! But I have more than that to say about the question you have asked me, and it is this: it will be long, Mary, before I entrust my happiness to another again. I have suffered much for having done this even once!”

“I know you have felt a deal of unmerited sorrow,” she answered, compassionately. “Yet do not be too hard upon us women. There are many of us to whom you might confide your happiness. It would be a sad day for humanity, if there were not angels on earth in woman’s form.”

“You are one of them!” he said, enthusiastically. “Since you have put the question to me, I think I am entitled to put it to you: why don’t you marry—I have heard that several most advantageous offers have been made to you?”

“None of them have suited me,” she answered, simply.

“But money is a great consideration.”

“Noel!” she exclaimed, turning to him in undisguised surprise.

He laughed outright. “You did not suspect, Mary, that I am mercenary!” he said. “I have learned my lesson since I got into good practice as a barrister.”

“Mercenary! I am certain, as I am of my own being, that you are no such thing!” she replied, with an assured look.

“Nor am I,” he answered, seriously; “at least altogether in heart I am disengaged from it; but, Mary, money is a necessary of life, and plenty of it is necessary for some.”

“Yes,” she said, “even for me. I have found out that of late. But I cannot keep a penny of it. It goes to the poor.”

“Take care of what you are doing; you should try and lay by some of it, since you will not accept any from me. A rainy day might come unawares while you are still without shelter.”

“So let it, it matters very little to me. It matters nothing to me, I trust in God.”

“Ah, that is the secret of your extravagance, you little spendthrift!”

“Yet I defy you to give me a scolding about it!”

“Why?”

“Because ‘those who live in glass houses should never throw stones!’ If I ought not to be prodigal

for God’s sake, it was not for you to have set me the example, for I know very well how the money goes with you.”

He smiled, and returned to the subject of marriage. “Mary,” he said, “you ought to get settled. You ought to accept one of those desirable proposals. A friend of mine, whom I met lately, asked me point-blank to put in a good word for him; of course, I willingly said that I would. Sir Rutherford Everton is this friend, and he is worth eleven or twelve thousand a year.”

“He has been at my feet,” she said, with a shy glance, “and I sent him away.”

“You foolish girl!”

“When I could not love him, what was his money to me, or his title either? Answer me that,” she added, vehemently.

“Your husband, then,” he replied, “if ever you take one—which I am inclined to doubt—must be an uncommonly fine sort of fellow, Mary.”

“Yes,” she answered, with the old wistful expression in her kind hazel eyes.

“Well, I only wish you may get him,” he said; “for I fear that such kind are rare. In all my life I never met half a dozen whom I would care to see for five minutes again, not to speak of making them my intimate friends.”

“Nor I.”

“ You and I agree upon a great many subjects, Mary.”

“ We do.”

“ And your happiness,” he continued, “ is about the dearest thing to me on earth.”

“ And yours to me,” she replied.

“ I hope you will get a good husband, and I a good wife, one day, Mary,” he said.

“ I hope we shall meet in heaven,” she answered, in her winsome way. He closed cheerfully the door of the cab wherein she had seated herself, and Noel told the burly driver to proceed to Hampstead.

“ I will be with you in the evening,” he said to Mary. “ Do not wait dinner for me. I have a great deal to do down at Westminster. But keep a cup of tea warm, at least.”

“ I will,” she answered, with a smile; “ I know the exact strength you like it, Noel.”

“ Always housekeeping,” he replied; “ it’s your vocation.”

Mary laughingly nodded in the affirmative, and drove off to Hampstead.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

“The daughter of a hundred earls,
You are not one to be desired.
* * * * *
“From yon blue heavens above us bent
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.
* * * * *
“You pine among your halls and towers :
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.”

TENNYSON.

D'Auvergne, as soon as he had parted with Mary at the Marble Arch, re-entered Hyde Park with the intention of proceeding towards the Courts at Westminster, where he expected to meet a London

attorney at half-past three o'clock, relative to the information which he was seeking concerning that important will-case in which he was engaged. He walked leisurely along, contemplating with the curiosity of a stranger the display of wealth and nobility moving backward and forward; and more than once he sighed when some girl-face studied him, while its owner, queenlike, reclined amidst the luxurious folds of her lordly carriage. Having reached Hyde Park Corner he stood for a few minutes, leaning against the iron railing, attracted by the sight of "London Society" taking its afternoon exercise. The horses pleased him nearly, if not as much as the silks and satins of fickle Fashion. Now a splendid trotter hurried on, driven by a cool, foreign-looking figure in unpretending costume; next moment a yellow carriage, nicely balanced on the safest springs money could purchase, crawled by, and from the window peered the withered face of some wiry old dowager-countess, who clings to life with the tenacity of a nine-lived cat. He had hardly time to forget the disagreeable vision of the ancient dame, when a landau dashed by, brilliant and "of the period," and graced by two young charming girls, merry with the exultation of their own innocent happiness, and the lovely sight of whom pours healing balm into many a bleeding heart, as they prattle in their girlish joy and seem to know not, or to care not, for the imperial power of

their exquisite beauty. D'Auvergne smiled when he saw them, for to look at them made him delightfully happy; it was such a wholesome thing to gaze into faces of good women! He was still glancing amiably after the receding landau, when another followed, and in it sat alone the daughter of a duke—the Lady Marguerita Dashbrook. She turned her eyes languidly, half-contemptuously, towards the foot-path, where London loungers moved slowly or paused, yawning with the fatigue of last night's dancing, and leaned, as a nob should lean, against the iron railings. She was an object of interest in many of those eyes that returned her glance expressively, and studied the indefinite points of beauty in her clear-cut face. One or two lifted their newly-shaped hats, and her gleaming carriage rolled rapidly onward; then brightly a sudden interest lit up her passionless countenance, and a hidden fire flashed, spiritlike, from her proud dark eye. She exclaimed to the coachman,—

“Only drive half way this time. Turn back then.”

“All right, my Lady.”

When she drove back, and was passing the Corner once more, she gazed with intense scrutiny at the group of carefully equipped loungers. She saw not the only one in their midst whom she desired so much—so very much!—to behold again! And again she sank back mournfully within her carriage, with a rigid countenance which betrayed bitter disappointment.

“Drive down Piccadilly, and then into Regent Street,” she said.

The coachman with alacrity obeyed—for my Lady was one not to be disobeyed—and was guiding his horses towards the arch which led out of Hyde Park to Piccadilly, when the sudden interest lit up brighter than before the passionless countenance of Lady Dashbrook. Quick as lightning a strange thought struck her, and she acted straightway upon its unusual prompting. Detaching from her bosom a most valuable brooch, she dropped it from the carriage, close to the arch, at the feet of a quiet-mannered, well-dressed gentleman who stood upon the pavement, waiting there until her carriage should pass on its splendid way and leave the dust-subdued road clear once more. He beheld the costly trinket sparkling brilliantly upon the water-refreshed ground, and hastened to pick it up out of harm's reach. Then he shouted to the burly coachman—to the footmen: the latter looked around, and one of them exclaimed, “Stop the horses, Williams!”

“Drive on,” said Lady Dashbrook.

“A gentleman is calling to us, my Lady, and holding up something in his hand, as if you had lost it, my Lady.”

“Drive on, I say!” she answered, impatiently.

So Williams, well-fed and submissive, drove down populous Piccadilly, and, devoting his skilled atten-

tion to the restless horses, did not think of the occurrence any more, as became a dutiful and responsible charioteer. Lady Dashbrook smiled as she seldom did, and abandoned herself to reflection; and an unwonted flutter of unladylike expectation lingered within her for the rest of the long, sunny day.

“I wonder who can he be?” she had asked herself inwardly often during that peacefully fading evening. “At all events, he is a gentleman.”

The gentleman alluded to, who was no other than Noel d’Auvergne, examined the brooch carefully. “It is full of diamonds!” he said. “Ah, I have a clue to the owner! Here is her name. Now this is a coincidence! Lady Marguerita Dashbrook! Why, she lives in Park Lane, Mary said; but I do not know what number. Which house can it be? I will give the brooch to Mary this evening, and she can restore it to the owner. I wonder what sort she is! I did not catch a right glimpse of her face.”

He was unable, owing to business, to go out to Hampstead on that evening, as he said to Mary he would. She kept the cup of tea for him, but he did not come to partake of it, much to her unmistakable sorrow. But she submitted, as she always did, and lost nothing of her peace of mind because of his unexplained absence. She knew he would come to her, if he could—he, her brother! Noel was busy, she was aware, or else he would come. So he was,

indeed, very busy, up until two hours after midnight, working steadily at that momentous will-case. And Mary had a note from him by post in the morning, apologizing for his non-appearance, and explaining the important cause of it.

Since he found himself unable to pay the Leynes a visit the previous evening, he thought he should lose no more time about restoring the lost trinket to its rightful owner. Accordingly, after breakfast the next day, having first sought her address in the Directory, he called at Lady Dashbrook's residence, and sent up his unobtrusive card.

Lady Marguerita was dressed to perfection, and evidently expected some one. The flutter of expectation grew rapid when the servant brought up Noel d'Auvergne's card. Her cool and schooled heart beat as it never beat before, as soon as she read the name, with a flutter of rebellious surprise.

And never yet did she receive a titled visitor with the spontaneous joy wherewith she received him when he subsequently appeared.

"Pardon me," he said, "for this intrusion."

She bowed and listened.

"I found in Hyde Park, on yesterday afternoon, a brooch, which, so far as I can judge, is most valuable. I did not therefore like to entrust its being conveyed to you to the care of another, unless some one whom I intimately knew. Your name

fortunately is engraved inside, and it was thus I discovered who its owner was."

"I am extremely obliged to you, Mr. d'Auvergne. I would not like to have lost that trinket—not so much because of its intrinsic value, but it was the gift of my dear mother before she died."

He arose, and was leaving the room, when she said,—

"Is it not curious, but only yesterday a friend of mine was conversing with me about a barrister of your name at the Irish Bar? Are you the gentleman?"

"Yes."

"Miss Leyne—she comes here sometimes—speaks of you in grateful terms. You were most kind to her family I understand."

"They have been most kind to me," he answered, with a mournful smile, which went deep into Lady Dashbrook's heart, and left there a wound which took long to heal. "To those who have no kindred of their own, the kindness of others is keenly felt."

"Have you no kindred?"

"In Ireland none."

"Elsewhere?"

"In France some. I am half French."

"I would say so from your name. It was considerate of you to bring me my lost brooch so soon!"

"It might have pained you, were the knowledge of its being in safe keeping delayed longer. I in-

tended to have given it to Miss Leyne for you, but last evening I was so busy professionally that I could spare no time to proceed to my old friends in Hampstead; so, lest you might be anxious, I brought it here to-day myself—though at rather an unseasonable hour. But you will excuse that, since a lawyer's time is not his own."

"I am early myself—there is no excuse required, I assure you. But many, very many thanks on my part, which I trust you will accept, and believe them most heartfelt! So you knew Miss Leyne came here?"

"I met her yesterday afternoon, and for the first time learned that you were a pupil of hers."

"I look upon her as my friend, and her society has been a great boon to me."

"She is a true woman!" he said, enthusiastically; "I admire her exceedingly. I am not surprised that she should have had so many offers of marriage—and yet I am surprised that she is so hard to be pleased. To give you a proof of how difficult it is to please her, or rather to show you how true a woman she is, a friend of mine, a baronet with an income of eleven or twelve thousand a year, has been at her feet, and she has refused him!"

Lady Dashbrook rose from her chair in astonishment.

"She is an extraordinary person!" she replied. "Now, I would say, that was foolish on her part!"

“She does not think so herself.”

“And what do you think about it—might I ask that question?”

“Certainly. I think she was right. If she did not love the man, why should she chain herself to him for life? He might be a drunkard, he might be a gambler! Her home, it is true, might be a palace of luxury; but fine linen, silver, and gold—ay, and even power—do not satisfy the human instincts, which can only be contented with love—with true love—and true love, Lady Dashbrook, means much!”

“I believe you,” she answered, earnestly; “but how many women find true love? Many a refined woman has to marry a brute of a husband, because want drives her to it, and she loves her own so well that she sacrifices herself for them. I have seen it, and it has brought tears to my eyes and bitterness to my heart. It is well for me and those like me whom Providence has mercifully placed in a position of life which enables us to choose for ourselves. But others, alas! are not so.”

“Then you should not wonder at Mary Leyne’s fastidiousness—if I might call it by that name—about procuring a life-long partner. It is an important step to take for either man or woman.”

“I wonder, because I know she earns her bread with her own hands. She can give that up, if she

chooses, by marrying a rich husband. Much wealth, I understand, may be hers, if only she says the little word, 'Yes.'

"Earning one's own bread makes the food extremely sweet."

"You find it so?"

"Yes; but I can hardly be said to earn my own bread, since others before me have done so for me. I am not a proper criterion to go by."

"Then why do you labour?"

"Labour, like virtue, is its own reward—at least, in my case. I detest idleness, and yet I love ease, provided I earn it. Down southward, in France, where some of my relations reside, there lived a Mademoiselle de Guérin, well-beloved by those who knew her—she wrote, 'Work, work! keep busy the body which does mischief to the soul! I have been too little occupied to-day, and that is bad for one, and it gives a certain *ennui* which I have in me time to ferment.' And so it is with me."

"You are not singular in that respect. I suppose you work hard?"

"Like a slave," he answered, good humouredly; "from ten in the morning until five or six o'clock in the afternoon, and again from eight until, perhaps, one or two the next morning; but when vacation follows, no child enjoys himself more thoroughly than I do."

Then he rose to go away ; during this conversation he had resumed his seat.

“ You must come and see me sometimes,” she said.

“ I shall feel most happy in so doing ; and I thank you for asking me.”

“ Whenever you are in London do not forget me ; I shall always esteem it a pleasure to receive a visit from you. Do you leave soon ? if not I will introduce you to the Duke, my father.”

“ To-morrow morning I expect to be speaking a different language from the English, since I intend to cross the channel to-night. I am going to the north-east of France.”

“ When you return, then, I trust you will call at Park Lane. We do not leave town for six weeks.”

“ Again, I thank you,” he said ; and he bade Lady Dashbrook good-bye. When she was alone she seemed to have become a different woman altogether, or rather she seemed to have become a *woman*, instead of the gliding figure of animated stone she had lately been.

“ And yet it is ridiculous to think of such a thing for even one instant !” she exclaimed, looking through the window at the summer morning sky. “ He, a nameless commoner, and I—oh, am I not a woman as well as a duke’s daughter ?” she added, fiercely. “ I must have something to love ! *He* is worthy of the love of a princess. No wonder Mary speaks of

him as she does. He is not of the herd. Oh, worldly rank, what a tyrant you are over women like me!"

D'Auvergne went away from Park Lane resolving to get into Parliament as soon as he could. When he returned from the Continent, he took care to visit Lady Dashbrook, and the future of his human life brightened for him again.

CHAPTER XVII.

TWO LIBERALS.

“ Ah ! when shall all men’s good
Be each man’s rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land ? ”

TENNYSON.

“ . . . The war-drum throb’d no longer, and the battle-flags were
furl’d

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.
There the common-sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.”

TENNYSON.

NOEL’S vacation had just commenced, and he was thinking of proceeding to the Continent, when Sir Rutherford Everton called upon him, and induced him before he left Ireland to accompany him to the County Kerry, where the Baronet had lately purchased some considerable landed property.

“ If you come there, I will go on the Continent with you. We need be no more than six days absent in the south of Ireland. Besides, I want you

to help me in the professional line down there. I wish to have a perfect understanding with all my tenants, high and low, from the very beginning of our mutual relations with each other. I don't want either myself or my agent to be knocked down by a musket-shot from some fellow behind a hedge."

"All you have to do is to be kind to your tenants. They won't shoot you then."

"Are Irish landlords ordinarily such tyrants as to deserve to be shot?"

"Some of them, I have no doubt, are shot down because of their own brutal tyranny. I will put a case to you:—A man has a little holding of his own; it has been in the possession of his family for generations: a strange, haughty landlord purchases it along with other holdings around it. He turns the man, with his family of little ones, out upon the cold world: the man is driven to desperation by the misery brought upon his wife and children, and regards the landlord above him in the same light as he looks upon the Government of the land, as alien—though it may be not wilfully so—to his interests. Since that Government does not help him, he takes the law into his own hands, and exercises 'the wild justice of revenge.'"

"Surely you do not approve of his crime, D'Auvergne?"

"I disapprove totally of one man taking it upon

himself to put another to death. I abhor capital punishment, and I hope to live to see the day when it shall be swept off the face of the globe. Two governments cannot agree; they have a quarrel; they declare war; they butcher each other; thousands die; thousands are widowed; thousands are made orphans—and all this because one man or two in a Cabinet held to his own views, through pride of intellect or malice of heart! The world has not taken out yet all its degrees in the University of Civilization. If I never see it, I trust others will—when mankind shall wonder that their rational ancestors, because they could not agree, should choose instead to cut each others' throats, and made the murder a glorious act because public opinion sanctified it. No, Everton, I do not approve of an Irishman shooting down his unreasonable landlord: but I approve of that act just as much as I approve of two nations going to war because they will not coincide amicably about some point or another."

"But, my dear fellow, that is all very well in theory; the thing, though, is to reduce it to practice. There goes the tug of war in right earnest! Suppose one nation is in the wrong, what is the other to do—to submit to it—to grin and bear it? My dear fellow, we are not in heaven yet: that will never pay."

"My dream relative to the future is, men will be educated up to this—namely, that moral force

shall be the invincible monarch of mankind ; that—by means of the public press, the railroad, the telegraph, the new discoveries of science, the quick interchange of ideas, the wearing away of blundering prejudices—by and by whenever a dispute arises between two hostile nations, instead of having recourse to the unsheathed sword, they will appeal to an international Parliament of the world, and submit to its humane decrees—the judgment, in other words, of the assembled representatives of every nation on the face of the earth. That is what I see coming in the future ; and I do not think I prophesy in vain.”

“You are a man with a mind beyond this age. Your idea is a grand one ; but we shall not live to see its realization ; nor shall our children’s children live to see it.”

“I hope we ourselves shall. Nations have their parliaments, and legislate for their own individual interests : let the world have its Parliament likewise, and legislate for the interests of the world.”

“You are too Utopian ; and yet, D’Auvergne, your idea is a grand one ! Every nation would send its pet child—its orator, or its hero, or its greatest genius ; and in that splendid assembly of united talent the human mind might find some adequate expression for its deepest thought.”

“What do you call the deepest thought of the human mind ?”

“God,” Everton answered.

They arrived in Killarney late one evening, shortly after the above conversation had taken place in D’Auvergne’s Dublin residence ; and one of the earliest sounds which strangely greeted their surprised ears, was the wild cry of agonizing mourning which sorrow for the unheeding dead wrenches from the Irish heart. A funeral was slowly passing through the street in Killarney, and woe-uttering women walked solemnly by the sombre hearse which was conveying the lifeless remains of the departed to their destination. The grief-exciting shrieking and weeping which startled so the two breathlessly listening friends, was that thrilling, painful cry which is known in Ireland as the “keene.” It smote both their hearts.

“It is the keene,” said D’Auvergne, seriously.

“The what?” asked Everton, in undisguised alarm.

“The keene—the mourning of the women for the dead.”

“What an awful, unearthly noise ! If I heard that at night, alone, in this distant corner of the United Kingdom, I fear I should never live till morning to tell of the ghosts I had been listening to ! It has given me a downright fright.”

“You look pale. But you’ll soon get over it. These women are perhaps some of your own tenants.”

“I'll eject them, if they go on with that sort of thing!”

D'Auvergne laughed. “You will hardly carry out that unwise intention, Everton,” he replied. “Beware! the Irish peasants are edged tools which require careful handling by those who do not know how to use them—who do not understand them properly.”

“I hope I shall never hear that fearful cry again!”

“I trust you are not superstitious—*you*, an Englishman, and a staunch Protestant!”

“I am flesh and blood; and, by the shades of my crusading ancestors, I can't stand the yell of a ghost! Do people die quickly here?”

“I don't know,” D'Auvergne laughed. “But why?”

“Because that confounded keening—if it strikes the drums of my ears often—will be playing the dead march for me to my own grave; and I have no notion of giving an obolus to Charon before my turn comes!”

“When you are used to the cry you won't mind it.”

Sir Rutherford, during the following week, was introduced to his various tenants, and D'Auvergne assisted him both legally and socially in the meet performance of his several duties. When they had got through the business which had induced the Baronet to proceed from Yorkshire all the way hither to this western district of Ireland, the two friends

returned again to Dublin, and from thence Everton went without D'Auvergne to Switzerland. Noel stayed in Ireland for a reason which will be explained by and by. But before they left the County Kerry an incident occurred which is worth recording.

An old servant of the former landlord died of the disease called ninety-four—in other words, of old age—and the people—his people—were determined to prepare the corpse for a decent descent to Mother Earth. Numbers were streaming in to the wake. Porter, beer, and whisky-punch were lavished prodigally. The old women, already half-seas-over, were rocking to and fro in renovated juvenility, and admiringly contemplating the corpse, complimenting him upon his respectable appearance.

“You'd think he was only a boy!” said one, taking a sip of something hot.

“Hasn't he the beautifullest skin—as if he was a live corpse?” responded a second dame, following the other's example, and just *moistening* her impatient lips.

“Glory be to his sowl!” added a third, swallowing her negus with a gulp of delight.

“The spirit of the ball” was the spirit of this wake; for the men, as hour after hour fled by, were becoming very boisterous, and the girls a little sentimental—just so much so as to tantalize the men, for these girls, like their betters, knew what they were

about, and had an extra eye open to their own interests. Eligible husbands sometimes wear a working-man's jacket, you know. Remember that, ye ladies who are ambitious to rise above your sphere. The chamber of death was filled with a satisfied company, who took care to make themselves comfortable—and we are not sure whether some who were tired of drinking the health of every one else, at last drank the health of the corpse. Amidst that unthinking crowd the only sincere mourners of the dead old man were a young orphan girl whom he had sheltered in his charity, and a shepherd-dog.

Sir Rutherford's friendly agent invited the Baronet and D'Auvergne to accompany him to the wake.

"You will see some fun," he said. "My three boys—wild fellows, but good hearted, Sir Rutherford, and as generous as if the whole world were their own to give away—have concocted a conspiracy, and I had not the heart to forbid them from carrying out their design, especially since the company assembled will be more or less the worse for liquor before the scene of merriment—the practical joke—shall be enacted. It is an extremely practical joke, I must say, D'Auvergne, but I sincerely trust that it shall not be attended with any unpleasant consequences. Indeed I don't think that it will. Nay, it may sober a few too ardent disciples of the wine-god! The old poets praised in writing the merits of Bacchus, but Paddy shouts

them, and sometimes follows up his exclamations with a smart application of *stick*-ing plaster to heads much harder than the hearts which throb underneath them."

Accordingly D'Auvergne and Sir Rutherford, having been first wisely let into the secret, assented to become lookers-on, and proceeded with the good-humoured land-agent to the cottage where the wake was held. It was eleven o'clock at night when they arrived. But an hour before Harry, the eldest of the three boys—a lad of seventeen—managed to glide unseen into the chamber of the dead man, and immediately hid himself from observation in the enclosure between the head of the bed and the unpapered wall of the humble cottage. Watching his best opportunity, he cleverly slipped a ready noose of well-knit silk rope round the unresisting neck of the stiffened corpse, and ran it straightway over the upper portion—the canopy—of the bed. The silk being blue, and the curtains of the bed being blue, the slight, firm rope was consequently unseen; the indistinct light shed by the attendant candles upon that portion of the lowly, simply furnished chamber being insufficient to render the artifice visible to careless observers, many of whom were present owing to the subtle influence of a liquid compound. A fresh supply meanwhile of eatables and drinkables made its desirable appearance; and upon the latter especially the men made a raid which

showed their physical capacity for "mountain-dew." We would fain blush to own publicly that the last mentioned article of consumption never paid its dutiful respects to a paternal government. Like that other gift of Nature—its namesake—it spread its blessings regardless of human control. "Stolen kisses are the sweetest," they say; and perhaps some of the charm of the "poteen" lies in its lurking propensities. Its life is a *still* life, but, unfortunately for some, its influence is rather disquieting. With invisible wand it will conjure up a mirage for desert travellers, and its *châteaux en Espagne* throw the cold shade of oblivion over the genius of a Michael Angelo, the architect of the Fisherman's Temple to the living Creator—to the greater architect than Michael Angelo.

Tom and Peter—the two younger brothers—had in the mean time entered, and—boys will be boys! mingled freely with the assembled company. Tom was called upon, as usual, for a song. He seemed, however, to be in a most melancholy mood, out of which even the entrance of his father with the Baronet and D'Auvergne failed apparently to rouse him. Nothing could induce him to sing one single familiar song for them to-night—and with his songs the company were familiar. Out of respect for the dear departed, he could not, he said, for one instant entertain the profane thought of doing so. But the company, who were exhilarated, did not appear to realize the weight

of that objection, and desired evidently to infuse the merriment of a wedding party into the subdued intercourse suitable to the solemnity of a wake. The corpse surely would not mind a comic song, for he liked one right heartily before he took his leave! and "ould Tim," as he was called, could sing a stirring ballad or two in his hey-day. Such would have been the sentiment of the thirsty company to-night, regarding the propriety of indulging in comic rhymes, were words required to give expression to their thoughts about it. They were sure that the corpse, if alive, would like to see them enjoying themselves. And so he would.

As Tom, who was the most famous comic singer for miles around, would not gratify his humble friends on this solemn occasion, he promised them a story instead. The company gathered quickly around the centre table, at which he sat, and said, within themselves, "Attention!" to whatever remnant of apprehensive faculties still survived the repeated attacks of fiery drink. Tom, at the head of the table, making a pretence to imbibe a little of the compound of fire which the officious liberality of a neighbour had placed, steaming hot, under his nose, clearing his throat carefully, and putting on an ominously long face, began:—

"Gentlemen! if any one here believes in ghosts"—hereupon the listening company universally started

and turned pale, with the exception of those - v were in the secret—"if any one here, I say again, lieves in ghosts," continued Tom, most impressive. At this juncture a young fellow, very white, tri to laugh, and interrupted him with these words :—

" Bosh and humbug! who does believe in ghosts ?

Tom turned towards him sternly, and made *hin* quail and shake in his brogues with a glance impres- sive enough to frighten a ghost himself, if there be such a spirit-wanderer through this strange world of ours.

" If any one believes in ghosts," continued Tom, " let him leave the room immediately, before I utter another word ! "

A universal rising ensued ; and then every one saw at once how very foolish every one else looked, and every one laughed faintly and sat down on the vacated seats again.

" Well, gentlemen, you are all determined, I pre- sume, to hear this true, awful, and authentic inci- dent ? " Tom remarked, solemnly. A slight move- ment proceeded from the corpse, and those who noticed it said nothing, but were beside themselves with the terror which it struck unerringly into them.

" What I am going now to recount to you," the serious speaker went on, " happened to myself, pre- cisely on this night twelvemonth ! " One or two grew whiter, if possible, and the table felt to Tom as if it trembled.

“ I was passing leisurely down a lonely glen, when unexpectedly, and to my great alarm, a man in grave-clothes—oh, there’s not a lie in it, gentlemen!—caught me by both shoulders, with the grip of a vice——” Tom stopped suddenly in amazement, breathed hard, and looked in affright at the corpse. “ What’s that I see ? ” he exclaimed.

All, of course, turned their eyes in the same direction. Lo! *mirabile dictu!* the corpse was wagging his head, as if approvingly assenting to something! The company started to their unsteady feet, and were about to fly in dismay. Tom shouted to them, in a voice of thunder, “ Stop ! ”

Like a flock of goose-hearted sheep, kept together by one harmless dog, those in the room became spell-bound, and stood still.

“ Listen to me, gentlemen ! ” Tom added ; “ the man in grave-clothes caught me convulsively by the shoulders—do not move, gentlemen ; hear me out !—and said,—

“ “ I am Tim’s brother, who died ten years back. And tell Tim, that I’ll be waiting for him this night twelvemonth, outside the cabin-door. Tell him I will come for him at half-past eleven o’clock exactly, to bring him away with me, both body and bones as he is ! ” ”

Precisely as the last words left the lips of the speaker, up, with a mighty jerk, started the corpse,

shook himself, dangled his long, lean arms, and hung down, melancholy-like, his lower jaw. Men, women, children shrieked and ran wildly to the door, but Peter had locked it beforehand, and they had no alternative but to make for the window. Several fainted outright, for such it was a very practical joke indeed!—many were nearly squeezed to death endeavouring to get through the windows, which were too small for one man at a time to pass through, while Peter, Tom, and Harry, joined by their father and the other two guests, stood in the centre of the room, viewing the general flight—and with regard to them it may be said truly, that laughter was holding both his sides. Well aware that if the joke was discovered to-night they would be “in for it” with the excited, susceptible peasantry, the boys resolved to make their own escape at once. Peter, unlocking the door, led the way out into the open air, and the company followed him in a swarm, like a hive of bees and their queen. As soon as the first terror subsided, the more hardy found latent courage; and ere the morning dawned such as were brave enough returned again timidly to the deserted cottage. The hoax was discovered when the broad, bold daylight filled the silent room of death. And after sufficient explanation had cleared up the alarming mystery of the affair to the minds of even the most superstitious amongst the audience of the previous

night, the company enjoyed their late discomfiture exceedingly, and buried the corpse with all due ceremony and neighbourly good feeling. And, let us hope, that the soul of the tired old man *is* in glory.

All, it must not be forgotten, did not join in the general stampede. Two faithful ones lingered behind in the deserted cottage, and kept watch during the silently-rolling hours of the sepulchral night, and no one heeded their patient presence—no one upon this exile-peopled earth, at least. But perhaps the sin-unburdened spirits of a happier sphere looked on compassionately at the kneeling figure of the orphan girl, and saw the regret which indifferent men saw not, shining by the weirdlike candlelight in the wistful eyes of the dumb shepherd-dog. After all, the old dead man was not

“so utterly desolate;”

and it is secret gratitude such as this which makes existence beautiful to the minds of those who have been compelled to mourn by the embittering imperfections of its darker side. And God knows that side is dark enough, if His light does not lessen its gloom !

“ We toil—through pain and wrong ;
 We fight, and fly ;
 We love, we lose—and then, ere long,
 Stone-dead we lie.
 O life ! is all thy song
 ‘ Endure and—die ’ ? ”

No, no, Bryan Waller Procter! too swanlike you sing! Life is love, and love is eternal; therefore life is eternal. Love has nothing mortal in it—that which has, is but passion.

“I wonder you don't go into Parliament, D'Auvergne!” Everton said, falling back luxuriantly upon the comfortable seat of the first-class carriage, as the train bore them back to Dublin.

“I will, as soon as I can. How do you like St. Stephens?”

“It agrees with me remarkably well. I wish I had you with me there. I think you would be a great help to me.”

“In what way?”

“Well, you see, I like you and you like me. That in itself is an excellent reason; but, besides, I want to make a figure in the debates, and you have a clear head. What cobwebs happen to exist in the corners of my brains, the brush of your intellect would sweep out. Excuse the simile.”

“If I went into Parliament I would have immediately many enemies.”

“And more friends than ever.”

“Doubtless. Especially in Ireland.”

“We Liberals in England are sincerely anxious to do this country justice. It is a tardy thought, to be sure, but better late than never. One thing I see clearly, that in course of time the Established Church

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over here must fall into the ranks with other religions, and walk on its own legs, or on none ¹.”

“Every Church should do so. If my own religion were the established one in this land, I would be one of the first to go in for its disestablishment.”

“You do not say so? Shake hands, D’Auvergne. I did not give you credit for being so liberal as that!”

“You don’t know me yet, my dear fellow, I plainly see. But we will get to understand one another much better by and by. Every Church ought to feed on its own vitality, and Irishmen will be certain to support their own religion. They have been true as gold to it in adversity—what will they not be in the days of prosperity which have arisen for it now? I would hate the sight of Government patronage as applied to officers of religion. The charming ministry of the Apostles ought not to be rendered desirable to the human heart by the gilding over of worldly gold. It is like holding a candle to the sun; and many would attend not to the sun but to the candle, because the candle is so near them and so much more tangible.”

“I agree with every word you say.”

“A priest is a man. A bishop is a man. And, Everton, men *are* men. We must not forget that

¹ Recent political events have proved that Sir Rutherford was not a false prophet.

truth. And again, to govern is to be in power; and power is a mighty absorber of that which is within its reach. No, give me none of your propped-up religions, for pride and pride's offspring are in the train of such, and mock the poverty of the Babe of Bethlehem. Trust me, the poor people—who are God's own, for *they* love Him because He was without srip or lordly dwelling, like themselves—trust me, I repeat, that the poor people don't like your religion made to suit the rich. Give me religious equality, and then let every religion make its own way into the hearts of men. I know how it will be with my own religion. It is sure to go ahead wherever the pressure of Government hostility does not weigh it down. There are such consolations for the human soul in the Catholic Church, that those who are members of it are so grateful for them, and so wedded to it on that account, that they will never desert it, never see it in want."

"I do not, of course, realize those consolations. You do?"

"Yes," he replied, with a grateful smile and beaming eyes. "I trust," he went on, "I shall be an M.P. when religious equality becomes the privilege of all these realms. I would like to be one of those who will aid in bringing that completely to pass. I trust we shall have religious equality even in England soon—not for Ireland's sake alone, but for your own

England's, since there is no contemptible body of Dissenters there."

"It is the natural effect of the Church Establishment that there should be a large body of Dissenters," said Everton; "and they don't like to behold a Church to which they do not belong, which even they do not approve of, favoured by a government to which they pay taxes, and from which they expect in return equal rights for all subjects, and injustice for none."

"Undoubtedly," D'Auvergne answered at once, and added, "the poor, as I have stated already, like not a Church suited for the rich. The children of the poor are not always poor. They rise into a condition of life superior to the social position of their more ignorant parents. They become better educated, and begin, as one would expect they would, to think seriously and boldly for themselves. The nestling will try the strength of its own wing sooner or later. Moreover, the public press of the land is the tongue of the people, and what with penny newspapers, what with the telegraph, the railroad, the march of material civilization, old ideas and old cowardice in the presence of social superiors vanish into the nothingness which they richly deserve, and the humble in life have found and are not afraid to utter the answer to

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

“Are you a radical?” Everton asked.

D'Auvergne was silent, and smiled.

“Well, I won't press the question,” the other went on. “But the desire in England for disestablishment over here in Ireland does not arise perhaps from any love for your national religion. The Dissenters want to try their hand with the Protestant faith in Ireland before they attack it in England.”

“And in Ireland the Catholics willingly help them—just so.”

“Just so, as you say, D'Auvergne. I too go in, as you assuredly know, for religious equality.”

“I was not aware of that as a positive fact before. And now let us have another shake-hands on the strength of it. You go in for equality because you are a just, thinking, and a highly educated man; for the more educated a man is the more liberal he shall—he must—become. What is true education but the entire development of all the good qualities one possesses? And what is the desire of the truly educated but for every one, high and low, to enjoy true liberty? And what is true liberty but freedom from every false pressure, within and without? England must become religiously free, and the public press shall be one of the instruments of her emancipation. I remember a description by Richard Lalor Shiel of the bishops rolling voluptuously down to Westminster in their worldly state; he compared

their luxurious style to the simplicity of that of the sublime Apostles. I wish I had the passage before me in order to read it to you. I will show it to you, Everton, when we get back to Rutland Square."

"Very good. Fortunately, here in my portmanteau I have some observations on the Catholic question, written by no other than the poet Shelley—that famous but unfortunate genius. Where are my keys? Hand the portmanteau to me. Here it is—the work I allude to—wrapped up in that handkerchief. No; these are my collars! Wait, it is under this hair-brush. Extremes meet, D'Auvergne, even in a gentleman's travelling apparatus! Now, listen! He says, 'Power and wealth do not benefit, but injure the cause of freedom and virtue.' (That may be true, but I bless my stars that I am a baronet!) 'Reason,' he writes farther down, 'points to the open gates of the temple of religious freedom; philanthropy kneels at the altar of the common God. I regard the admission of the Catholic claims, and the Repeal of the Union Act as blossoms of that fruit, which the summer sun of improved intellect and progressive virtue are destined to mature.' And again, '... the aristocracy of Ireland suck the veins of its inhabitants, and consume that blood in England!' D'Auvergne, I call that strong language!"

"And yet it was no ranting Irishman from whom it came, but from the poet born in Sussex of whom

England is proud—from Percy Bysshe Shelley! Truly, a poet belongs to no nation, but to all mankind!”

“If any one asserted that Moore was not an Irishman, how you would resent it!”

“Yes; but you caught my meaning?”

“I did.”

“Did you ever hear of the manner in which Shelley’s body lay when found after being washed on shore?”

“No,” Everton answered.

“When the body was found, the right arm was locked over the heart—under the clothing—and the hand contained a copy of Keats’ poems, open at the ‘*Eve of Saint Agnes.*’”

“A poet to the last!” Everton replied, and went on, “I asked you a while ago were you a radical, and you did not answer me. Are you?”

“You must define the word ‘radical’ before I attempt to answer you.”

“I decline to make out all it interprets. The task might be beyond my comprehension. But you are extra Liberal, I suspect.”

“I am this much Liberal, Everton. I would have, if I could, religious equality, land-laws just to landlord and tenant alike, and an Irish Parliament in Dublin. When the last mentioned privilege shall belong to us, believe me—and what I say comes from my heart!—that the union between Great Britain and Ireland

will not be one of frail paper or parchment, but of heart within heart. For when England by her acts wins Ireland's love, Erin will be true to Albion, and lean upon her as a wife upon her husband's breast. Love is the lord many things, Everton, and justice brings love!"

The two friends when they reached Dublin dined together at D'Auvergne's residence in Rutland Square. After dinner, fatigued after the long journey during the day by rail, they did not leave the dining-room, but, lighting fragrant cigars, resumed their previous political conversation.

D'Auvergne went over to a book-press and took from thence a volume of Moore's poems. It was the portion of the works of the renowned author of the "Irish Melodies" which contained his satirical and humorous poems. Glancing through the pages he found what he required, and placed the book open before Everton.

"Read that," he said, quietly, and pointed to the piece entitled

"ST. JEROME ON EARTH.

"FIRST VISIT.

"As St. Jerome, who died some ages ago,
Was sitting, one day, in the shades below,
'I've heard much of English bishops,' quoth he,
'And shall now take a trip to earth, to see
How far they agree, in their lives and ways,
With our good old bishops of ancient days.'

“ He had learn'd—but learn'd without misgivings—
 Their love for good living, and eke good livings;
 Not knowing (as ne'er having taken degrees)
 That good *living* means claret and fricassees,
 While its plural means simply—pluralities.
 'From all I hear,' said the innocent man,
 'They are quite on the good old primitive plan.
 For wealth and pomp they little can care,
 As they all say “No” to the Episcopal chair;
 And their vestal virtue it well denotes,
 That they all, good men, wear petticoats.'

“ Thus saying, post-haste to earth he hurries,
 And knocks at th' Archbishop of Canterbury's.
 The door was ope'd by a lackey in lace,
 Saying, 'What's your business with his Grace?'
 'His Grace!' quoth Jerome—for posed was he,
 Not knowing what *sort* this Grace could be;
 Whether Grace *preventing*, Grace *particular*,
 Grace of that breed call'd *Quinquarticular*¹—
 In short, he rummaged his holy mind
 Th' exact description of Grace to find,
 Which thus could represented be
 By a footman in full livery.
 At last, out loud in a laugh he broke
 (For dearly the good saint loved his joke²),
 And said—surveying, as sly he spoke,
 The costly palace from roof to base—
 'Well, it isn't, at least, a *saving* Grace!'
 'Umph!' said the lackey, a man of few words,
 Th' Archbishop is gone to the House of Lords.'
 'To the House of the Lord, you mean, my son,
 For in *my* time, at least, there was but one;
 Unless such many-*fold* priests as these

¹ So called from the proceedings of the Synod of Dort.

² Witness his well-known pun on the name of his adversary, Vigilantius, whom he calls facetiously 'Dormitantius.'

Seek, e'en in their Lord, pluralities !'
 'No time for gab,' quoth the man in lace :
 Then, slamming the door in St. Jerome's face,
 With a curse to the single knockers all,
 Went to finish his port in the servants' hall,
 And propose a toast (humanely meant
 To include even curates in its extent)
 'To all as *serves* th' Establishment.'"

Sir Rutherford read the above first in smiling silence, and subsequently aloud to his companion. The two friends indulged in hearty merriment at the expense of the Church Establishment, and each spoke laughingly to the other concerning the comical genius of Ireland's great poet.

"To have read that not over-authentic episode of the disembodied St. Jerome would have made a convert of me to my present political belief," said the free-and-easy Baronet, "if parliamentary experiences had not already effected the change in me. I went into the House of Commons half a Conservative, notwithstanding my Liberal professions to the constituency which did me the honour of electing me to a seat in the most splendid legislative assembly in the world. It is hard, you know, to undo the teachings which are instilled into one in childhood and boyhood. My dear father and his father before him were staunch Tories, and died as they lived. I imbibed their opinions; and those opinions became part of my very nature. Then when I was made

Member of Parliament, I studied the subjects of the day more accurately than otherwise I would have taken the trouble of doing; and the consequence was, that the old ideas lost one by one their fast hold of me, and I have become, as you perceive, D'Auvergne, a thorough Liberal to the core!"

"Your early conversion has laid the foundation of your future peerage. I shall have to address you as 'my Lord,' by and by."

"Do you think so?"

"I am pretty sure of it."

"And I shall hear you addressed in the same manner," he answered, smiling pleasantly, and added, "when you are on the bench!"

D'Auvergne bowed.

"I mean the woolsack!" he continued.

D'Auvergne bowed again, and nearer to the ground this time.

"By the by, talking of lords," the Baronet went on, "supposing a Bill for disestablishing the Irish Church should pass through the Lower House, as no doubt it will, what about the Upper House? The Lords will never submit to such a measure! They will never, if they can help it, permit it to become law³."

"But if they cannot help it?" D'Auvergne replied.

³ Recent legislation has happily rendered the above and some of the following sentences unnecessary.

“That is a delicate question for you to ask,” Everton responded, “when speaking of the English Constitution.”

“I am no blood-thirsty revolutionist,” the other answered at once, “when I say that the Lords can be compelled to pass it.”

“How can the pressure be brought to bear upon them—unless by the creation of new peers?”

“Precisely; by the creation of new peers! But I trust that means need not be resorted to by those who are at our helm. I hope the Lords, if not just towards the English subjects, will at least be alive to their own interests, and by their acquiescence in the measure satisfy the national desire. They have a great stake in the country; and therefore, if English History is a part of the Oxford and Cambridge curriculum, the Peers ought to remember that the enlightened Englishman of the nineteenth century is not the ignorant serf of centuries ago. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis!*”

“And I will answer you with a bit of Byron:—

‘The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles.’

“A nation’s rights are not bubbles!” the hard-working barrister replied, earnestly.

“No,” Everton said; “but, Noel, my praiseworthy fellow-voyager over life’s troubled ocean, forgive me if I moralize. ‘There are more things in heaven and

earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in our philosophy' ! and I cannot help thinking—the thought is down in the far depths of my mind—that the affairs of the human world, like those of the world of Nature, are carried on correctly by an invisible Power, and much better than we could carry them on."

D'Auvergne was silent a moment ere he answered, "You forget that men rebel against that Power, and violating His laws disorder the salutary effects of such. Every man does not remain in his true place; every man is not in co-operation with his Maker. If every man remained in harmony with the laws of Nature and the laws of God, earth would be the beginning of heaven. It is because every man is not in such harmony, that those who are strive with so many unselfish yearnings, exciting them towards goodness, to extend the Kingdom of Justice throughout the abodes of mankind. There are many true and noble on the earth; they are its salt!"

At this moment tea was brought in by the servant; and very delicious tea it was, as Sir Rutherford gratefully acknowledged. The non-inebriating, cheerful beverage is a delightful drink when the bodily powers are fatigued after a long day's journeying. The evening papers were likewise on the tea-tray, and the Baronet, opening the *Dublin Evening Mail*, dried the still damp print before the fire.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, in astonishment; "what's

the meaning of this?" And he read the following for Noel d'Auvergne:—

“STRANGE CONFESSION OF MURDER IN HIGH LIFE.

“The Honourable O'Malley Oranmore, a gentleman well known in aristocratic circles, made a startling announcement this morning before Mr. —, the police-magistrate in — Street. In the spring or the early summer of the year 186-, he states that he followed a lady—whose name, however, he positively refuses to reveal—and stabbed her in the heart! That subsequently, he further states, he disposed of the body, having thrown a mutilated portion of the remains down the area of a dwelling-house situated in Gardiner Street. It is the general opinion amongst those who have heard of this most extraordinary statement, that the unfortunate honourable gentleman is labouring under mental hallucination. Not long ago he was a leading figure in Dublin society, but a severe fit of malignant illness, reverses of fortune, and the infliction of dangerous wounds received during the late Continental campaign, during which the honourable gentleman served as a volunteer under General Garibaldi, have, it is suspected, unsettled Mr. Oranmore's mind. That which corroborates this suspicion is the fact of his total denial of all knowledge of the transaction in about two hours after the statement was made by him in the police-court. He still persists in the above denial, but he has been remanded for the present, because—strange to say!—some human remains were actually found in the area of the dwelling-house in the street alluded to, and at the precise time of the year 186- mentioned by the prisoner. There will be an investigation immediately, and Lord Summervale, brother of the honourable gentleman, who is in town on his way to England, has had a lengthened interview with Mr. Oranmore.”

The result of this news was that Noel d'Auvergne did not leave Ireland at all during the Long Vacation; but—we had better turn over a page, and begin a new chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NOT GUILTY, MY LORD!

“The wind, that beats the mountain, blows
More softly round the open wold;
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.

* * * * *

“I will not say—‘God’s ordinance
Of death is blown in every wind;’
For that is not a common chance
That takes away a noble mind.

* * * * *

“Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll:
Sleep to the end, true soul and sweet.”

TENNYSON.

THE shadow of a suspicion passed over Noel’s mind when he discovered what Oranmore had done; the faintest shadow which, like that of a cloud upon smiling fields, flitted out of sight; for he could not but recollect Oranmore’s fiendish look in the hospital, and what came afterwards, in the shape

of sickness of so blighting a nature that it had blasted all Oranmore's prospects in life, and might have effected the same ruin for D'Auvergne.

But then D'Auvergne remembered likewise days pleasantly spent with the self-imprisoned man, around whom for Noel were tender memories of one who, but for him, might have been to-day the holy light of the toiling barrister's household—the justly proud wife of an earnest and good and honoured man. So what did D'Auvergne do but, when the prisoner was returned for trial at the next Assizes, go and offer gratuitously to Oranmore his assiduous and sincere services. The evil heart softened at the sight of him, and O'Malley Oranmore gave way and wept, as he had not done since he lisped at his negligent mother's knee. All that fashion-mad woman had to answer for!—since but for her pernicious example what might not he have been, who beheld before him the scaffold's final scene? D'Auvergne waited until the passion of his wild regret was over and contrition let loose its pent-up waters. When the calm ensued Oranmore was again the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore, cool as a cucumber, serene as a bride, dignified as a judge.

“My wounds,” he said, “have unsettled my reason. I read when it occurred of the finding of those remains in a dwelling-house area, and the idea got into my mind and fixed itself there; and it

was thus I got into this confounded scrape—confound it! You'll get me out of it, of course?"

"Certainly. What seniors have you employed?"

"Only one. Solomon Fineheart."

"He is a host in himself. You need no other. And I, in my small way, will be a help to you as best I can."

"For sake of the old friendship?"

"Yes."

"I will never forget you, Noel!" These were the most truthful words he had uttered for many and many a year.

The trial was one of the first which came on during the next term. As it was decidedly sensational there was no lack of an audience, and since the prisoner belonged to the aristocracy, the highly seasoned spice of that clarified element flavoured the atmosphere of a court familiar with the fragrance of the great "unwashed." And here we may be pardoned if we express some wonder, *en passant*, at the patient inanity of that portion of the public who seem to be afflicted with no particular occupation, and seat themselves complaisantly in the uncushioned galleries of our despicably built law-courts, listening to ineloquent lawyers. Has the spirit of the august Law some charm whereby this unshaven audience is rivetted to the dominion of that fearless-throated authority, the court-crier? Or, like children who

create a provision-shop out of sand and broken china, do they delude themselves into the belief that the law-court partakes of some distant resemblance to the theatre, with the compensating advantage of "admission free"? Undoubtedly, it is something to be able to sit in the same room opposite a real judge, although a cat could look at a king. And, above all, it must be a comfortable contemplation for the entire day long on a Law-feast—the Law has its feast-days as well as the Church—to stare at the head-dress Justice assumes, as if she was earnestly envious of well-fed white rabbits, and defied them to turn out with organs of audition more lengthened than hers. It is a disgraceful cruelty—which a certain Preventive Society ought to take cognizance of—that honourable men, endowed with no ordinary brains, should be compelled to sit in a distinguished seat, like Patience on a monument, smiling—but not at grief. However, we will be silent and say no more, remembering, with some inward murmurings of dissatisfaction at the things that are, that the Law of the land, like the politics of the land, has a lot of horrid old garments which ought to be thrown generously to the dogs, but which, miserlike, it wants to sell for the best price before it parts with them for ever.

Ah, we know perhaps why the people linger in our galleries when they have nothing but dry technical contention *pro et con* to listen to! Homer does

not always nod, and the big-hearted, poetic poor loiterer, may be, he should awaken and they should not be present to lend their ears! The inelegant law-court sometimes is filled with throbbing bosoms, thrilling at the sound of the orator's voice—that “mighty power!” and one of Ireland's chosen sons gives proof to the critical world abroad that history told the truth when she recorded the story of the ancient greatness of the island saints. Far away across the desert track of a darkened past lies the light of our olden glory; and even through the gloom of the interval its rays have pierced to the present time, and those who live and love Ireland to-day know well that the light of that former time and the light which shows such brightness now are the same. It shines in the radiance of the golden-voiced lawyer's eyes and lends fire to his practised tongue, and the torch of liberty, like a vestal flame, is kept alive. And the “unwashed” see it, and it communicates its fire to them and seems to put life into them somehow, while it brings an indistinct, unimaginable dream of all which yet may be; and their warm hearts warm for the orator's sake; and they leave the court in the stillness of the evening tired, but unmindful of their fatigue, hungry, but satisfied—so proud are they of the unmistakable genius of their outspoken fellow-countryman, who perhaps is not half so much to himself as he is to them. For although he honour-

ably sits amongst the ancients at the gates, they—the poor—are but helots still, hewing the wood and drawing the water for a mess of porridge. These helots, however, are of royal birth, for the written title to their kingdom is fastened to the wood familiar with a thorny crown.

To-day, at the trial of Oranmore, the great unwashed, being elbowed right and left, were obliged, as usual, to give way to those who had money in their purses and good clothes on their backs. The solidly-clothed gentlemen in blue who perpetuate the abbreviated name of Sir Robert Peel, saw to that, as was their duty; we will not say—for personally we are not aware of it—that palm-oil is an article of consumption in the criminal court of Green Street, but since it is in universal requisition, we may presume that it was on this occasion, and that many a fair lady and fine-clad gallant secured an available seat for themselves in the crowded court-house, because they knew the secret power of that unctuous oil which can take the resisting rust out of many an obstinate lock.

D'Auvergne had no other senior counsel except Solomon Fineheart, Q.C.; and when the public heard that the latter gentleman was engaged for the prisoner, they flocked in crowds and filled nooks here and there, and extended their necks to hear and to see after the manner of a domestic bird not remarkable for the innate grace of its movements. The trial lasted two

days ; and on the second day D'Auvergne, glancing at a variegated group of elegant ladies in the gallery above him, beheld the Lady Marguerita Dashbrook. A strange thrill passed through him, especially when she recognized him with an approving smile, which intimated to him that she was pleased to see him thus defending one of her own class. Did it imply that she was pleased with no more than that? Time will tell.

The great advocate did not belie his fame, and the eloquence of his defence convinced the jury of Oranmore's innocence. He dwelt with much force upon the fact of the prisoner having read the statement in the newspapers of the finding of the remains in the dwelling-house area, and of the idea of the occurrence fixing itself in his mind. There was medical testimony, too, which went far to prove that a sabre-cut he had received in the head would lead to an occasional aberration of the intellect. It was not untrue that his mind was not always his own: the conscience-stung man had gone through much, and laboured under a mental burden sufficient to drive a sane man mad. But he was strong-minded, and schooled in outward self-control, and few blows could strike him down without a struggling resistance from him. He and all others were foes—even to the very devils with whom he was by his passions leagued. Alone in the desolation of his unfriendliness, he carped at others and hated all, including D'Auvergne,

whom he envied, although for once the rising lawyer had taken him short by his unexpected kindness, and sweetened for a minute the soured man's nature. There was one incident in the celebrated orator's defence which is worth recording. He had been word-painting in brilliant colours a soldier's proud career, and drawing from that flower of eloquence a little honey in favour of the prisoner. He was just after depicting,—

“ The pluméd troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue !
. . . the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner ; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war ! ”

when, as he closed one splendid, fiery, gorgeous, impassioned sentence, strains of martial music floated in their grand way into the breathless court, and the excited orator had the tact to remain silent for one minute until the music died away. A regiment of infantry were marching by the court-house, and the stirring music came from the military band in front. No more powerful stratagem for producing the desired effect could have been procured by the eloquent-tongued advocate, towering in the strength of his genius, and of his physical frame, which was that worthy of a legal Hercules. When the martial music vanished in the distance, a murmur of applause broke from the audience, which showed to the orator the

advantage he had gained; and that murmur was loud enough and prolonged enough to rouse the ire of the judge, lest the dignity of the court should be compromised. But what cared Hercules? He had flourished his clubs and had won the day—and O'Malley Oranmore was acquitted.

Outside the court which had been the animated scene of the trial Noel was accosted by Lady Marguerita Dashbrook, who, amongst an exquisite group of high-born women, waited evidently for him—and for him alone, to judge from the pleasurable anxiety depicted in her delicate features.

“I have stayed here for five minutes purposely to congratulate you!” she said, when she met him.

“Very little praise is due to me, Lady Dashbrook,” he answered. “My eloquent senior has done the work, and not I. Did you like his speech for the defence? But I need not ask you!”

“I was positively charmed with it! And how exceedingly grateful poor Mr. Oranmore must feel at this moment towards him! He has been subject to a great deal of annoyance in consequence of that temporary derangement.”

“He was severely wounded in battle; and that accounts for it. His friends must watch him narrowly for the future.”

“You knew him personally, I understand, before this unfortunate incident happened?”

“Yes. We were intimate friends.”

“Really! and you defended him for that reason?”

“I did. There are some mutual ties of the past which join us together,” he replied, earnestly: “I would do more for him than I have done, if I could,” he added, in simplicity.

“He must be for life obliged to you!” she said, with an air of interest.

D’Auvergne sighed. “Do you reside long in Dublin, Lady Dashbrook?” he asked.

“We leave for our home in dear Devonshire to-morrow evening,” she answered. “We are staying at Morrison’s. We were to have left—my father and myself—yesterday morning; but knowing that this trial was to take place, I induced papa to stay, though I could not prevail upon him to accompany me here, so I had to come with some friends. Allow me to introduce you to them.” She did so; and ere she parted from him, he remarked,—

“This law-case must have possessed some interest for you, since you broke your homeward journey for sake of hearing it. Indeed it is trying for ladies unused to it to sit in an uncomfortable law-court for two successive days!”

“Why have you not courts fit for us to remain in? At present they are wholly unworthy of your noble profession.”

“You should ask those who are in authority to

answer that question, and not an humble nobody like me!"

"Well, since you desire to know it, I came to this trial partly because I am acquainted with Mr. Oranmore's family—Lord Summervale and the rest—but my chief reason was to see and to hear you."

"You have been disappointed then, for I spoke very little throughout the entire trial."

"But I *saw* you!" she said, and pressed his hand ever so slightly as she bade him good-bye. A pressure of the hand is a little thing, yet it speaks volumes! It spoke her secret to the keen young lawyer, and brought a blush into his handsome face. For the rest of that evening, and for months to come, the image of Mary Leyne, which had been latterly so vividly there, faded from his hard-working mind, and her vacant place was filled with the form of one who in social rank was in her garden of roses, round her palace of gold, thousands of miles away from where he toiled, a day-labourer in the cornfields of life.

He did not meet Mary Leyne again during the rest of that year, but she wrote to him about once in every two months just such another sort of letter as she would have written to her brother Harold were he away from London. For was not Noel almost her brother? She did not forget that, but believed in it with sweet fidelity, and considered him as such.

On Valentine's-day he received two valentines, and both of them gave him considerable concern. Both

bore the London postmark, and each came from one who had touched him to the innermost core of his heart, and only as dead Madeleine had touched him there. Perhaps even more unerringly and more sharply than had that disappointed sufferer now gone to her secure rest, because he was older to-day and more circumspect, and much less susceptible. The blade that could strike home henceforth must be of Damascus make, for the armour was of more than triple steel. This modern Crusader had fought in the fight before, and his precious life-blood trickled silently once from one well-remembered wound.

The first valentine which he opened was a costly one, in gorgeous lace and satin, ornamented with doves, and from the centre sprang a bunch of lilies. The lilies were withered, it must be remarked, and dried, but yet they were *genuine* lilies. Attached to the valentine were the following lines, taken from "Childe Harold," and written with violet ink in a beautifully wrought female hand:—

“ I send the lilies given to me,
 Though, long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be;
 But yet reject them not as such:
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine! ”

“ A PEARL.”

“A Pearl”! D’Auvergne could not mistake that! Margaret signifies a pearl; and he could think of no other place from whence the valentine was sent except Park Lane. The love-token trembled in his hands, and it required all his strength of mind to enable him to think clearly.

He laid this valentine aside, and opened the envelope which enclosed the second. No doves hovered around this, nor did it smack of Eugene Rimmel. No perfume floated upward from it except the natural fragrance of a few early primroses, suggestive to him of a death-bed scene he shall never, never forget, were he to live on earth as long as the “grand old gardener”! The envelope contained, together with the wildflowers, a piece of paper not larger than a lady’s visiting card, and upon this paper was—not written but—printed the following:—

“MY WISH.

“May the blessing of thy God wait upon thee, and the sun of glory shine around thy head. May the gates of plenty, honour, and happiness be always open to thee and thine. May no strife disturb thy days, nor sorrow distress thy nights; may angels’ hands thy eyelids close, and the pillow of peace kiss thy cheek; and when length of years makes thee tired of earthly joys, and the curtains of death gently close round the scene of thy existence, may the angels of God attend thy bed, and take care that the expiring lamp of life shall not receive the rude blast to hasten its extinction. And, finally, may the Saviour’s blood wash thee from all impurities, and at last usher thee into a land of everlasting felicity.”

D’Auvergne read this wish over and over again,

until he had it off by heart. And this second valentine cured him of a foolish dream. "He shall take a burden upon him that hath fellowship with one more honourable than himself," says a Book which teaches not vainly; and Noel d'Auvergne thought no more of Lady Dashbrook, so entirely had Mary Leyne stolen into her lost place in his heart again, never to leave it for the rest of Noel's busy days!

Not very long after this, one of the bitterest griefs he had met with filled his soul. Its peculiar bitterness was akin to that he experienced in the death of his own sister years ago. On Easter Sunday—it was meetest that he should die on that day of all others—Tom Middleton, the young Melchisedek, ended the stirring pulsation of his brave, great heart. The Christlike son of the King of kings went to take possession of his throne. "Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time: for his soul pleased God: therefore he hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities: but the people see this, and understand not, nor lay up such things in their hearts." The silver cord is broken, and the golden fillet has shrunk back; into the earth the dust has returned, and the spirit to God. Let the mourners go round about in the street, it is nothing to him now who remembered his Creator in the days of his youth, before the time of affliction came. And yet we must mourn, and a cry of agony is wrung from

hearts made desolate by his early death, for he was "like to the roe, and to the young hart upon the mountains." He was old, too, when he died, for a spotless life is old age!

Don't you remember when he came back from Rome—a priest—how his sweet face wore that charming expression of peace? Don't you remember the two deep lines that knit his brows, and which were carved there by years of highest thought? True, we held that those lines were intruding strangers upon so friendly a face, and wondered why they were there! And then we saw him in the quiet church, listening with patient smiles to some whispered tale of woe—and we wondered still more to find that those care-carved lines were for the moment gone, and his brow was smooth as a girl's of seventeen, who is fearless because she is not yet afraid of the world. After four year's ministry in Dublin, he died of a fever caught in the discharge of his duties while attending the death-bed of an humbly-born German girl, who a twelvemonth before was made a Catholic by the sight of him. For that angelic face—so pure and peaceful!—drew her to the chapel he was attached to, until she was won and made fit for heaven. She had a big heart in a small house—of all things here below that which is said to have touched Lacordaire the most.

Those who laid Tom in his earthly resting-place

were friends to whom he was a beacon on their way, and who loved him and felt the influence of his life. They saw that youthful countenance in its beauty of health, and in the stillness of its long sleep. To them he is a pledge that what they live for is true, and so they are grateful to him, and in their gratitude have lifted up a marble tomb, which tells that he who lies beneath is worthy of remembrance. They stand by his grave sometimes and think with gladness of the sky behind the clouds. Yes,—

“Let the dear old land that bore him cover o’er his manly breast.”

O’Connell’s Round Tower stands like a sentinel close by—Daniel guarded the living in his day—and not far off, waiting the Resurrection, reposes the body of the poor German maiden, beneath an unnoticed wooden cross. Many an old man and old woman who cannot rise from their beds are thankful to Tom, and they little think that he would be the first to go. Young girls are truer for the recollection of him to all that which is worthiest of the name of woman. Young men—the good and the brave, the darling flower of our nation—have learned from the young sailor-priest to be generous to God, to their Faith, to their Land! To see him did more than a mighty preacher. His life, short but immortal, wrought its allotted work. He may rest now, though ill can earth spare him and such as him! *Requiescat in pace.* But does he need our prayer?

CHAPTER XIX.

“ I HAVE MURDERED HER.”

“O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory: for the memory thereof is immortal. . . . When it is present they imitate it, and they desire it when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts. . . . For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years; but the understanding of a man is grey hairs. . . . He pleased God and was beloved; and living among sinners he was translated. He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul. . . . Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time. For his soul pleased God: therefore he hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities; but the people see this and understand not, nor lay up such things in their hearts.”

WISDOM iv.

“**W**EEP but a little for the dead, for he is at rest”! So Noel wept but little for dear Tom, so far at least as tears are concerned. But tears are not the measure of weeping when the heart is touched—touched through and through by the penetrating pierce of that dart of sorrow which strikes so directly home. How could he not but mourn, as one mourns

who is in distant exile and hears only indistinct tidings of his native land—the dwelling-place of the friends in home’s security there? Tom was one so tender, pure, and true that Noel, thinking of him, remembered sadly Hamlet’s estimate of his murdered kingly sire—Tom was kingly too, and Noel’s spiritual father—“ He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again.” “Those whom the gods love die young,” says one, as if tenderness, purity, and truth were in peril midst the mental battles of mankind. These things are immortal, and the immortal in human nature would grasp and possess them for ever. But that may not be for all men, since that which is mortal within us throws the blighting shade of death over some, and sin—the skeleton at many feasts—sickles down the flowers which would rise to heaven, and crowns with a garland the haughty brow of Lucifer. The pure and the true, how much they are to many a sighing heart! They are so precious that gold cannot purchase them. Who has not felt within him those intense aspirings after what is pure and true, those indefinite longings after the infinite? Who has not heard within him—and trembled with the desire excited by the exquisite music—those soul-songs—so sad, so plaintive, so beautiful!—the carol of the spirit beating against prison-bars and wounding itself? It sees heaven, as it were, and has not wings to fly there. Of all those soul-

songs this is the sweetest: "Non omnis moriar"—
"Not all of me shall die."

Of the sailor-priest we shall not speak again. He followed wisdom and led others to follow her. They who obeyed him thank him now, and amongst the varied scenes of stormy lives he is one of the tenderest memories of the time-softened past. While he stayed he taught them steadily until they knew it, that wisdom is "the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope."

Shall we never look upon his like again?

It would pain us to do so, and yet we would rejoice.

Farewell to him! but not a long farewell!

We must return to O'Malley Oranmore, and follow that "honourable" gentleman during some of his subsequent movements. The world was going extremely wrong with him those days; and with more than one significant frown fickle Dame Fortune gave a rapid jerk to her wheel, and lowered his altitude. And yet he clung to her with a wonderful fidelity, considering her proverbial fickleness. She must have been the impersonation of cruelty to have scorned such faithfulness of servitude. Perhaps she was this to him, for he cursed her with a fine round oath which needs no repetition here.

After the momentous trial, Oranmore proceeded with his brother to the hotel of the latter; and there

they parted, to meet no more. Not, however, without a substantial recognition of their brotherly relationship on the part of the terrified Lord Summervale. Those who might have heard of the pecuniary gift would have put down a deal of good-nature to the credit of the cool-looking peer, in whose features benevolence was not altogether absent as a phrenological characteristic. You and I know better, forbearing Reader, and might, with a very fair show of reason, assign a far different cause for Lord Summervale's forced liberality. The nobleman was hopelessly in his brother's power; and if the latter—more or less of late, a reckless, desperate man—wished to utter five-minutes' flow of words with his satirical tongue in the ears of those having authority to take cognisance of such unpleasant matters, Lord Summervale was disgraced publicly, or a worse fate still might await him. True, Oranmore thereby would have had an opportunity of shaking hands—if he wished it—with one of Calcraft's calling, the hangman—that convenient instrument of the law. But as Oranmore probably would not have made an oration upon the interesting occasion, it is more than likely his usual courtesy would have deserted him, and that thereupon he would have saved the hangman a little pardonable hypocrisy, implied in the mutual clasping of hands. This is not a subject, however, we will pursue; and we dismiss Calcraft's pro-

fessional brethren, with a hearty wish that he and they may soon retire into private life.

"Three hundred ought to be enough for the present," Lord Summervale said, angrily, when the two brothers were closeted together in a private sitting-room at the Bilton.

"Make it five hundred," the other replied; and Oranmore was not angry, but as cool and collected as he was wont to be.

"I cannot."

"Make it seven, and I shall trouble you no more."

"Seven hundred pounds! Are you a madman?"

"I begin to believe that I am—sometimes," he answered, calmly. "To a man with a rent-roll of fifteen thousand a year, seven hundred ought to count like as many copper coins in an affair like this, which is life and death to you," he added, scornfully.

Lord Summervale remained silent for a minute, looking sharply at his keen brother. Their eyes met. There was no reading O'Malley Oranmore's thoughts. He suspected, however, what was passing busily through the Peer's mind during this prolonged interval of deep meditation and contemplation of Oranmore's immoveable countenance.

"O'Malley," he said, at last, and solemnly, while standing before him he steadfastly confronted him, "you are a bad man——"

“ You know that from experience,” he interrupted, “ and I cannot contradict you. Go on. Say your say—and confound you !” (“ Confound ” was not the epithet he used.)

“ Wicked as I have found you out to be—and long ago that undesirable knowledge came bitterly home to me—yet I cannot believe you so debased, so utterly wedded to the devil, that you should stain your hands with the blood of another. I have not heard tidings of my unfortunate wife this many a day. She left Germany for Ireland, I understand, with a young woman and her child—a Spaniard, I have been told——”

At the name “ Spaniard ” Oranmore winced. Taking a scented handkerchief from his pocket, he inhaled it, and then used that article violently.

“ Something seems to urge me,” the Peer went on, “ to the suspicion of foul play effected by you. Is it so ?”

“ What a question to ask me ! If I knew the answer, do you think I would tell you ? No, by Jove ! Once too often I have played the idiot in that line !”

“ Tell me, O’Malley, I implore you, what has become of her ! Set my mind at rest about my wife. Though she has sinned, remember I have loved her !”

Oranmore glanced at him derisively. “ The more ass you !” he replied. “ You are a make !”

“ A what ?”

“A moke—a donkey!”

Lord Summervale admitted—if silence means admission—the compliment, and said, “The only way to deal with you is in pounds, shillings, and pence.”

“Exactly. You have hit the right nail on the head. Now sit you down, my brother, bottle up your anger for a more convenient occasion, and let us come to business.” And Oranmore drew his chair closer to the Peer, and, leaning his elbows on the table, waited for the nobleman to begin.

“You know what became of Lady Summervale?” he asked.

“I do.”

“Where is she?” he questioned eagerly.

Oranmore remained silent, looking calmly at his excited brother. “You forget the money,” he answered, quietly.

“Oh, ah, that’s true! How much do you want?”

“Seven hundred, as matters stand between us at present. Two thousand, if I reveal what I know.”

Lord Summervale took out a cheque-book, wrote a cheque for the latter amount, and handed it to his brother.

Oranmore examined it closely; and immediately exclaimed, with a slight smile, which might imply a good deal if the nobleman chose to take the hint, “You have not signed it! In its present state it is worthless to me.”

“Excuse me—I am so nervous!—it was an oversight, I assure you!”

“Oh, of course!” said O’Malley, drily, “sign it now, if you please.”

He did so, with an ill grace, and gave it back again sullenly to the other.

Oranmore took it, examined it again, this time more minutely, for it was a precious document to him; then he placed it safe amongst other private papers hid carefully in his inner breast-pocket. He arose quickly, withdrew a step or two, folded his arms slowly, and said, in a distinct tone, “I have murdered her.”

Lord Summervale plunged at him and caught him fiercely by the throat, before he had time to withdraw out of reach from the now infuriated man. “Villain! Give me back my wife!” he exclaimed.

O’Malley was the stronger of the two—he knew a trick, moreover, when in close encounter with an enemy, for he had seen rough soldiering in his campaigning-time; he easily extricated himself from the hands of the enraged husband. “There is no use in all this violent exercise,” he said, holding his brother with ease, and seeming carelessness, at full arm’s-length. “See how you have disarranged my cravat! I am, by no means, obliged to you.”

“I dare say not!” the other answered, with a vain effort at self-control.

“Compose yourself; and be glad I have rid you of

a bad bargain," Oranmore rejoined. "You are at liberty now to marry again with the sanction of the law of the land. Don't be a hot-headed fool! You were never that as long as I have known you!"

"Then you were guilty of the crime of which you have been acquitted this afternoon? Oh, God help me!"

"I will not tell you whether I am guilty or no. Be satisfied to simply ascertain that your straving wife has broken all tethers at length, and therefore shall trouble your peace on earth no more."

But the husband heard him not. He had fainted.

O'Malley Oranmore gave a long sigh of relief; and with consummate coolness, rifled his senseless brother's several pockets, taking from his unresisting person whatever money—there were large sums about him—he could hastily find. Then he glided stealthily from the room, left the hotel unobserved, crossed in the mail-packet for England that evening—he was just in time to catch the boat before starting—cashed the cheque successfully in London, on the following day—for that the money was to be drawn there, Oranmore took care to foresee when his brother wrote the cheque for two thousand—and Oranmore was met with in Ireland no more. He never returned thither; and, hereafter, his grave was dug many an Atlantic mile away from the green land of his innocent childhood.

Will you follow his fortunes farther, Reader? Yes; for his end, when it comes, will perhaps surprise you.

In England, he changed his name and went on the turf, for which he had a natural liking—when a beardless boy-ensign in the —th he had squandered his pay at provincial races. Alas! where it is so easy to spend hundreds of thousands—witness some recent downfalls on the turf—it cannot be difficult to lose a paltry two thousand! With that small capital, O'Malley, assuming a horsy appearance, concealing therein his aristocratic individuality, set up in business. He won, and lost, and won again a goodly sum. Then he lost all, and was ruined! It was not lucky money, nor was it in lucky hands. The curse of sin was on it. Drink is bad enough, but not worse than gaming, as mothers and wives know. They are often together, no doubt—the champagne-bottle and the betting-book—for the fellowship is genial, and, like poor Chang and Eng, the Siamese Twins, it requires more than the knife of a Nelaton to separate them.

CHAPTER XX.

THE IRISH AT FREDERICKSBURG.

“ We dash full on their guns—through the flare and the roar
Stood the gunners bare-armed ; now they stand there no more ;
The war-throat waits dumb for the ball :
For these men pale and mazed to the chine we shore,
And their own cannon’s smoke was their pall.

“ That done, we’re at bay ; for the foe, with a yell,
Piles his legions around us. Their bayonets swell
Line on line ; we are planted in steel :
‘ Good carbine ! trusty blade ! Each shot is a knell,
Each sword-sweep a fate—they reel !’

“ One by one fall our men, each girt with his slain,
A death-star with belts ! ‘ Charge ! we break them !’—In vain !
From the heights their batteries roar ;
The fire-slucices burst ; through that flood, in a rain
Of iron, we strike for the shore.”

WESTLAND MARSTON.

“ Alas ! brave sons of Erin,
You only march to die,
Where shot and shell are raining down,
And Minié-bullets fly.”

THE POET OF THE SOUTH.

THE Derby-day ! But we are not going to describe it. Newspaper correspondents have

dilated upon that theme which is yearly new. We will not attempt what is beyond our reach. Go and see Frith's picture. Enough for our purpose to remark that Noel d'Auvergne was present there the year following the one during which the trial and acquittal of Oranmore was a nine days' wonder. He wandered through that populous scene, and Harold Leyne was his companion. They left the vicinity of the grand stand for the purpose of surveying human nature when out upon its annual equine holiday. Flashy, vulgar men, with diamond (?) pins stuck in their loud scarfs, shouted monetary challenges—and with them the condemnation also of the true glories of the trial of speed between the noble animals who know nothing of the extreme sorrow of which they are the unoffending cause—sorrow which comes home to those gentle ones to whom yonder infatuated young nobleman is the dearest object in life. He is digging his own grave; and to those who are sewing his shroud before making his coffin he is bequeathing lavishly the broad acres of his patrimonial estates and the family plate. And breaking hearts are present with him in his madness; but ah, how sorrowfully powerless! For when a man goes mad on one particular subject, what can you do with him to root out the rank weed of an idea? "Shut him up," you answer. By and by when he is sane he might thank you for doing so. Myrtilus still can cheat *CEnomaus*, and

Erinnys let loose from Tartarus, but dressed in chignon or dust-coat, is sovereign of the revels—nay the other day were not seventy guests entertained at ten guineas a head, to a public Hecates *cæna* in Christian London!

Roaming about, both D'Auvergne and his companion enjoyed themselves nevertheless, and picked up an acquaintance here and there—either a fellow-barrister from Ireland or some friend of Harold. One sight disgusted them both: in a lordly carriage reclined an unregarding young lady, with the sated, dissatisfied listlessness Frith has given to the appearance of one who, in a somewhat similar position, is honoured with a place in his famous picture. But there was this difference between the painter's ideal and the reality, as it met the saddened eyes of the two Irishmen. Beside that lady and either her husband or her brother, probably the former, sat, or rather lay down, a handsome gentleman about thirty years of age, mournfully tipsy—mournfully, we write, because it is after all one of the most mournful of sights—and then the contrast with the indifferent and lovely woman was indeed great. She seemed not to mind; evidently she was used to it. Used to it! These words tell a tale to those who understand them. These words mean much—years of sorrow, unmanly blows, slender frames and delicate arms more black than blue, more blue than black; blighted lives—ay, even to crying out in the mad agony of suffering

against the wise goodness of God ! But God is good, and perhaps the sufferer, man or woman, finds out that in the latter end. Suffering teaches us. By the way, that is an eloquent incident in Frith's picture where the strolling player waits for the little acrobat to come to his arms and go through his feat—but the child is a child, and gazes at the viands spread not far away for consumption by those who have more goods, as the world counts them, than has he. And then, close by, the girlish lady with the youth by her side, dreaming no doubt love's young dream. The maiden has money to spare, for she is about giving some in charity, and the lover is looking on, and although she never intended to find favour thereby in his eyes, this little act of charity done gracefully by her has tied him to her side for life. It is a sweet sight too, and does one good to contemplate. And we more than half suspect that those who are like her in this girlish open-heartedness shall receive in return a thousandfold by and by, when they likewise shall have daughters grown up ; and the autumn of their own existence is illumined with the coming light of the eternal spring. We are moralizing ! Forgive us, patient Reader, since we love the painter's art, and—but what is that D'Auvergne and Leyne overhear with a mutual start of surprise ?

“ Step in, gentlemen ! ”

They looked at each other in astonishment.

“Can it be he?” asked Harold Leyne.

“Undoubtedly,” D’Auvergne replied.

“I would know that voice any where,” said Leyne.

“And that face! who could mistake it when once seen—when seen often as we have beheld it?”

“How strange!” the other answered.

“And has it come to this with him?” D’Auvergne added.

“So soon too after the trial!”

“There are queer ups and downs in this life!”

“But listen!” Harold rejoined. They listened.

This is what they heard.

“Step in, gentlemen! step in, step in! Now is your time to win. All fair play inside. Here you are, Sir, this way! Make way there! Be quick, gentlemen, and seize upon the opportunity!”

“What if I lose?” asked a half-drunken voice.

“Then you will lose honourably, and will bear it like a man—which you are! It is all fair play here, gentlemen. Step in!”

It was the Honourable O’Malley Oranmore who spoke, but who would believe it was he unless convinced of the truth of it by the testimony of his own clearly-seeing eyes? Dressed in a livery of green edged with gold, a broad gold band around his shining new hat, exclaiming in a loud, but insinuating voice—this broken-down brother of a peer had fallen so low in the social scale that he had be-

come the servant of a roulette-player, and stood at the entrance of the gambling-tent, enticing the unwary in!

“ You shall have a good glass of brandy, gentlemen!” he said. “ You need not play—just come in and look on, and take the dust of the day out of your throats. This way, Sir—you’ll find the governor hard at work inside!”

We have heard of a baronet driving a cab through the streets of London, and, at least, that is gaining a livelihood by worthy if humble labour. But to be the guardian of a roulette-tent! To be the tempter to a career of ruin! To be the Cerberus of a licensed “ hell ”! We know of only one occupation for a man lower, more degrading than this—but we desire not to name it here or any where. Even to that lowest one he fell at last. What will not poverty drive a human being to? And in London! His master—“ the governor ”—lost heavily soon after. That night following, the roulette-player drank deeply of the brandy he was wont to pour down the throats of his foolish customers. It ruined him as it ruined them. He arose next morning, his head aching, his pockets empty, and the blue devils revelling infernally within him. In distraction, ill and disappointed, imagination still in the grasp of the tyrannical blue devils, as a tremulous mouse in terrible cat-claws, his bloodshot eyes caught wickedly sight of a tempting bluish blade—a morning

implement necessary to gentlemen who are not given to hirsuteness around the chin and lips—and with an oath and a maddening design he clutched the sharp razor, and drew it across his throat from ear to ear! The quondam turf-leviathan—he had been a large and most successful book-maker at one time—lay lifeless, stretched at full length under his own roulette-table, a temporary epitaph over him, and the fittest one; and now that his canvass shop was shut up, the green livery edged with gold lace with which he had ornamented the pliable Oranmore was placed by the latter for an inadequate consideration in the safe keeping of a pawn-office. It did not loiter long, however, on the shelves, having been purchased by an enterprising second-hand clothes-dealer, who sold it afterwards to a burly city gentleman retiring from business, who was bent upon spending the sunset of his days in the twilight contentment of a suburban villa, and whose burlier better half had inveigled him into purchasing a one-horse brougham, for which a livery-servant was required.

His occupation gone, Oranmore was adrift again. The stream of circumstances bore him back to London with a few pounds in his pocket, which did not last a month. Another might have made them go farther. But not Oranmore. Then his clothes began to give. When the sensation of shabbiness springs up within oneself, that is the time when those

nurtured in refinement who are hard up in a large city begin to appreciate the value of money and the comfort of purple and fine linen. His boots—he had no second pair—showed signs of parting leather; and on wet days a London pavement is a sad path to tread when badly shod. He was driven to visit the pawn-office again and again, until at length he could only afford one meal a day. Poverty is an awful despot. And O'Malley Oranmore sank to the bottom of the sink of vice. He made some money—ill-gotten gains as they were, he gladly made use of them to fly from a city wherein he had seen such scenes of crime and felt such misery. He purchased a steerage passage-ticket to New York, and landed on the quays there, nameless, and with one shilling and sixpence in his pocket. He was resolved never, never, to assume his true name again. He had left the old world for good. Did he know that *she* lay in her grave in a New York cemetery? Yes, he did know it. He ascertained her fate in Ireland, at the sea-side hotel, whither he had gone to question about the rose-bud which was his youth's true love. Yes, he did know it. With the solitary English shilling-and-a-half in his purse—he had no purse, his pocket we mean—ere a mouthful of American food ceased the craving of his scantily-satisfied appetite, he trudged through the streets and found his way to her grave. The Cross was throwing its

shadow upon it still. During her short life the Cross had sheltered her; it was now a worthy emblem—a suitable memento of the spirit which once inhabited the undiscernible form which lay in the earth beneath. He found her grave. He saw her name carved upon the Cross, her age, the land of her birth—which was the land of his birth too—and in the wet grass surrounding it, with the rain pouring its torrents upon his uncovered head, the wanderer knelt, regardless of the warring elements, and prayed. Prayed! A strange thing to write of O'Malley Oranmore. Not stranger than to write that he wept, too—yes, wept tears of truest, heartiest contrition. He passionately kissed her name and the earth upon her grave. To do so, he separated the intervening blades of grass until his lips met the cold, damp, clammy earth itself. Flowers were growing wildly at the foot of the grave; he plucked one—only one red rose—and hid the blushing flower somewhere near his heart, where a locket hung suspended by a cord around his neck. Opening the locket, within it he placed a leaf from the little coloured flower, and re-clasped the trinket. With flower and treasured relic close to his beating heart, he walked away slowly from the emerald-grave—meet tomb for an Irishwoman—and, mingling once more amongst the jostling crowd in the peopled-streets, he felt himself a changed and bettered man. Whither was he to go now, with his shilling and his sixpence?

Was he to live for days, for months, for years, yet? What was he to do? O poverty! poverty! you are a hard teacher, a cruel task-master! and yet—and yet the lesson you make the reluctant pupil learn is sweet in the end. Poverty draws us to God. When others desert us we are constrained to go to Him. Thus it turns out in the end perhaps that poverty is the greatest blessing we could have had; that when we thought God was farthest away from us He was nearest to us. Poverty and suffering, like birds of prey whom we like not, but who purify the earth of carrion, take away our failings. No preacher has their eloquence. No; not a Massillon, or a Bossuet, or even a living Dupanloup—that European advocate of the Irish nation—that Prometheus whom no Mercury shall chain, who is to vivify with the fire—not stolen—from heaven the saints and sages of the nineteenth century at the approaching great council—the international parliament of Pio Nono—the answer to Renan.

Rationalism pricks its long ears, and heresy is in a huff; but the venerable viceregent at the Vatican smiles, for next his heart are gathered together his children, as One would have gathered the once little ones of Jerusalem.

The Civil War had broken out in America at the time when O'Malley landed so extremely poor upon the quays of New York. He found no difficulty in enlisting, especially since he carried a military bear-

ing and was one evidently well accustomed to the career of a soldier. That same evening, after leaving the grave he desired so ardently to see—and which he left a reformed man—he joined an infantry regiment on active service, and was sent straightway to the seat of war, as he was considered not in need of any preliminary training. His former experiences proved an immense service to the ex-officer, and gave him an unmistakable advantage over many of his companions-in-arms. The latter at once perceived that he had known better days; and in a short time the rumour went abroad, uncontradicted by him, that he had been at one time an officer in her British Majesty's service. Amidst the stirring incidents of that memorable war between North and South promotion was rapid. Death made many gaps in long, straight walls built of human flesh and blood. Many a soul flitted suddenly out of sight, to be seldom or never remembered again. At the battle of Fredericksburg he distinguished himself by such undoubtedly daring bravery that he was raised from the ranks immediately. It was at the battle of Fredericksburg that the heroic gallantry of the Irish troops was severely and fatally tested. They were rashly ordered to capture guns in position by mere battalions of infantry with the bayonet. Like the Crimean Three Hundred, the Irish went to their death.

“Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not though the soldiers knew
Some one had blunder'd :
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.”

“Oh the wild charge they made !” The poor fellows were of the nation which supplies England with valiant fighting-men. They had rather do and die than rebel against the mad command. And so they went to their death, for the inconsiderate attempt against the guns of the enemy totally failed. How? By the wholesale slaughter of the gallant Irish! “Up, lads, and at them!” exclaimed Wellington at Waterloo; and perhaps when he gave the order he remembered that his own fellow-countrymen there precipitated themselves upon the foe, and perhaps that thought sent a flush of hope into his cheek. In that desperate attempt upon the guns at Fredericksburg O'Malley Oranmore was one of the survivors. By his gallantry there he won for himself the position of an officer—a position, it must be said, more genial to him and far more suited to at least his earlier antecedents, if not the later ones. And the men who fought generously alongside the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore at that battle of Fredericksburg did not envy his rapid promotion from the private ranks, wherein he had hotly struggled on an equality with them. No; they had too much honest enthusiastic admiration for the

bravery of one who was a fellow-Irishman to yield to the littleness of envy. Many of those poor valiant soldiers—who had nothing perhaps in all the whole world but their weapons, their alien uniforms, and, thank God! their hearts—were destined, alas! not to live many months longer during which either to envy or to admire. For days, for weeks, for years, be remembered not alone in the annals of the devastating civil war but at the hearthsides of dearest Ireland, the heroic gallantry of her exiled sons against the guns of Fredericksburg!

“Thunder answers to thunder, bolts darken the air,
To breathe is to die; their funeral glare
The lit hills on our brave ones rolled.
What of that? They had entered the lists with despair,
And the lot which they met—they foretold.”

Oranmore ran a very narrow chance of being taken a prisoner during the excitement of action when the Irish were repulsed. He stole successfully under some cannon which stood there, and contrived to elude detection by concealing himself in the midst of some thick bushes growing around. He feared, with good reason, that if he abandoned his hiding-place the rifles of the enemy would shoot him down. So he lay there in silence for some hours, having his gun loaded, and the trusty bayonet fixed thereon. Unexpectedly, after the battle was over and comparative quiet reigned, he heard the steady tramp of a com-

pany of foot-soldiers. A word of quick command was given, and immediately the men dispersed in search of Northern fugitives, who might happen to lie concealed amongst the surrounding bushes. Oranmore raised his head a little, and saw that the searchers were rebel soldiers, and handling his musket steadily and firmly, he made a desperate resolution to sell his life—which was not of much value to him now-a-days—as dearly as possible, for he was fiercely determined not to yield himself up as a prisoner without an obstinate resistance. A Southern prison did not seem to him to offer a very inviting prospect for the future, and since he was a soldier of fortune, he had a special desire to continue a fighter in the memorable conflict between North and South. There happened to be right in front of him, where he was hiding, an opening which any one entering would enable the intruder straightway to discover the lurking foe. He resolved, therefore, to shoot down the first man who should have the misfortune to cross that aperture. Close by he heard the sound of voices. Brave as he was, he trembled at the extreme nearness of peril, and the musket dropped from his hands, making but a little noise, since the ground was almost next to it, and the gun accordingly had not far to fall.

“Some one is concealed in that bush,” said a soldier.

"Did you hear any thing?" asked another.

"I think so. It was like the fall of a footstep, or the rustling of a living body."

"Where's the Colonel?"

"Well, my man, here I am!" exclaimed the latter.

"We are going to search that bush, Colonel. So keep out of the way. For one man to be shot is enough."

"Why, Corporal? Is there a fox for us hid there?"

"Faix and shure your honour, the dickens a doubth of it!"

"Go ahead then, Corporal! We'll keep to this side, and give him a warm reception at right angles, should the rogue escape you. I am certain though that you'll take a feather out of his wing!"

"Och and begorra, 'tis a clane thing I'll make of it—nate and purtiful! Didn't I sarve me time to the business at home, whin I was a raw gossoon, and used to make free with Squire Houlahan's blackbirds?"

"Blackbirds!"

"Arrah! 'tis phissants I mane! Won't a rose smell as sweet, Colonel, by any other name? 'Tis yerself I heard say so, Colonel. And you're as good as Gospel truth!"

It is evident that the Corporal was an Irishman,

and on friendly terms with his officer, or else he would not have been allowed to indulge in language so unmilitary. It was indeed true that Corporal Shea was the Colonel's right-hand man in expeditions of this, and of other kinds, and so he was allowed to speak as he did. Moreover, it was a period of war and danger of death; and warfare, like adversity, makes strange bedfellows. Nay, some one coming back hereafter to his poor old mother's cabin in Ireland, might with truth tell her of the boy she gave a few pounds to, in order to bring him to America, that *El Dorado* of Ireland,—

“Mother, he saved his Colonel's life, and bravely it was done;
In the despatch they told it all, and named and praised your son.”

Therefore the Colonel gave him his freedom of speech, though martinets exclaimed, “How shocking!”

“Now, Corporal, look sharp and take care of yourself!”

“Catch a weazel asleep or a Tipperary boy! Lave me alone, and be aisy!”

Corporal Shea went forward on tiptoe for some thirty yards, and his experienced eye readily detected the figure of O'Malley Oranmore concealed amongst the bushes. It was the work of an instant to bring the Corporal's musket to its familiar position against his shoulder; he was about to fire when a blush of indignation at himself reddened his swarthy face,

for Oranmore's back was turned to him, and he had not the heart to fire at an enemy and knock him down as he would a "phissant." He advanced farther, stealthily, with the intention of capturing the fugitive, without the shedding of blood by pouncing upon him, and taking him unawares.

Meanwhile O'Malley Oranmore watched with indescribable eagerness the aperture in front of him, expecting every succeeding moment to see the rebel uniform appearing there. A rustling behind him induced him to look around hastily, and then he saw to his horror the dark mouth of a musket pointed close to his brain, and two eyes above it glaring down satisfactorily at him. He knew at once that it was useless to resist, that if he made one single little suspicious move his brains in all probability would be scattered amongst the surrounding bushes.

"I am in your power," he said. "Here, take me prisoner! I give myself up to you. For God's sake keep away the mouth of that musket!"

"If ye rise I'll shoot ye! And if ye don't whip the blackguard cap off the nipple of that gun, *at wanst*, I'll make mince-mate of every bone in yer body!"

Oranmore most dutifully obeyed, and without rising took the cap off his gun and threw it away.

"Wisha and God be with ye night and day, Mither O'Malley! And how is my Lord and the

missus and all at home? And what, in the name of all who are in glory, brought yerself with yer two legs here?"

Oranmore could hardly reply through sheer astonishment, and when he could, all he was able to say was,—

“Con Shea!”

“The same, yer honour, saving your presence. But, bad scran to it! what a scrape ye’ve brought me into!”

“How?” he gasped.

“Do ye think I’m going to trate ye to a shute of cast-off prison clothes? Faix, and as I hope for a bed in heaven, I’ll not be so generous! Lie still, yer honour, as if ye was the cat by the fire afther her dinner. I was an Irishman before I was an American soldier, and if ye keep yerself quiet I’ll stale away agin, and thwist the Colonel round me little finger with a yarn that shall bate “Gulliver’s Travels”! Good-bye, and God be with ye, Mither O’Malley! and think of Con Shea sometimes. Oh yis, that same ganius was a Tipperary boy before he followed Stonewall Jackson! God keep ye, Mither O’Malley, and good-bye!”

The poor good-natured fellow actually thrust his hand through the bush and clasped warmly that of Oranmore. The latter pressed his lips to it in his gratitude.

“God bless you, Con,” he said, hoarsely.

“Amin. An’ the same to yer honour with intherest,” he whispered, and fled back to his comrades.

The gallant Corporal was killed before the South gave in ; and often Oranmore remembered his smiling good-natured face with real tears coursing down his own.

God forgive you the lie you told the Colonel, Con !

CHAPTER XXI.

“DO YOU THINK THAT IT COMES FROM PARK LANE?”

I.

“Beloved ! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my early path,
(Drear path, alas ! where grows
Not even one lonely rose),
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

II.

“And thus thy memory is to me,
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean, throbbing far and free
With storms—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.”

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

WHEN the war was ended, and gentle peace again proclaimed between North and South, O'Malley Oranmore, who had departed from the city of New York an unknown private soldier in the Federal army, returned thither a Colonel in the same ! After

remaining in the city for some months on leave, through the assistance of an influential friend he was offered, and at once thankfully accepted, a lucrative military appointment out West; where, when he arrived, he lived in comparative retirement, and was observed to be an altered, silent man, but amiable in disposition and sincerely beloved by his fellow-officers, not alone for his simplicity of nature and benevolence, but for his studied considerateness towards the faults of others. About the most remarkable trait which strikes the notice of these jovial fellows—careless soldiers of fortune as they are—in their scrupulous but gentle Irish Colonel, is his extreme precaution lest he might inadvertently not utter the truth in conversation. They lay it down to over-conscientiousness on his part, and occasionally, because of it, indulge in a good-natured laugh at him behind his back.

Whence came he, they wonder? Who was he originally? They know not, although they would like to know. There was something about him, at all events, which made them respectful in his presence—something which accurately hinted of high-breeding—the *je ne sais quoi* of the gentleman. Though his face was young-looking, his beard, moustache, and hair were nearly white. Sorrow might have easily done that, some gossips say.

Rumour, whose tongues are legion, would have him once a youth to whom an ample fortune and

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elevated social position opened every avenue to society and to perdition, and that he pretty freely travelled the road which led headlong to the latter; that disappointed in not obtaining in marriage the hand of a certain loftily-born, dainty-minded dame, he sullenly left his native land; and when, years after, he returned, that his former friends and associates almost failed to recognize him, for his brown hair had changed to a greyish-white, and he, moreover, within himself was sadly altered too.

Tired of the monotony of home, and burning with the desire for adventure, he sailed across the Atlantic, landed in America, and enlisting as a private soldier when the civil war broke out, so rumour added, he worked his way gallantly and rapidly upward to a colonelcy, unaided by aught save the force of his unmistakable daring in battle, and the genius of “getting on in the world” which some lucky people seem to be so gifted with.

As he said nothing either in contradiction or in confirmation of this rumour, the tale was more or less believed in by those who heard it; and, having been once sent fairly abroad upon its travels, it began, as a matter of course, to gather additions to itself as the snow-ball does.

To none, it is further noticed, is the young-looking, white-haired Colonel so kind as to youthful girls; two of whom wishing to get married to their sweethearts,

but they being poor, and not having the requisite means to set up house, he has actually been so charitable as to present them both with a sufficient dowry to enable them to begin married life upon something more substantial than love in a cottage, and has procured work for their happy husbands to labour honestly at.

The bread-winners for the two youthful households are grateful to the considerate Colonel in their rough way. And already the name of this changed-man is blessed in the far West!

He treasures that bruised locket still! Oh yes, indeed he treasures it! it has saved his life for the second time. When in battle, a bullet was flying into his heart, but that the locket turned it away. Ah! that golden relic was watching at the portal and kept the leaden enemy from entering and working fatal mischief.

The flower culled from her grave is in his possession too, and, although withered now, it is dearer to him than the fairest of blooming roses.

Has that pure girl done nothing for him in heaven that he should be altered thus? Treasuring the remembrance of one of God's own so faithfully, has he been led at last to think of God Himself, until ere long that single thought absorbs all others, and the scales drop for ever from the enlightened eyes? Such changes are miracles; but miracles are recurring, though some, perhaps, do not think so, nor see

them, nor feel them; yet many do think so, see them, feel them, and the daily lives of some people are in themselves miracles. O'Malley Oranmore's existence was a miracle, for the devil had been hurled from the throne of his heart, and an entirely new reign had begun there.

Two bitter motives for contrition sweep continually his soul. One is the recollection of Lady Summer-vale's fate. The other that of Dolores and her child. Oh, what a brute he was to fling her with her unborn babe into the murderous river! Oh, what a brute he considers himself now!

And poor Dolores!

Were she alive, and he knew it, he would hasten to her, and on his knees shed tears of truest sorrow. Poor Dolores! he understands better of late what she was and what she might have been as time wore on. Amongst all his memories of her he cannot remember one unkind word uttered by her beautiful lips. And often she had good reason to reproach him. Even when he threw her ruthlessly into the flowing water she only said, “Have mercy on me, *dearest!*”

The affectionate words burned themselves into his heart, and were never forgotten to the day of his death.

D'Auvergne and Harold Leyne having returned from the Derby found no further trace of Oranmore for the present in London or elsewhere. Noel re-

mained for some time with Harold at Hampstead, affording thereby unseen joy to gentle Mary Leyne, who never allowed it to be revealed to him that she loved him with a tenderer feeling than the old familiar, sisterly affection. He thanked her for the delightful valentine she sent, and then—you know, he was her brother—he showed to her the costly one he had on the same day received, likewise from London, from some person who signed herself “A Pearl.” Mary was frightened when she saw it, as one would be frightened who feared lest a treasure she prized was going to be taken away from her.

“Do you think that it comes from Park Lane?” he asked.

“I do. Yes,” she answered, “I am pretty sure that it has been sent to you from there.”

“‘A Pearl’ of great price!” he remarked, good-humouredly.

“According as the opinion of the world goes,” she replied; “she may be a very true woman too. I think she is.”

“You know her very well, Mary.”

“Tolerably.”

“What is your estimate of her?”

“I had rather not answer you.”

“Why?”

“One woman may not be the best judge of another woman.”

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“Nor a man either, when blinded by love.”

“Do you love Lady Marguerita?”

“I might find it easy to love her.”

“So I should say, especially when I look at this valentine. What a match it would be for you!” and Mary sighed ere she could help herself. In sighs love can be betrayed.

“I often think what an advantage you men have over us women,” she added; “the world of stirring events is yours to move in—we look on.”

“But woman has her own place to occupy in the affairs of human life. Man is the bread-winner for her—she has to make the bread sweet to the taste and the labour of winning it sweet. How are you getting on, Mary? Do you ever want money now? You should always call upon me when you require it. Remember old times!”

“Thank you, dear Noel!” she replied, and drew her form up somewhat proudly.

“But do you need money?”

“Oh, no. Harold would help me if I did. He is good. I am very well off. Teaching music and languages I have found in themselves rather lucrative, and people are extremely kind to me——”

“They could not be otherwise,” he interrupted.

She smiled, and blushed one of her old blushes — she had not lost that trick of getting rosy yet — and continued, “But I have a secret to

confide to you. You will be surprised to hear it, Noel!"

"I am all attention!" he said, "What is it? Why do you pause and look silently at me? I often find you at that meditative business in my presence."

The old blush started into her face again, and well became the constant sunshine in her eyes. "Sir Rutherford Everton," she said—Noel started; Mary remarked that movement at the mention of the Baronet's name—"has been here again," she went on, "and has made another offer of marriage to me."

"Did you accept it?"

"I did not say, 'No.'"

"I congratulate you, my dear Ma——"

"I did not say, 'Yes,' either!" she interrupted, hurriedly. "I told him to give me a week to decide. The week shall have expired to-morrow morning, when, at eleven o'clock, I expect him here."

"Mary!——" but D'Auvergne remained silent, and a storm of emotion passed through his breast. "I will not ask you what your answer shall be," he said, after a moment's hesitation. "I only desire that all you need on earth may be given to you; may every real happiness be yours; may the 'wish' you sent me on Valentine's day—that most beautiful wish!—be realized in your regard! Sir Rutherford

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is a fine fellow, and in your hands he shall become finer still. Mary,” he added, earnestly, “do you see these two valentines I hold in my hand?”

“Oh, Noel! how wasteful! how ungrateful! What must Lady Marguerita think of you?” Mary exclaimed.

He had torn the costly valentine to pieces. “I want to prove to you,” he said, “that I care not for her who sent it.”

“But she is so good, and so beautiful!”

“I admire her; I respect her. I do not love her. I never can love her as——” he was about adding, “I love you,” only he remembered that Sir Rutherford Everton was to visit Hampstead at eleven o’clock the next morning.

Noel d’Auvergne’s strange conduct at this interview decided the answer which Mary Leyne was determined upon giving to the persevering and faithful Baronet.

Colonel O’Malley—he had dropped when he arrived in America the family name of Oranmore—was recalled again to New York from his military post in the Far West, and shortly after his return he was raised to the rank of General. General! He had obtained one of the objects of his life’s earliest ambition, namely, to be styled a “General,” and to enjoy the emoluments attached to that title of high military rank. But he was lifted up thereto

in a manner how different from his former expectations! Now that he had in very truth attained to it, how little he cared for it in reality! How changed entirely he was within himself these latter days!

Subdued, contrite, ennobled by his repentance, he lived, as nearly as it was allowed him to do so, an unobtrusive life, and mingled but little in American society. He felt no desire henceforth to shine in social circles, to strut through ball-rooms, big with his imaginary importance. Often at evening time, or early in the fresh gay morning, those who wandered thither bent upon a similar pious mission, saw the bowed and white-haired man standing by a green grave, shadowed over at times by a simple Cross. "When I die," he said to the sexton one day, "I am to be buried alongside this grave!" And to ensure the realization of his wishes, he bought the ground and built a vault thereon beforehand.

Much of his leisure time he devoted to the alleviation of the sufferings of the poorer classes of the Irish people who disembarked from their own land upon the quays of New York. He had compassion for them, and we hope that his charity covered a multitude of sins. He was sorry to see them coming. Alas! in our fair island a noble race will not remain! Our people are dwindling down in Ireland. We have a generous soil to give us bread; we have

a fair sky above us, though sometimes a tearful one ; we have intellect to enable us to hold our own amongst the races of the earth. But our brethren and bosom-friends abandon us, making way for strangers to light their household fires on the cold hearths of our fathers. It is a pity that so fair an isle should be deserted by millions of its people. What is the consequence? A cloud has arisen in the West whose shadow is thrown Eastward. And Brother Jonathan likes the look of it. There is one consolation: Ireland, like her Divine Master, is poor, and goes forth into the wide, wide world as His Apostle. For awhile God has afflicted her, because acceptable men are tried in the furnace of humiliation. But is it nothing that when other nations have fallen away and forgotten Him, she has through all those centuries been true? Shall her glory come when Civilization sheaths the sword and listens to Nestor? Time will tell.

It was about this period that General O'Malley fell fatally ill. Upon his last bed of sickness we will leave him for awhile, and return to Mary Leyne and that gentleman who is frequently her theme of thought—Noel d'Auvergne.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FAVOURITE ACTRESS.

“A very woman : one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.”

LOWELL.

“Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eyes ;
In all her gestures dignity and love.”

MILTON.

AT last Mary knew that he loved her. The glad knowledge was beyond doubt, although Noel uttered no sweet-toned words in confirmation of her happy belief that she, and she alone, was nearest and most precious to him, at length, of living women. And he, on his part, did he not understand that she loved him, and him alone? He was sure of it. She had refused the wealthy Baronet again, and for the last time, since she sent him from her feet with the mutual understanding that he was to kneel there a suppliant no more.

It was in this way Noel and Mary were situated : Noel d'Auvergne had two wherefrom to choose, namely, Lady Marguerita Dashbrook and Mary Leyne.

Mary Leyne also had two strings to her bow—to use a familiar phrase—Noel and Sir Rutherford Everton.

Lady Marguerita, there was no mistake about it, was decidedly the better match for Noel d'Auvergne in the eyes of those whose object it is to raise themselves in the world by hook or by crook. With reference to Mary Leyne, there was of course no comparison in the same eyes between Noel—be he ever so clever, and, as a young barrister, ever so rising—and Sir Rutherford Everton, the respected owner of stately Waterbrook Castle, and who was in the undisturbed enjoyment moreover of eleven or twelve or thirteen thousand a year. Sir Rutherford also, be it known to all those whom it may not concern, could trace back his forefathers to the period of the Conquest, and we know not whether aristocracy has not got *its* aristocracy. It is something—is it not?—to be in a position which shall enable you to prove that one of your sires was made head-cook to William Rufus! Even in the ritualism of Royalty, what is the Gold-Stick-in-Waiting, if it was only his grandfather—the son of a cook, it may be—got perched for six months on England's woolsack, after

being an acolyte for forty years or more, serving faithfully the altar of the Law?

Another man besides Noel d'Auvergne, and another woman besides Mary Leyne, would have hastened to spurn one another with right good will, for the sake of securing Lady Marguerita or Sir Rutherford—each a better prize in matrimony than they themselves. Others would have, with the gladdest eagerness, seized upon the golden opportunity afforded to them both of socially aggrandizing themselves at the expense of true love. But no; true love was not to be bartered thus for sake of a foolish phantom. Not to be bartered, at least, by these two—by Noel or by Mary—in whom there lurked none of the common alloy. Their nature, which was the same nature for the one and for the other, sought, as water does, its own level, and found it. Not in the lower atmosphere of worldly interest merely, could either breathe and continue healthy. A higher element was wholesome for them.

What influence restrained them from grasping the more exalted prizes so easily within their reach, and not alone restrained them to remain just as they were,—satisfied if they should never be nearer, never be husband and wife?

The answer is to be found in a mystery of love which they believed, but which men do not believe, and therefore do not find the blessings of. The

happiness of both Mary and Noel was in that mystery. Where else could it be but in it? as those who know it will admit. So, therefore, childlike Mary and Noel waited until the will of God was made known to them: and the Father brought together, in His own way of doing things, these two docile children of His will. Who would not envy them the gift of casting all their care upon Him?

Both had suffered. Both were more than timid now about taking any step of such vital importance as a declaration of love, and as marriage implies. They had gone through an agony, a passion, a crucifixion; and after that came their happy Easter-day and a most plenteous Pentecost, showering graces down from heaven upon them; and earth claims them not for her ordinary own, and yet more than heretofore are they her own.

Mary Leyne had abandoned entirely of late her pursuits as a governess. She was led to do this because she was earning a great deal of ready money by another and more gainful occupation, which will explain itself by and by. When they were poured lavishly into her lap, what did she do with her abundant coins? Invest them in bank-shares? Throw them into the tea-trade? Spend them in dress? Buy a needy husband with them?

She kept hardly a shilling! No, not even for

a rainy-day. Her trust was so beautifully implicit in God, that she gave almost all she could spare to the poor, and to the poor-sick especially, whom she visited. Her chief motive for exerting herself in her new employment—she exerted herself strenuously in it—was simply in order to be the bread-winner of poor homes whose own bread-winners were struck helpless by death or by disease. This was her way of doing good—to earn money, and give it in charity. And is it not a worthy way, and deserving of unalloyed admiration? Who can deny for a moment that though she stood not by the sickbed-side in the unassuming garb of the purest religion, her life was exquisite in the loveliness of its holiness? Who can deny that though she spoke no solemn vows of self-renunciation in the presence of a sympathetic sisterhood, her will was consecrated upon the altar of sacrifice, and registered in heaven to be part of her eternal glory hereafter there? Hers was the life of a saint, though no aureola shall crown her brows in the earthly history of the Church. “The chaste soul is one that loves God, and Him alone,” said the son of St. Augustine. And Mary’s soul was chaste. Her love for Noel was a part of her love for God. Deep down in the undisturbed depths of her sublime nature it dwelt unalteringly, brighter than the sparkle of the morning-star, which reveals its beauty to the birdless stillness of the awakening dawn. Like one all-famous

star, shining to-day in the world's annals as it will shine in them to-morrow, and the next day, and the next, that God-love led her surely ever to the stable-cabins of His poor, where she offered, like those wise eastern ones, her precious gifts of gold, and the myrrh and frankincense which were concealed in the fragrance of her purity :—

“ Silent, lone,
As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew,
And kept her heart serene within its zone.
There was awe in the homage which she drew ;
Her spirit seem'd as seated on a throne,
Apart from the surrounding world, and strong
In its own strength—most strange in one so young !”

It happened that Noel d'Auvergne arrived in London one evening, and as it was at what he, at least, deemed an unseasonable hour to make his appearance there, he did not disturb them at Hampstead. Accordingly, he resolved to pass the night in London, and secured a bed in Morley's, the hotel he usually frequented.

Having nothing in particular to occupy his leisure time, he went to the theatre in order to wile away a couple of hours. He was induced to proceed thither more especially, because there was a favourite new actress performing there, of whom the London newspapers were enthusiastically sounding the praises, and whose truthful photograph—which Noel had observed

in many shop-windows, not only here but in Dublin—clothed her with an unwonted interest in his eyes. So he went to the theatre full of curiosity to see her acting, and to judge for himself as to her claim to such a large share of the public notice she had succeeded in winning during a short period of time.

This fresh star in the theatrical firmament looked beautiful as the fair heroine of a famous piece which obtained a lucky run on the boards for fifty successive nights. Crowds worked their violent way into the filling theatre, and crowds turned doggedly homewards, disappointed that there was no more room to be disposed of. It was the fiftieth night—the last of the performance, at least for the present time; the manager surely intended to bring it before the public again!—and it was most fortunate for Noel d'Auvergne that he had wisely taken the precaution of being one of the earliest at the yet unopened doors.

For half an hour he was compelled to wait in the thick of the expectant group which fronted the pit-entrance. At the expiration of that interval he had the satisfaction of finding his powers of patience amply repaid their brief trial by the pleasant possession of one of the best seats in the theatre, right opposite the stage. He purposely chose the pit instead of the more distinguished boxes, expressly with the design of struggling into that central seat, which afforded him an excellent view, not only of the performance,

but of the crowded audience which peopled the house. He could not reconnoitre the upper regions, certainly, with the same ease as the lower—where the graceful forms of refined ladies gladdened the eye—but indeed he did not complain inwardly that the cockney “gods” were more or less invisible. The last-mentioned city-deities regaled themselves before the drama commenced, and between the acts, with oranges, gin, and “XX porter”—a nectar for the galleries!

The theatre was packed full as usual. The favourite of the hour played her difficult part with consummate taste. The house rang again and again, from pit to uppermost gallery, with repeated plaudits.

At the end of the first act, having been called for most rapturously, and most peremptorily, she appeared, radiant with smiles and loveliness, before the fallen curtain.

It was the signal for a rapid shower of rare bouquets to rain down at her dainty feet from the right and from the left, and from beneath the footlights, where other enthusiastic observers rose from their seats to bestow their share of flowery gifts.

Then one nobly-born lady reclining in a box close to the stage, urged to the deed by the universal excitement prevailing at the moment, unclasped quickly—as if she could never do it soon enough—a costly diamond-bracelet, and flung it generously from

her upon the carpeted-stage. It dropped upon the satin train of the splendid dress worn by the queen-like gliding actress moving to and fro. The precious stones sparkled as diamonds can sparkle, and their true gleam caught the searching eyes of the witnessing multitude.

One low murmur rising louder until it broke unrestrainedly forth into a grand continuous cheer of delighted approval, acknowledged readily the graceful act of the noble lady. The beautiful heroine of the evening bowed low, picked up the shining gift, and with an innate charm of manner, smiling at the giver all the while, she pressed the bracelet gratefully to her lovely lips. It was another irresistible occasion for peals of genuine applause, amidst which the well-pleased actress retired, almost overcome by the feelings of the moment.

In the pit there was one who sat watching all this—one with a broadly-built chest and the stamp of character upon his manly bearing. He sat motionless, not very far from the unsteady footlights, and regarded with astonishment that elegant form pacing ladylike from one place to another, while fastening, as it were, by some secret, powerful magnetism the enraptured gaze of the theatre upon herself.

In the last act there was a popular song which it fell to her lot to sing, and this admired melody, along with its appropriate surroundings of accompaniment

and painted scene, and pretty faces in the background, was one of the crowning hits which made the piece so palatable to the public. The actress sang this song. She sang it well; but nevertheless with a most real touch of indescribable sadness about her, for this was the last night of the piece, and she was to sing this song—which she herself loved so well to sing, because its meaning was one that was after her own heart—ah, yes! to-night she was to sing this song in public, it may be, for the last time. For who can tell what to-morrow shall bring—what it shall undo? Ah, who can tell? And withal the clever actress could not help her joyous looks breaking out through the cloudy sadness, like sunbeams through an April shower. Her bosom was rapidly beating with the unsubdued pleasure of her triumph, and still more with the splendid-hearted exultation of genius when freely breathing in its native element. For it was evident that here in such scenes was its element. Perhaps the actor has his vocation as well as the priest.

She was encored of course. Yet that would not do. The appetite of the audience was still unappeased. She must obey, and sing for the third time. She cast a beseeching look at the crowded theatre to let her go, but both men and women, uncharitably—and yet charitably—were fully determined to be inexorably exacting in the satisfaction of their desire; and

then, yielding to their expressive wishes, she sang a third time for them—not that former song, but one, a sweet old air, endearing as the harmonious nightingale's melodious music, ever old and always new, which sent off the listening house into such a state of breathless silence that while she was singing one would fear to utter a low whisper to his next neighbour. What is that noise? Who has become ill? Where is he? Where is she? Remain quiet a moment, ladies and gentlemen, and all will be right. Do not rush forward so impetuously! There is no fire!

What is it?

The actress pauses in alarm and gazes anxiously down into the pit, where a sudden commotion is beginning, and where a quick gathering of eager human faces cluster together promiscuously. Then arises a tumultuous medley of cries.

“Give him more air, will you? What are you about?”

“Keep back a little, if you please, and do not crowd upon the poor fellow so impatiently!”

“Wait; he will surely return to himself immediately.”

“Only do not press upon him. Give him more air!”

“Did you never see a man in a faint before, ma'am?”

“ Hits th’ ’eat of the ’ouse,” exclaimed a London “cad.”

“ Give way there! Where on airth har ye ’unting to? The gent’s heaten too much, and’s eavy arter his grub!” responded the companion of the last speaker. And this latter “gent” was loudly “got up” in broad-patterned plaid trousers, velvet coat, and crimson scarf, kept in its position by a horsy ring of very doubtful metal. But his costume took not in the least from his evident good nature. And the seeker after charity in others should be no respecter of persons.

“ Be so kind as to make use of my scent-bottle,” a lady said.

“ And of my fan,” added another.

“ We do not want it, thanks to you, miss! Open his shirt-collar. Oh, for a glass of water! Thank you. There! Did I not say so?”

“ See, he is coming round!”

“ A minute more will do the business.”

“ All right, sir!”

“ It was merely a little faintness; but you’d better leave the theatre, sir.”

“ You had better come out of this hot place.”

“ Give me more air—more air, please!” pleaded a faint voice.

“ Yes, yes, immediately. Here is my arm.”

“ Oh, thanks!”

“Lean upon it without the least fear. I will support you.”

“He is a gentleman,” remarked another lady.

“You would know it by his bearing,” replied the same who had kindly offered to lend her scent-bottle.

“Make way there!”

“Well, well, to be sure! There! he is off again!”

“Your best plan is to lift him at once on to the stage, and convey him out into the open air immediately. It is the quickest way of bringing him to.”

A score of considerate hands put forth their charitable assistance and raised the prostrate form of a gentleman who had fainted in the pit. They brought him without delay and laid him for a moment on the stage of the theatre, where the popular actress, forgotten for awhile amidst the new excitement which attracted the audience from the contemplation of her, was gazing downwards full of pity, her eyes upon the figure lying before her, and her woman's lovely heart burning with true compassion. An actress, you know, shall act all the more cleverly for being a thorough woman at the core. She took a glass of water from a theatrical attendant—a very fierce-looking stage-ruffian, by the way—who had just made his appearance at the time. She tenderly placed the refreshing draught of wise Nature's beverage to the lips of

the sufferer. The drink revived him. He opened his wondering eyes, and fixed them lovingly upon her compassionate countenance, as he had fixed them upon her years before when he was laid low like this, not in a grand theatre, but in an humble cottage by the sea. Ah, what changes had come over them both since then! How much sorrow had taught them! Sorrow, that salt of the corruptible earth! And sorrow, too, which found no relief for itself in tears. If all sorrows were washed away by tears, there would be many tears shed throughout life. Tears—they are the dew of the soul.

The actress went upon her knees by the side of the prostrate figure. "Noel!" she exclaimed, and there was an exquisite thrill in the cultured tones of her modulated voice which struck one of the most silent chords of his nature until it responded in unison. "Leave him! Leave him *to me!*" she said, motioning the bystanders hurriedly away from him and from her. "Do not be surprised at beholding me kneeling here. He is a dear friend of mine—such a dear friend!"

They made way for her respectfully, for the attendants at the theatre stood in awe of her somehow, although she was humble as the humblest amongst them, and they knew that she was such in disposition. Poor fellows! they had lots of time to take note of things when stationed upon the

stage during the performance of the different plays enacted thereon, and in which they served to fill up a gap in some scene, or to swell the ranks of bandits, pirates, and robbers in general, or to quaff deliciously nothing out of gilt goblets midst festival displays. Poor fellows! do the grand rich people in the boxes ever notice you?

The actress, still kneeling, placed her beautiful arm around Noel's neck, and lifted up his head, fearful for Noel's sake. Then the curtain, which had fallen and had been raised again to afford more room and air, dropped on this new scene so unexpected in the drama played that night upon the boards. Though so unforeseen, yet it was not after all uncongenial, and fitted in well with the play, for it was true, like the play itself, to that which is part of the lovely in our human life.

The audience, blank with astonishment, were silent for a moment, and immediately, with the suddenness of a report from a cannon, there pealed forth one loud round of rejoicing approval.

Mary Leyne—she was the actress!—was called for vociferously. As soon as she made her graceful appearance again upon the varied scene, another bracelet, as costly as the first one, and flung by another coroneted lady, but from an opposite quarter of the house, fell at her feet.

The final act followed. The favourite actress, now

a greater favourite than ever, surprised even those who were most familiar with her remarkable talents by that splendid display of genius which was on fire within her. Afterwards, the thronging audience departed to their several homes extremely satisfied, and the shrewd manager of the theatre bowed that night to prospering Mary Leyne with more than his usual studied, well-measured politeness—a significant fact which served to greatly please prudent Mary Leyne, who foresaw the brilliant prospects for the future which that bow of the manager implied, while, with the thoughtful way which was natural to her, she recalled to mind her hungering poor and inadequately attended sick, for whom, and not for her mere self, she was labouring thus and with such success in the new sphere of employment which chance, or rather Providence had led her into.

The air which she sang to-night, and which had overcome Noel d’Auvergne and laid him low, was an old familiar melody Madeleine used to sing for him in the days of their love-making.

Once he lay senseless as he lay this evening; but on the former occasion it had been a wild, wet night, and the scene happened in a dining-room, and the woman he loved mistook then and there the cause of his helpless attitude, and despised him, and thereby sank gradually but surely into that premature grave

which she had passionately dug for herself with her own foolish, misguided hands !

And the woman—the actress, toiling for the London poor—who beheld him senseless in the same manner to-night, was, when compared with her sister Madeleine—peace to her memory!—as Ruth to Orpah.

That identical physical weakness of his, that same momentary deprivation of his strong bodily powers, which proved so fatal to Madeleine, and which came as an infliction upon Noel, owing to his courage on that day at the quarry's edge, when he gallantly saved the life of Madeleine Leyne at the imminent risk of his own—that senselessness, sudden, and overwhelming, which poor dead Madeleine so sadly misconstrued to her own fatal detriment, came to be the turning-point in dear, sweet, good Mary Leyne's life, and from it may be dated the long-delayed acknowledgment of Noel's hidden love for her. Yes, truly, for many a day—ay, even before they found that Madeleine was going to die—his affection for Mary had been growing slowly, securely, silently. As long as he loved Madeleine, he paid no heed to the rare excellences of Mary's character, though he could not but pay heed to her loveliness, which was fully equal to the beauty of her elder sister. But when Madeleine disenchanted him of her own accord, the sermon of Mary's life continued to be eloquent, and Noel was not one

to refuse to listen when the preacher herself was so sincere. He saw at once then which was the better, higher, worthier woman, and straightway he began again to love, but this time with a spirit of caution which often drew him back, and closed his lips when they were about to betray him into a declaration to Mary of the love for her which was within him.

“You never told *me!*” he remarked, reproachfully, when he had somewhat recovered and sat behind the scenes until Mary had performed her part in the last act. “You never told *me, Mary,*” he continued, “that you had gone on the stage!”

“I was afraid that you would object, and that was the reason I have appeared before the public under a false name. I wanted to better myself in the world; I required money, the opportunity offered, and after some previous engagements at smaller theatres I made my *début* here in this piece.”

“Then you must have been some time on the stage!” he exclaimed, in wonderment.

“From almost the very day of my arrival in London after Madeleine died. For certain I received a minor engagement during the first week I passed in Hampstead with Harold and his wife.”

“You astonish me!”

“I am a woman of the world, you know,” she replied, laughing, “and must make my way.”

“And you would never accept money from me!”

"No!" she answered, proudly.

"I am angry with you," he said.

"For what?" she asked, anxiously and seriously.

"Is it for going on the stage?"

"Not at all," he answered. "It is an honourable career, and worthy of a woman like you. You should have taken money from me when I offered it to you."

"It is for not accepting your money that you are angry with me?"

"Yes."

"Do you not find any praise for me in your heart somewhere, Noel, for pulling the oars against the stream myself, instead of sluggishly asking others to do so for me?"

"I am not so angry with you," he said, with a smile, "as I am proud of you. Why, Mary, you are a great woman!"

She laughed a gay laugh. "What do you call greatness?" she asked.

"Your name, Mary, is on every body's tongue."

"It is not my own name; and besides I do not call that sort of thing greatness," she said.

"What is greatness?" he asked.

"A spotless life," she answered, readily; and regarding him with a gentle look, she added, "like yours."

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHITHER ?

“ A place in thy memory, dearest,
Is all that I claim ;
To pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.”

GERALD GRIFFIN.

GENERAL O'MALLEY could have found little difficulty in wedding an eligible New York heiress, if on matrimonial designs he happened to be bent. But he did not happen, as it turned out, to be bent on them. That which was for him so intricate of attainment in Ireland was easy here. Baffled in the one land, in the other mothers and daughters alike courted his notice, and hinted to him what was their ambition. The elder Mr. Weller paternally advises his dutiful Sam to beware of widows—excuse on its merits the hackneyed allusion—and the successful General likewise avoided them. Towards their daughters he conducted himself as a gentleman conducts himself; but he soon gave his interfering

friends to understand very distinctly, not only that he was a widower, but that he was resolved always to continue a widower. Why, they could not guess, though they put their own—not the right one—construction upon this unshaken determination of his not to marry again. Then, when no one thought it was likely that he should fall ill, he sickened hopelessly, and severe suffering struck him sternly down, and kept its iron hand upon him until he learned to lean on God alone, of Whom his idea latterly was something more than that of a Great Spirit. He said, though friends would not believe his words, that he would never leave his bed alive, that he would never leave it until they came to carry him out into the street to take his last journey.

He lodged, when he fell thus fatally ill, in handsome apartments belonging to a house inhabited by a lady who lived alone with her only child—a gracious boy with rich brown hair which might have been yellow in childhood.

The boy and the ailing warrior grew to be close friends, and the young fellow said to the General, one day, “People say I am exceedingly like you!”

“They who say so do me an honour; I have heard it too.”

“They declare—I hear them speaking to mamma about it, you understand?”

“Yes.”

“They declare that your eyes and mine are exactly alike, General !”

“I am quite proud of it !”

“Wherefore ?” asked the boy, opening those handsome eyes wide.

“Because I like your eyes.”

“And I think yours very *nice*,” he whispered, as if in confidence.

“Where is your mother ?” the sick man asked.

“Down-stairs, covering a ball with leather for me. I left her busy at the work. Oh, she does cover them so well !”

“You are very fond of mamma, my boy,” he remarked, softly.

“Fond ? I would die if she died !” he replied.

“Send her to me when she has finished covering your ball,” the sick man said.

“She shall come this minute. Never mind my ball ! It can wait, and so can I.” The young lad hastened down-stairs.

She came at once at the soldier’s bidding. He looked earnestly at her when she made her appearance in the room. He was convinced. Approaching death seemed to make things vivid to him that might have been indistinct before. He bared his once powerful right arm, which knew how to cleave with the sword. “Read that name !” he said.

She gave one cry, and threw herself upon his

breast. He pressed her to it tenderly, and wept bitterly. He had found one whom he did not expect to find on earth again.

Years ago, by the shores of Southern Spain, an old sailor belonging to a British man-of-war had, by some art known to himself, written into O'Malley Oranmore's right arm, in dark, distinct letters, this name,—

DOLORES BURGOS.

She is leaning upon his breast now, and all—yes all! —is forgiven. Long, long ago all had been forgiven by her; but in order to satisfy himself about it, her repentant husband needed from her lips repeated expressions of her full forgiveness. With her whole heart she yielded to his desire, and spoke those charming words of woman's mercy. Oh, that he had known her longer, and had been under the spell of her influence, how much might have been spared him! She would have overcome him and changed him. She would have convinced him of the reality of virtue by the simple fact and example of her own living existence. Women have a sublime part to play in human affairs. We have read that "the rôle of a Christian wife resembles that of a guardian angel. She may lead the world, but by remaining, like him, invisible." O'Malley Oranmore knew at length that he was forgiven by her, not because she said so—there is a better way than saying it—

but by her angel-like ways, and her ministering love. But, alas! she only found him to lose him just when she understood that he loved her! For soon the rose-leaves shall fall around his grave. Such things as this are the mysteries of suffering, and we shall not seek to probe them. Our tread would be upon an empire's dust.

Dolores told him her tale, and of her journey with Lady Summervale. His habitual coolness did not desert him at the mention of that terrible name, which excited such hideous spectacles in his mind. He told not to his wife the fate of her companion. That sin—deep and awful!—he cast away from him with other sins, and knew that God could forgive it. He had determined never to make confession of it to mortal man. He would die sooner than undergo the humiliation of confessing it! He will leave its forgiveness to that mercy which is greater than justice. Before he died he changed his determination, and underwent the abhorred humiliation without difficulty, and without a dread of him to whom he revealed his secret. Before he died he did confess it—to one more sacred than Dolores.

A vessel bound for America picked up Dolores and her child almost immediately after their submersion in the waves, and brought mother and boy to New York. Her clothes kept her floating on the surface, and they had thrown her out a life-buoy,

which fortunately reached her, and then they stopped the vessel's course and manned a boat and conveyed her on board, and the captain's wife treated the poor girl and her yellow-haired child with considerate kindness. In New York, after much struggling with the world, Dolores, with the fruits of her economy and industry, was enabled to purchase a goodly residence, which she let out to lodgers in several suites of apartments. Thus she managed to support respectably both herself and her little boy, educating the latter in body and soul. She was beautiful still, notwithstanding the troubles which she had endured. A Spaniard—

“ She had something of sublime
In eyes which sadly shone, as seraphs shine,
All youth—but with an aspect beyond time ;
Radiant and grave—as pitying man's decline ;
Mournful—but mournful of another's crime.”

One day, coming very near his end, Oranmore was extremely ill and said to his wife, who nursed him for the wages of love,—

“ Lola dearest, send for her. Send quickly !”

“ Yes, my husband. But for whom shall I send ?”

“ For Beatrice of course.”

“ I will.” And she wept.

“ I am dying,” he answered ; “ make haste !”

Dolores did not hear him : she had left the room on her errand. Beatrice Fitzgerald came, as upon a previous occasion when summoned to his bedside she

had visited another sick man—Noel d’Auvergne—and had helped Mary Leyne during the malignant sickness which he was attacked with, owing to the revengeful machinations of this same—oh, how changed!—O’Malley Oranmore. Now when called upon she rejoiced within her secret self again, as was her wonted custom at the yearned-for opportunity afforded her of doing God’s good for more than the ten-hundredth time. We would find it a task, pleasing though it would be, to try and count the thousands of such opportunities which befell her earthless yet so earthly path. She herself, even if we wished it, would not have us number them.

When at first O’Malley Oranmore bade his restored wife to go in search of one of that useful sisterhood, who should appear but Beatrice accompanied by another Irish lady—this latter of noble birth—in response to the sudden call at the convent-door for assistance—for Beatrice was now stationed in New York: having left a blessed name after her, like a trail of light, in Dublin, she was ordered by her superiors to take ship and proceed to America, there to leave after her, before she dies or is sent on her mission of love elsewhere as usual, another blessed name.

She had when in the world been acquainted with the Honourable O’Malley Oranmore in the old native land of both, and it was chiefly through her persistent

instrumentality, supplemented by that of his wife, that the decaying warrior abandoned free-thinking—that easy religion of men of the world.

The pleasant face of dear Beatrice—continually benign and peaceful as her heart, and with something in it which meant more than benignity and peace, namely, the divine expression of a woman who is truly human, who is considerate towards human nature—secured a powerful effect upon the doubting mind of O'Malley Oranmore, and persuaded him irresistibly. The following announcement reached him before he died.

Lord Summervale, who was a passionate devotee of the chase, had been killed by a fall from his horse in the hunting-field. A lagging fox-hound had crossed his path and tripped his steed. Both rider and horse fell to the ground, and the rider never rose alive.

“You will be Lord Summervale, my boy!” Oranmore said to his son, in a feeble voice, which but faintly tokened the triumphant joy which such a thought gave the dying father.

“Really, dear papa! Can it be possible? I never expected this!”

“Nor I.”

“I shall be a great man then by and by! Are you glad, papa?”

“Yes,” he replied, and added, with a grim smile which the child did not understand, “I am now

Lord Summervale—at last! What a world this is! We grope our way through it, as it were, the helpless creatures of unforeseen circumstances. That which we desire ten to one shall be denied us. To submit without fear to the invisible will of a higher Power is the safest line of conduct, I should think. My boy,” he continued, with earnest solemnity, “when you grow up—if you are spared to grow up to manhood—always follow goodness. You will be certain in the long-run to find it the best policy!”

“Honesty is always the best policy, mamma tells me, dear papa!”

“She speaks well. Thank God she has been by your side from your birth, and that your education was not left to others!—to me, for instance!” he added, sorrowfully. “Oh, my darling boy, may you never be as your sinning father has been!”

A true prayer rising straight from the cleansed heart.

He wrote home immediately, while time on earth was still vouchsafed him, to his late brother’s agent—a man to be trusted, who never was honoured, or dishonoured, with a threatening letter embellished with Death’s coat-of-arms—announcing that he was alive in New York, with his son and heir, and imploring the agent to proceed thither without delay, as he, Oranmore, was not destined to live. His haste and forethought in this momentous matter secured the

title and inheritance to his son; and thus he was enabled to repay in a measure his wife and child for the fearful wrong he had in the days of his insanity—the expression somewhat is true—done both her and him. The wife was wonderfully grateful, and thought herself entirely repaid. Perhaps other mothers will think so too. *They* know what love is.

Oranmore also wrote to Noel d'Auvergne, beseeching him for the sake of his newly-found boy to come hither across the sea likewise. D'Auvergne assented to his imploring request, and accompanied by the late Lord's agent journeyed immediately to New York. They had the good fortune to arrive in sufficient time to afford the dying man ample opportunity of making the necessary arrangements, in order to indisputably secure the title and valuable inheritance to his graceful boy, who gave promise of reaching in a few years a worthy manhood, if we are to believe that the child is father to the man. Noel and sweet Beatrice once more were together, and had a great deal to say to one another about those who were dear to them both in Ireland. Together, likewise, it was their lot again to be at a solemn deathbed scene, whereat the peaceful spirit was reigning as it held sway at that former chamber of death wherein they had stood and knelt, and witnessed with awe that which was taking place there in the room of D'Auvergne's house, wherein Madeleine died so many ocean-miles away. And this

latter scene as well as the former spoke its own truths to them, although they sorrowed less.

The day came for Oranmore to die. It shall come for all of us—that certain day which is so uncertain. Towards the evening, ere passing from their midst, O'Malley said, “Dolores!”

“I am here, my husband.”

“Poor Lola! Poor, poor Lola! I have injured you deeply. But oh, my dearest one—yes, you are dearer to me than my child who taught me to love you as I love you now!—my dearest one, the punishments which came to me as a consequence have been fearfully great for that—you know what I allude to—and for other crimes! I am penitent. The rocky heart has yielded to the wand which struck it. Are you woman enough to forgive me, Lola?”

“Long ago I have forgiven you. Need I say this to you over again? Your boy compelled me to pardon the past, even when I believed—thank God, falsely believed!—that we would never meet on earth again; but I looked forward, for my heart was always hopeful, dearest, to our meeting elsewhere, where there would be no parting. I still look forward to meeting you there!”

“I thought you could not but forgive me, my wife. I thought poor Lola had it not in her nature to be in the least unkind, although—although—although I thrust you, as I did, into the—well,

well, I will be silent about it, Lola, since to speak of it displeases you."

She had placed, while he was thus speaking, her hand upon his lips, lest he might criminate himself. She would not have him do that. No one present in the room should know any thing of it, if she could prevent the knowledge of it ever reaching their ears—that he had plunged her into the flowing river with her unborn babe!

"Kiss me, Lola, and let me die," he continued. "God have mercy upon me!"

"Amen," she answered, audibly and reverently.

When he heard her answer, he looked wistfully into her moistened eyes, with a sort of smiling sunshine in his own. Then, turning to Beatrice, standing by his bed, he said, "You are true—if truth is true!"

He paused, and fixed his gaze upwards, as if he was thinking of what was quickly coming. The life within him was flowing fast away, and all the passionate tide would be out soon—ah, not to return now!

"Where is it?" he asked, vehemently, while his fierce eyes softened their glances, and the rolling pupils opened wide in search for something.

"Where is it?" he asked again, trembling this time with great eagerness. He stretched out his hand to his wife; but Lola did not understand.

“What does he want, sister?” she implored.

Beatrice said nothing, but watched the sufferer.

“He does not speak to me!” his wife exclaimed.

“Where is it?” he asked, for the third time.

“Oh, sister, what is it he wishes to have?” the wife cried.

Beatrice knew his desire. “This!” she answered, triumphantly—for this was the hour of one of her triumphs—and detaching a Crucifix from her bosom, she placed it before his decaying vision. He saw it, and recognized it with the delight of a child. She put it carefully between his half-clasped hands, covering where the gaping wound, during the Italian campaign, had been received in his side, and where the bruised locket no longer lay hid and treasured. He had destroyed the long-cherished trinket when he recovered his wife. To retain it still would have been in his eyes a wrong against Dolores. How changed he is!

Bowing down his head over the emblem clasped within his hands, his lips touched it.

“He at least was without guile!” he muttered, and closed his eyes. He opened them, exclaiming, in a loud voice, “You have conquered me. I thought in the end it would be so! I am yours!”

And he smiled, as if the cynic was satisfied. So he was. Dolores Oranmore was not given time to lift up the long dark delicate silken eyelashes ere her husband was dead.

in America and a Lord in Great Britain, therefore they deemed him worthy of a suitable monument. The humbler Cross over the ashes of the forsaken woman by his side would have been more eloquent than the sculptured marble over the costlier tomb of the warrior Lord, but that the Cross crowned the latter too.

And so ends the strange, eventful history of O'Malley Oranmore. If some will carp at its eventfulness, and deem his good end not in accordance with the punishment which *their* justice unmercifully requires for great crimes such as he has been guilty of, let them remember there are dreadful deeds perpetrated by men and by women who go about with smiling, satisfied faces, and, instead of meeting with punishment here, are, on the contrary, flattered and courted. The world fawns upon them; and, because they are either high in rank or princely in fortune, the world winks at their delinquencies and imitates them in a second-hand way. It is when some scapegoat is caught so palpably that the world, ashamed of itself, turns hypocrite and makes show of virtuous indignation over the criminal, and sends him away into the wilderness of opprobrium, while a whole nation of similar offenders roll up the whites of their eyes. A hot-blooded colonist took the law into his own hands lately, and the law let him off for so doing. His victim was one of the scapegoats;

and if every like delinquent was finished off in the same style, societies instituted for the Confusion of the Light of the Gospel in Foreign Parts might shut up shop and retire from business, to pass the remainder of their days contemplating the wreaths of chaff they have won.

The same land which received his first love into its bosom, has also received Oranmore. In death nigh each other: oh, are they together there where death blights not?

He has departed from the scenes of earth a General and a Lord. It was for such things he laboured assiduously once. When they at length were his, their charm was gone. If he had been allowed to live longer, he would have laboured for higher things.

Lacordaire thus classifies men who do their duty:— The honest man; the man of honour; the magnanimous man; the hero; the saint. O'Malley Oranmore died a hero.

The night before he left, he was reading a book and fell asleep. His wife gently, adroitly withdrew the volume from his hand, lest, if it dropped to the floor, the noise of the fall might awaken her husband.

At the open page there was this passage from Lacordaire, which Lola read, and was satisfied:—

“Who shall tell you what the love of Jesus Christ is, if you have never known it; and if you have, but for a single instant, tasted it, who shall recount to you its unutterable effect? Not the transports

of pride in the day of its greatest triumphs, nor the fascination of the flesh in the hour of its most deceitful delights, nor the mother receiving a son from the hands of God, nor the bridegroom leading his bride into the chaste abode of nuptial bliss, nor the poet in the first flight of his genius, nor any thing that is or has been, affords an image or a shadow, or even an inkling of what the love of Jesus Christ is in a soul. Every thing else is either too much or too little. Jesus Christ alone has the measure of our being ; He alone has made of greatness and lowliness, of strength and of unction, of life and death, a drink such as our heart yearned for without knowing it ; and those who have once tasted this cup, in the day of their manhood, know that I speak the truth, and that it is an intoxication from which there is no recovery."

Hush ! her husband is speaking in his sleep !
What does he say ? Lola listens.

"He alone has the measure of my being," Oranmore muttered in his slumber. "Every thing else is either too much or too little." He ceased ; and began again, "Lola is like Him, and my boy is like Lola, and I—I am——!" The sleeper sighed and did not finish the sentence.

Dolores rose from her chair in the silent chamber, and, standing by the bedside, raised her eyes to heaven and blessed the dying man.

Oranmore smiled in his sleep.

"LORD SUMMERVALE,

A GENERAL

IN

THE FEDERAL ARMY,"

are strange titles upon the tomb of the Honourable O'Malley Oranmore. Write beneath them this line :—

HERE LIETH ONE WHO GAVE THE ANGELS JOY MORE THAN
NINETY-NINE.

Farewell to you, Oranmore! You had a bad mother and a good heart, and your life was warped. But the bent twig that should have been straight, grew upright at last, and the dew of heaven fed its instincts. Farewell!

“Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
* * * * *
Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed;
Chaunteth not the brooding bee
Sweeter tones than calumny?
Let them rave.
Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.”

Ay, “let them rave”! you will not heed; nor those who witnessed your end.

Dolores Oranmore—now Lady Summervale—sailed for Ireland with her boy, the little Lord, when all was over, her house in New York disposed of, and interfering arrangements were finally completed. She had never been in Ireland, and that isle possessed for her attractions which made her have an affection for it akin to the love which she bore for her sunny native land. She was accompanied thither by Noel d’Auvergne, who paid her, in his gentlemanly style of doing things, those attentions which betrayed

the æsthetic nature of a gentleman born, and which added to her comfort. Need we say that she was grateful, and that had she known all she would have been still more grateful? The agent to the Irish property had returned home before them, so that when they arrived in Slieverieghmore—the name of Lord Summervale's county residence—apartments were already prepared for her reception, and a cordial greeting was given her and the young Lord, which touched the mother's heart. As mistress of Slieverieghmore, Dolores is in the position natural to her disposition of mind, and suitable to her noble birth. She holds her own most successfully amongst the magnates of the county aristocracy, and has even found a small degree of favour, though a Spanish Papist, with excitable Mrs. Bouncing, the calm clergyman's any thing but calm wife. She was more than mere wife of the clergyman was Mrs. Bouncing. The kind-hearted, amiable parson was a right good fellow, at whose hospitable table it would thoroughly delight one to sit and eat, and what one ate there did the guest good. He accomplished his professional work honestly and earnestly, and—all praise to him!—was an honourable ornament to the endowed cloth which he wore. He served God sincerely. And the consciousness of doing so was his reward amongst many domestic and parish trials. But woe to the day when Mrs. Bouncing put the winkers on him

and tightened the reins! His wife's curiosity was as great as that of one of the canine species poking his nose into nooks and corners. This inquisitive better-half was continually intermeddling with the clerical duties her obliging husband was required to perform, until the last straw broke his back and he was so subdued by the Amazonian Dorothea Priscilla—which latter name means in Latin “somewhat old”—that in the opinion of several amongst the parishioners he was held to be an object worthy of genuine pity, mingled with some slight contempt at his matrimonial cowardice. Some, uncharitably enough, insinuated that the parson's bustling wife kept a rod in pickle with which she administered castigation which would have won admiration from those Mentors—*tor*-mentors rather—of the rising generation who, indulging lately in the luxury of newspaper correspondence, have related their experiences in handling the rod with a gusto which implies that in their own early lives they had a deserved acquaintance therewith, and were at present revenging themselves.

The wit amongst the parishioners christened the parson's lady, “The Very Reverend Dorothy Priscilla Bouncing.” Did a little bird whisper to her that she had been ordained? The little bird was not a goose, for Dorothea Priscilla was worth keeping on hands; many a crumb, be it said to her credit, she threw to

little birds, although she was the lass to put the spice of scandal into a tea-party !

Dolores and Dorothea Priscilla were on the most hazardous terms of cock-fighting contemplation of one another's excellences until the recent Revolution broke out in Spain and sent the Reverend Dorothea into an ecstasy of satisfaction. Mrs. B. made an ungenerous dart with her spurs then, and Dolores retaliating with interest, Mrs. B. vacated the frying-pan. We doubt if she found the fire pleasanter, especially as her husband, coming out of his cowardice, flatly refused to follow her, and all through maintained the uninterrupted friendship of Lady Summervale. Mrs. B. was frightened by his fierce resistance to her wishes ; and from that hour her power over him was less than before. He had never been afforded the right opportunity of exercising his own discretion contrary to his wife's hitherto, inso-much as he had glided from the blindness of honeymoondom into the sheepfold of passiveness. We will not enter into the Spanish discord aroused by Mrs. B. with Dolores. It had something to do with the impetuous importation of shiploads of Bibles into Spain ; and, whatever were the words fired from the female lips, we know that Lady Summervale laughed heartily in Mrs. B.'s face, which affront Mrs. B.'s being an uncomfortably choleric countenance could not stand. Mrs. B. blustered ; Lady Summervale

smiled good-humouredly. With a wrathful exclamation came the crash, and so did the parson in timid search of his vigorous-voiced spouse.

However, time heals wordy wounds; and in the end the Revolution infused less missionary zeal and bigoted disputation into the incomprehensible soul of flushed Mrs. Bouncing, and she made it up with Lady Summervale. She swallowed the gnat which she thought a camel.

Because, you know, Dolores was *Lady* Summervale, and Mrs. B. could never hope to leave the impression of her vindictive heel on such a lofty lady's neck.

Around the carefully cultivated pleasure-grounds of stately Slievelieghmore a stranger walks with a slow and dignified step. He is an old, white-haired gentleman, with a flowing beard and hoary moustache, and a powerful chest, and a splendid dark eye.

Often—then he is marvellously happy—a young lad loiters by his side to hold the aged withered hand in his, and to be kissed upon the fair, fresh boyish cheek. The lad has such eyes as O'Malley Oranmore possessed, but his beautiful face is most like that of Dolores.

They call the old man “Count,” and this lad is the little Lord Summervale—his grandchild. Yes; it is Dolores' father united to her and hers, never to part on this side of the grave. All his own dear ones in the land beyond the Bay of Biscay have passed

away—even the wife of his bosom—but he sorrows little since he has found his darling Dolores, who has fervently pardoned his unkind neglect, when she refused to conquer her affection for the young dashing British officer, and send Oranmore away at her imperious father's stern command. She had taken upon herself the consequences of her disobedience; they were very heavy for a passing time, but her heart had been courageous, and her trust in God infinite, and the old man has lived to regret his own cruel desertion of his favourite child.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder, and the noble Count loves his daughter the more deeply because of that unexpected separation, and yet the more deeply because of her boy, who is a brightness in the old man's life which shall keep darkness from him until everlasting day begins for him. In the winning ways and personal beauty of the boy he finds again the vanished girlhood of Dolores, and when he dies his possessions shall belong to that beneficent child who is so unconscious of all the good his guileless presence is doing.

Did O'Malley Oranmore ever suspect that a son of his would live to be a peer of the realm of Great Britain, and likewise a wealthy Count holding vast property in Spain?

He did suspect it. For the old Spanish nobleman reached America in time to attend his lordly son-in-

law's death-bed. The aged Count is still alive, and hale and sprightly for his five and eighty years. In the homes of the poor scattered around magnificent Slievelieghmore his foreign name is a household word.

Lady Summervale, if she so wills it, has it in her power to marry again. She is young, and much sought after. But she evades those who would have her hand, and prefers her freedom. In her gratitude towards Noel for his kindness in crossing the Atlantic to attend the death-bed of her husband, she often writes to him confidentially about her affairs, and seeks for his advice. The counsel of a wise man is not to be treated lightly. She did not disregard it, but in one matter at least she did not follow what D'Auvergne strongly advised. He did not understand her completely perhaps when he tried to persuade her to marry again.

She had written to him long letters concerning two advantageous proposals for her hand. He took the train and went down to Slievelieghmore on her invitation.

“When I wrote to you to come,” she said, “I was in doubt whether I would say yes to one of them. There were strong inducements. But I have made up my mind since.”

“To accept?”

“No.”

“And why not accept one of the two, Lady Summervale? One of them is certainly desirable.”

“Quite true, but——”

“You pause. Now, my dear Lady Summervale, listen to me. The match would be quite the thing! This gentleman, I know, on undoubted authority, has a rent-roll of twenty-three thousand a year, and has a seat in Parliament. You could keep a house in London, which would be an advantage to my Lord while he is growing up. Moreover, the estates of this gentleman join your son's, and in the marriage-settlements provisions might be made for the eventual amalgamation of the two distinct properties. Think over your answer again—for the young Lord's sake.”

For the young Lord's sake! Ah, these last few words are a powerful appeal! But not powerful enough. She made no reply immediately, but—it was in the library the conversation was carried on—taking up a volume of Alfred Tennyson, lying on the table within her reach, she looked with a quick eye through the pages, and at length, glancing pleasantly at Noel, she said to him,—

“I cannot express the reason for my refusal more aptly than this expresses it. Please to read it, Mr. d'Auvergne.”

She pointed to these four lines, and her finger traced them for him :—

“ And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But oh for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still ! ”

In a stately way she too is gliding havenward. D'Auvergne did not repeat his advice. He understood her motive now. He made no remark when he ceased reading, but he looked at her reverentially, until she smiled when she interpreted the meaning in his face.

In a stately way she too is gliding havenward, seeking for the touch of a vanished hand, and listening for the sound of a voice that is still.

Bidding her good speed on her journey, we shall seek to follow her course no more.

It is a prosperous course, and she has a good pilot, and *satis est !*

CHAPTER XXV.

HER LIFE IS A SMILE OF GOD, AND PLEASANTER THAN
SUNSHINE.

“Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quaerebam quid amarem
amans amare.”

CONFESS. ST. AUGUST.

“Solo Dios basta.”

ST. THERESA.

“On ne perd jamais ceux qu'on aime en Celui qu'on ne peut perdre.”

ST. AUGUSTINE.

WE have more words than one of tender farewell for Beatrice Fitzgerald. With a smile let her name be written. With a smile let the recollection of it steal into the heart silently and nestle there. Her life is a smile of God, and pleasanter than sunshine. Her death when it comes shall be a national loss. Humanity can ill spare such a credit to it as she is. It is needless we suppose to say that her spirits are gay, for they would not be otherwise. Joy penetrates her existence as a golden thread through a wonderfully woven pattern, and

brightens it as the sun gives light to the day. In hospitals, in hovels, in prisons, in the chamber wherein death has stricken with his sickle some one who was so strong in the health of youth, that he seemed as though he almost believed death to be an unreality. To whom death was not as it is to some, hardly more than the casting off a garment they take no human pride in.

Wherever direst poverty, wherever dangerous disease, wherever that agony in an afflicted family caused by the final departure of a dearly beloved, needs the touch of her fair waxen hand, or the blessed sight of her consoling face, there surely when called upon—and how often she is called upon!—stands or kneels or sits blithe Beatrice Fitzgerald, and charms those hearing her gratifying voice with the truthful arguments it is part of her high vocation to expound and beautify, and convince the obdurate therewith.

Or else a giver of good, she listens faithfully to the beseeching request of the unregarded poor, and hushes with a pure kiss the cry of the girlish forsaken. What her Master was to Magdalen so is she.

We will close our sentences of praise, and permit this angel to pursue her mission henceforth unseen. It is a way the angels have of working. She would rather we let her be invisible like them. It is not our praise she wants; but we cannot help giving it.

To reveal her hidden acts of heroism would raise on her countenance a reproachful bloom, for

“The Sister of Charity blushes at fame.”

Through a recent visitation of the cholera she passed unscathed. The plague wounded not one who wore heavenly armour. Upwards of a hundred victims to the disease she composed the limbs of in their rude coffins, “closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces.” And yet in her sublime task she broke not down, nor faltered as a woman might. After that she proceeded to America, active as ever, to make a hero of O'Malley Oranmore.

It is pleasant to remember that one day nations will acknowledge this Maid of Orleans, when she will receive her medals and Victoria Cross—

“O Deus ! ego amo Te ;
Nec amo Te, ut salves me,
* * * * *
Sed sicut Tu amasti me,
Sic amo et amabo Te ;”

Such was the carol of Francis Xavier. Beatrice sings it likewise, though neither in Latin, nor in rhyme.

We have devoted to her this little chapter. It is little, but we offer her the whole of it, and if it be short it is likewise sweet. We could not say more for her than we have said. She is an honour to God.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HIS AILEEN AROON.

“ When like the early rose,
 Aileen aroon.
Beauty in childhood blows,
 Aileen aroon.
When like a diadem,
Buds blush around the stem,
Which is the fairest gem ?
 Aileen aroon.
“ Is it the laughing eye ?
 Aileen aroon.
Is it the timid sigh ?
 Aileen aroon.
Is it the tender tone,
Soft as the stringed harp’s moan ?
Oh, it is truth alone.
 Aileen aroon.”

GERALD GRIFFIN.

LADY MARGUERITA has no sisters, and never had them. Her only brother inherited his father’s lofty title sometime since; the old Duke went the way of all flesh at a ripe age, to dwindle into dust amongst his distinguished ancestors.

At Noel D'Auvergne's residence in Dublin the young Duke fell in with the Middletons, and became so intimately acquainted with that unassuming family that the result was the following critical interview with our friend Paul, who is now an estated gentleman, having obtained the ownership of an extensive property, and an appropriate country mansion by the death of a bachelor uncle. The meeting took place in D'Auvergne's study.

"You wish to speak to me on particular business I understand," said Paul, in a kind tone habitual with him.

"I do, Mr. Middleton."

"Very well, I am ready to hear you."

"Please be seated, Mr. Middleton," the Duke added respectfully. Paul sat down in his quiet way, and looked attentively at the young nobleman, who hesitated before he began.

"Your daughter Adelaide——" and then he hesitated again.

"Well?" asked Paul anxiously.

"Why, sir, to be explicit about it, I love her dearly, and I have sought this conversation with you in order to ascertain your wishes upon the subject. Will you permit me to make her an offer of my hand?"

"Have you spoken to her relative to this?" Paul demanded, and his strong frame trembled; for his

only child was more precious to him than his own life-blood, and far too dear to him to be bestowed upon even a Duke—and an English duke.

“Not one word. I would not do so without your consent. She is your only child, and I am a gentleman. A Duke if you will—but a gentleman first.”

Paul Middleton held out his hand, and unbidden tears coursed down his cheeks. They were tears of joy at his daughter's good fortune, and tears of sorrow that he must submit to lose her, to let her go and live away from him in another, a new and an unknown home. The nobleman seizing Paul Middleton's proffered hand clasped it within his own, with a hearty shake more expressive than language.

At this moment there was a gentle knock against the study door. The two men heard it, and their hearts leaped up with joy. Each knew who gave that affectionate knock. For was not one a father's, and was not the other a lover's heart?

“Papa dearest, please shall I come in?”

“Not now, my darling.”

“Of course she may!” interposed the lover.

“Stay, Adelaide!” exclaimed the father, “Come in!”

And into the room tripped with the spring of a fawn—but not a timid one, there was no one she was afraid of in this house—

“A lovely being, scarcely form'd or moulded,
A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded.”

“Oh! now what a shame. I have made an intrusion.”

“By no means,” replied the Duke decidedly.

“You must not blame me, papa. I was told by Noel that there was no one here but yourself, papa.”

“Then our infallible lawyer was for once in the wrong,” interrupted the Duke.

She glanced at him with the sweetest artlessness, which brought a smile on the faces of the two men, and her eyes sparkled with innocent joy. It was plain to see that she would not harm a fly.

“What a wife she will make,” the Duke thought.

“You I am sure will excuse me,” she said to him with a blush upon each cheek. “I came in here to get a book which mamma left on the shelves there. I will not be a quarter of a minute disturbing you.” She went in search of the volume.

“If you will allow me, I will procure it for you,” the lover said. She assented, and made way for him to ascend the little portable ladder D’Auvergne used in the study.

“There it is,” she exclaimed, and pointed to the book.

He handed it down to her and descended the ladder. She thanked him, and carrying the book away with her remarked,—

“When gentlemen are talking seriously on business”—there was the laughter of purity in her voice—

“a silly goose of a girl ought to keep out of their way.”

She opened the door and was closing it, but her father called her back. “Adelaide, my sweet child,” he said, “his Grace desires to speak with you alone. Recollect, my child, that he has my fullest permission to say to you what you are about to hear.” He kissed her blooming cheek. “And now,” he added thoughtfully, “I had much better leave you alone together.”

The father gave a short sigh—it was hardly a sorrowful sigh—and shut the study door behind him.

They were alone, and the old old story was told.

Adelaide happened to be already deeply in love with the Duke of Merton, but not because he was the Duke of Merton. She was too young yet in knowledge of the world to be in love with him merely for his being a duke. For her he was not entirely yet a Lord of Burleigh. And no

“Trouble weigh’d upon her,
And perplex’d her, night and morn,
With the burden of an honour
Unto which she was not born.”

In three months’ time the happy nobleman conducted his rosebud to her future home, where

“Many a gallant, gay domestic
Bows before him at the door,”

in that dear Devonshire which is so fondly regarded

by Lady Marguerita. And the rose of Erin gradually unfolded into exquisite womanhood, meanwhile giving trusty promise of her resolve to be

"Through all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife,"

shaping "her heart with woman's meekness to all duties of her rank." Paul and his wife—who is sedate of late, and stout and somewhat matronly—having lost their only child, as they were well pleased to lose her, have found her again three times over in her three tiny children, two boys and a girl.

The greatest perplexity honest Paul ever had throughout his life to contend with is whether the boys or the girl are the dearest to him. If any one declared that from his manner it was evident he liked the girl best, he would flatly deny it, and if his wife poutingly insinuated, which she sometimes did, that the boys for a certainty enjoyed the larger share of his love, he would flatly deny it too.

The real state of the case is this, that the one affection burns within him for the children, and their mother and his own child's mother. But oh! how much the more burning is it because of the children—those teachers who civilize.

There were many people—especially mothers of large families, and interested, not interesting-looking spinster aunts—ready to angrily condemn the Duke

for what they termed a *mésalliance*. But the contented nobleman keeps his mind to himself whenever such matrimonial murmurings reach him. He regards with convincing complacency that act of his in securing Adelaide for a wife as the wisest measure he has up to this time accomplished. There is no mistake about it, but that it is indeed very much wiser than insanely squandering fortunes on the turf amongst horsey society, and thus putting with one's own hand the snuffers upon the light of life.

His Irish Duchess is a greater honour to her exalted position than the exalted position is to her. There is surely no earthly dignity like the dignity of a pure, true woman.

The noble Duke conferred a benefit upon the House of Lords, present and to come, when he wedded his Aileen aroon—his “flower of a hazel glade”—who first unleaved her loveliness near the groves of Blarney, which “look so charming down by the purling of sweet streams,” and which Sir Rutherford Everton, who is anxious to distinguish himself in Parliament, ought to visit before the next Session. For

“There is a stone there,
That whoever kisses,
Oh! he never misses
To grow eloquent.

* * * *

A clever spouter
 He'll soon turn out, or
 An out-and-outer
 'To be let alone.'
 Don't hope to hinder him,
 Or to bewilder him,
 Sure he 's a pilgrim
 From the Blarney stone !''

Unfortunately there is a difficulty about imprinting one's lips to this sesame of loquacity implied in the probability of a temporary suspension by the heels from a castle height—a position not calculated to prevent a rush of blood to the head, and a rush of uncomfortable thoughts to the mind, concerning a descent to the ground more rapid than graceful. But Sir Rutherford has been particularly engaged of late upon some other matters besides politics. He has in fact been so busily employed, that he has given very little of the raw material of his valuable thought to the cattle plague prevention - better - than - cure recipe, and the Irish Church Pill, which the Holloway of the Lower House extensively advertises free of expense in the newspapers.

The Inquisitors of the Upper House, who wear lawn sleeves by the way, are reluctant to put faith in our modern Galileo, and would quote Scripture in support of their stationary position. Sir Rutherford has a passionate faith in our Galileo and follows him. Many men brighter in intellect than the Yorkshire

Baronet rank themselves with this destroyer of a stale system which fits not in with the laws of the universe. The world is on the move, you know.

The particular business engaging the serious attention of the Baronet, and which is not business at all of a political nature, shall be revealed ere long.

We shall meet him next on an auspicious occasion in London, and afterwards—for the last time—at his splendid seat in Yorkshire, Waterbrook Castle.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MARRIAGE OF OUR HEARTS.

“ Look through mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine ;
My other dearer life in life,
Look through my very soul with thine !
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes for ever dwell !
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

“ Yet tears they shed : they had their part
Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness pass'd again,
And left a want unknown before ;
Although that loss that brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more,

“ With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee :
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—

With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find."

The Miller's Daughter.—ALFRED TENNYSON.

IN the London theatre, on that memorable night, Lady Marguerita Dashbrook occupied a prominent seat. She had soon enough, and long before the exciting episode took place, observed Noel d'Auvergne sitting in the pit. He too beheld her, and returned smilingly her gracious bow of recognition. From the moment she saw him the objects surrounding her assumed in her eyes a brighter appearance, and her schooled heart broke away from its tethers to beat a few moments violently, and then to subside into the calmer throbs of security derived from his near presence. Why? We will not attempt to explain. It is one of the mysteries of love. But she was ceasing to regard him now in any other light than that of a friend whom she could and would trust. This was wisdom on her part, and a herald of future peace of mind.

Subsequently she had been an astonished and interested witness of the most unusual scene there and then enacted upon the stage. She rose, left her seat attended by her brother, and found her way successfully round to the back part of the theatre and inquired for the popular actress. Being the Lady Marguerita Dashbrook she met with no difficulty in procuring access to Mary.

“What do you intend to do?” she asked.

“He will accompany me to Hampstead when I am ready to leave the theatre,” Mary answered. “He is nearly himself again.”

“You shall use my carriage. It is a comfortable one,” the other said.

“Oh! thank you sincerely, dear Lady Marguerita. How kind of you!”

“Not at all,” she replied; “it is just as it should be.”

The carriage, which at the time was standing in the street outside, and waiting for its owner, was brought round to the door, and Noel d’Auvergne therein conveyed to Harold Leyne’s residence in Hampstead. As soon as this suburban destination was reached, Noel, who was much better, said,—

“I am grateful, Lady Marguerita.”

“I would gladly, if the opportunity offered, do more for you than I have done,” she answered; and then there was no more said about it for the present, and the carriage bore Lady Dashbrook homewards to the mansion belonging to her ducal brother.

Next morning Noel, who did not descend to breakfast early enough to meet Harold before the latter left home for his law-chambers in Town, found no one in the drawing-room but Mary, who was attentively reading a book.

She laughed merrily—her laugh was never so

merry for any one as it was for him—when she saw how well and happy he looked notwithstanding the slight illness of the night previous.

“I slept so soundly,” he said gaily, “that all my indisposition has fled. I am rather late this morning,” he added apologetically.

“We are not long done breakfast,” she replied, subduing D’Auvergne meanwhile with the mystic beauty of her eyes. “I have been looking through the pages of this book, which Harold was perusing this morning before he went into London. I had nothing else to do for the moment, so I took it up in order to pass away the time until I should hear your familiar footstep upon the stairs. But I hardly heard you coming down: you tread so softly.”

“It is a life of O’Connell, I perceive,” he exclaimed.

“Yes: listen to this, my learned counsellor, and then go and do likewise!” She read the following in her cultivated voice:—

“O’Connell on one occasion was engaged in a will case. It was the allegation of the plaintiffs, that the will—by which considerable property had been devised—was a forgery. The subscribing witnesses swore that the will had been signed by the deceased while ‘life was in him’—a mode of expression derived from the Irish language, and which peasants who have ceased to speak Irish still retain. The evidence was altogether in favour of the will, and the defend-

ants had every reason to calculate on success, when O'Connell undertook to cross-examine one of the witnesses. He was struck by the persistency of this man, who in reply to his questions never deviated from the formula, 'the life was in him.'

"On the virtue of your oath, was he alive?"

"By the virtue of my oath, the life was in him," repeated the witness.

"Now I call on you, in the presence of your Maker, who will one day pass sentence on you for this evidence, I solemnly ask—and answer me at your peril—was there not a live fly in the dead man's mouth when his hand was placed on the will?"

"The witness was palsied by this question; he trembled, shivered, and turned pale, and faltered out an abject confession that the counsellor was right—a fly had been introduced into the mouth of the deceased to enable the witnesses to swear that life was in him¹!"

She ceased reading, and ere she made a remark about the above anecdote, Noel said,—

"Mary, you ought to be fond of the barrister's profession. Your father belonged to it: your brother is a respected member of it."

"I am fond of it."

"And would like to be a barrister's wife?"

"That depends upon circumstances. If I loved,

¹ Fagan's "Life of Daniel O'Connell."

and was loved in return, I would rather my husband was of that profession."

"Look at me, Mary," he said.

Her blushing face was bent upon the floor; she raised it at his word, and looked at him.

"Is there a story in my face?" he asked.

"There was always a story in it," she replied with her usual simplicity.

The blushing countenance was bent upon the floor for the second time, and no other answer came, except what might be slyly implied in the least little smile around the small resolute lips. For the moment he needed no answer, but he lifted her hand—he was standing by her chair—and held it, and she did not withdraw her hand.

"Mary," he went on, "I have been surprised why you have many times refused to take upon yourself the responsibilities which belong to a wife. You might have been Lady Everton. You might have been the honoured wife of a London merchant prince. I have wondered what motive induces you to remain as you are—homeless in a certain sense of the word—for what home is there for a single sister in a married brother's house? Mary," he added softly, "I think, nay, I am sure, that I understand the cause at last, although I may have been slow to understand it."

Her mystic eyes rested upon him without turning themselves timidly away. Ah! she was not timid to-day. She knew that he was hers just the same as she was his!

“Mary, you know that I have a large house in Dublin, and you know that it is very lonely when its owner is alone there. Will you be its light, Mary—for my sake?”

“Yes,” she replied immediately.

There was a satisfied smile upon her rosy lips, and the blush was all gone from her beautiful face, leaving in its stead there an exquisite hue, which Madame Rachel would have envied and imitated.

“Mary, do you see this wedding-ring? You have seen it before, for I remember it was shown to you, and submitted to you for approval in other days, when I purchased it for one who is gone to her rest. I need not tell you how that departed one was loved—you, who were an eye-witness of both her and me. *Then*, I only thought of you as I thought of my dead sister, Mary.”

“You were always almost my brother!” she faltered.

“I know it. I recollect the night I said so to you, when I sincerely believed that you would never be more to me than that. Mary—I may call you my Mary, may I?”

“Yes, Noel. Your Mary for ever.”

“I loved our poor dead Saint, Madeleine, and you will not love me the less because she was so dearly loved?”

“Oh! no, surely! That is but another reason for your being precious to me, Noel.”

“But she killed that love, and it lay slain within

me, and I had to bury it out of sight and out of mind. Ah! that was a difficult matter, and I would not like to have to accomplish it again. No, not even for Madeleine!" he said sternly. "Then I was extremely slow to yield my heart up a second time, but you have conquered me. It is simply out of my power, Mary, to tell in words how much you are to me—only, dearest, I can say that I will try to prove it in deeds more than words. And, darling, let this ring, sanctified by a memory cherished by us both, be the life-long pledge of the marriage of our hearts!"

He placed the ring, which once was bought for dead Madeleine, upon Mary's unresisting finger. Thus were united these two who only waited now for the Church to shed its shower of graces over them, and make them one.

At last! At last! He was all her own! Joy is hers to-day, and a crowning reward for her patience, and goodness, and unselfishness. Ring out, ye happy marriage-bells! Ring merrily the melody of pure love! Every bell which sends its musical peal floating through the strings of nature, sounds in Mary Leyne's delighted ears as might a marriage-bell alone!

Ay, even the solemn toll for the dead carries to her ears half the music of a marriage-bell, so happy is she! Happy as the pure can be happy! She has felt the weight of a piece of wood which flung its shadow on a hill—the sun-dial of eternity—and no sorrow saddens her again as it once did.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IT SEEMS AS IF SHE IS TO HAVE HER GLORY NOW.

“ Erin, the tear and the smile in thine eyes,
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies !
Shining through sorrow’s stream,
Saddening through pleasure’s beam,
Thy suns with doubtful gleam,
Weep while they rise.

“ Erin, thy silent tear never shall cease,
Erin, thy languid smile ne’er shall increase,
Till, like the rainbow’s light,
Thy various tints unite,
And form in heaven’s sight
One arch of peace !”

THOMAS MOORE.

ON the same day and in the same city of London, but in different parts thereof, two marriages were solemnized. Lady Marguerita Dashbrook gave her hand to Sir Rutherford Everton, and Mary Leyne was united to her only and long-loved one.

Sir Rutherford and the Lady Marguerita, having been disappointed, the one with regard to Mary

Leyne, and the other with regard to D'Auvergne, have found in each other some consolation for the thwarting of their mutual wishes.

It is the truth to say that Lady Dashbrook—now Lady Marguerita Everton—is happy as she has never been happy hitherto. London has lost much of its charms for her, and in the country, attending to the duties of her new position of wife and mother, she passes most of her swiftly-fleeing time. When one is desirably occupied the hours lag not. But she is not quite so happy as she might have been, and as she fondly hoped to be. Ah! not at all! There is no disguising that depressing fact from herself, although it may be hidden from others, and above all from her affectionate husband. She knows it keenly that she is not altogether happy—happy as she would fain be—when she beholds Mary and Noel together looking like the two in one which they are.

She braves her lot, however, as best she womanly may, and successfully proves herself a worthy mistress indeed of yonder stately Waterbrook Castle, the substantial towers of which are so grandly tall that the white flag—a flag of truce—bearing the arms of the House of Everton, can be observed miles away waving from the topmost turret. Those who behold that ensign conspicuous midst the pleasant sunshine which gleams down beneficently doing God's work

upon the skilfully tilled acres, spreading to a distance broadly around the castellated residence of Sir Rutherford and his noble lady, bless those, the charitable pair, who live underneath the roof which that flag flutters peacefully over ; bless them for their good-will to neighbours, and generous, gentlemanly, ladylike hospitality to the poor who are in so many parts of this peopled earth of ours.

Lady Marguerita's considerable landed property situated in Ireland, which she inherited through her mother—the heiress daughter of a Hibernian nobleman—she has requested D'Auvergne to superintend, so far as he may, the professional management of.

She does not murmur—perhaps she is partly grateful—that Noel did not tempt her to descend—as he would in his humility term it—to an alliance with him. She submits to her state of lesser happiness, and gladdens the gentle Baronet's very easy life.

To Noel she is kind in ways which prove her truly kind, and she repays him for the responsible trust reposed in him, with reference to her Irish estates, by heart-touching means of exhibiting her regard for himself and his Mary, who are thereby made to feel that amongst their many friends she is most to be relied on, because her friendship is so unmistakable and so downright disinterested. They know not that she is chiefly so kind for this special reason, that from acquaintanceship with them both,

they have been a mutual example to her, and have by their companionship, always desired at Waterbrook Castle, purified her aims in life, and elevated them. It was not her ambition now to captivate London society, while wearing in gorgeous ball-rooms a borrowed complexion upon her manufactured face. To give an instance of those heart-touching means of manifesting her gratitude she has named her eldest born Noel, her second boy D'Auvergne; and these two young fellows, together with their only sister Mary, have opened out a mystery of unselfish love to their tender mother, who in this newer yet older title, has in a measure forgotten that lofty one which belongs to her as the noble daughter of no modern duke.

We bid her and the children good-bye, leaving sweet Lady Marguerita and refined Sir Rutherford in the peace of their wedded lives. Every day teaches them, they are not too old to learn. During the few years that they shall linger on earth—however many they are at most but few—we trust that their existence may be nourished by that peace which is the happy offspring of purity and dutiful love.

Harold Leyne is labouring at his splendid profession, and reaping for himself golden success. Rapidly he is securing an honourable position at the English Bar, and Kathleen—barrister's daughter, and wife as she is!—has a large share in promoting her

husband's steady advancement. What cannot a wife do for good? His legal friends, who ought to know something about these matters, assert that by the simple force of his own merits, he shall one day occupy a seat on the Bench, without the hazardous exertion of taking a somersault or two or half a dozen with a parliamentary leaping-pole, and alighting without the forehead band of green ribbon and the stars of gilt tinsel, but elegantly ermine-robed solemnly and softly upon the judicial seat. That's the way we do the business in Ireland. Smile not, O Anglo-Saxon! but admire the acrobat!

We wish Harold every success, and that his Kathleen shall live to keep the clouds from the sunshine of his life. Before we part with them, it is well to add that there is one great consolation he affords Kathleen. She is never nervous when Harold is invited to a gentleman's dinner-party, nor waits up for his return, but retires to her room content and fearless: for she has never seen the sign of drink on him. We have.

Through the landed influence of Lady Marguerita Everton, Noel has been returned for Parliament at a late election, and in the House of Commons he sits near her husband, and at length is in a position to afford the earnest Baronet that political aid which Sir Rutherford believes D'Auvergne can supply, but which belief in his own statesmanlike genius Noel

strenuously deprecates. However, they help one another, and add their mite towards lessening the labour of governing a great and glorious people. Thackeray says, that "many a young man fails by that species of vanity called shyness, who might, for the asking, have his will." Of all species of vanity, that one was about the last which those who understood D'Auvergne would be inclined to charge him with. He was not afraid therefore to "say his say," in the face of some Thersites babbling to his own distorted image, and enamoured with it. Then dearest Mary! She is such an incentive to an honourable ambition, such a precious adviser, wealthy in the fruits of her own experience. For she is no immature girl, but has learned her lesson in the school of self-trial, and understands it well. It had taken some painful time, of course, to understand it, as many perhaps know, and treasure like her for that reason jealously the results of the stern teachings which have been brought to bear upon them.

Of all things now-a-days which Mary thinks the least of is herself, and herein lies one of the deep secrets of the healthful happiness springing outwardly from her inner life of self-renunciation.

She is dead to her own self, and has no will of her own; and yet she can be extremely determined at times, but Noel is well aware that she is so for God's sake and not for her own, because of her complete

submission to His will, and eagerness to have that will to work fully without human hindrance its inscrutable ends. If all husbands comprehended as Noel did their wives' motives, it would be well for them. And the same remark applies to the wives. There might be less domestic bitterness in households which the world perhaps thinks are the abodes of nuptial peace. Many a smiling face, it may be, hides a breaking heart, and many a generous man and forgiving woman regret their wedding-day. Lavender ties and white bonnets and gorgeous bridal cakes are sometimes sad memories.

For Noel and Mary there are no such painful regrets on either side. They gave away themselves to God in His name, and they have received back a hundredfold.

Now that the one and the other have all which they desire on earth, the knowledge which experience has conveyed to both is the conviction that to be happy they must plant within their souls the germ of a vitality free from every blight of death. And it has been planted there. They reside, when Noel can spare a day, at dear St. Mary's—the quaint old place which possesses special attractions because of the recollections wherewith it is enriched.

Mary sits again upon the rustic seat at the extremity of the garden, from whence she can view to her heart's content the fair scene of natural beauty spread out

before her, and wherein Howth Hill towers before the dreamy eye. How happy she is! We cannot describe Mary's great joy, unless by mentioning that at her feet, as she sits upon that rustic seat, reclines her first-born, who has been named Rutherford d'Auvergne, and who so often reminds her of Noel.

One evening her husband was standing by her side. While she sat there, and they both were watching the sunset, two small clouds appeared between them and the sun, and the cloudlets moved towards one another until they came together and were as one cloud, which gradually melted as it were into the dazzling glory of the sun.

Husband and wife saw therein a similitude to their life.

Mary and Noel had drawn towards one another until they were united and absorbed as it seemed into the furnace of burning charity. And therein, forgotten to themselves, God's light shines through them upon the earth whereon they walk, an honour to the Creator, and a witness to the beauty and truth of the Nazarene whom Renan knows not, though he wrote His life.

They are living and prospering in this darling Ireland whereon the morning is shining of which our sighing fathers saw the dawn. They look forward—we say *they*, for Mary is Noel's wife—to the realization of the poet's prophecy:—

“ Erin, thy silent tear never shall cease,
Erin, thy languid smile ne'er shall increase,
Till, like the rainbow's light,
Thy various tints unite,
And form in heaven's sight
One arch of peace !”

The streams which fill the rivers come from sources apart, and have to tumble over the precipice, and glide under the rock, and forgetful at length of one another they mingle in the river which is bearing them to the sea. So with a nation's political differences; as soon as they descend from the sources far away in the mountains of heaped-up prejudices and, bearing each *ridiculus mus* upon their current, drown it in the river of a nation's course, they cease to ruffle the majestic current flowing towards the eternal ocean whose waves we hear with trembling, knowing not how near to us they are.

Our noble constitution is not yet emancipated from the rough rock from which it was hewn. Eternal lines of beauty make it a wonderful whole—eternal lines the master touches of Michael Angelos—but even in this marvellous nineteenth century the grand English Constitution has not done struggling into perfect form. We shall be sleeping in our graves before the services of other Bohuns, Bigods, and Hampdens can be dispensed with, when the races of posterity shall proclaim that this modern Laocoon is faultless.

And Ireland takes her turn with the chisel, and

touches the splendid handiwork of ages with the exquisite grace of her own peculiar genius. Yes, Ireland takes her turn with the chisel.

For O'Connell gained the Clare election; Grattan's eagle-winged words took their flight across the mountains and the valleys, and men glanced upward listening; Curran startled with his eloquence; Richard Lalor Shiel made Erin grateful to her enthusiastic, poetic child. Thank God the dawn our fathers saw has given way to the morning brightness! Oh! thank God! Miles of more golden harvests may wave yet in the summer breeze; our fine harbours be filled with larger fleets of the peaceful navy of commerce—noble vessels conveying hither the wealth of nations in exchange for our own; foreign tongues oftener heard upon our quays; towns and cities astir with new activity. Let us hope that when the morning shall have given way to the day at last, our rivers shall flow no longer in idle grandeur to the sea, but that upon their bonny banks shall rise up mills and factories wherein the hum of busy machinery shall give token of national industry, and the sounds of labour be music in our ears. Then we shall listen without pain to the laugh of the maiden and the shout of the stalwart youth.

Ireland has had her Passion and her Calvary¹. It seems as if she is to have her glory now.

¹ "They (Ireland's sons) have for their mission to be nailed to the cross, and to suffer for the propagation of the Gospel," said O'Connell to Mgr. Dupanloup, the illustrious and eloquent Bishop of Orleans,

in London, in 1839. It is this same magnificent-hearted prelate, this glorious embodiment of the Catholicity of France, who said—and all thanks to him from every true Irish heart for saying it!—that “There is one virtue, the daughter of faith, a virtue peculiar to Christianity, so touching and so pure that it adorns with an inexpressible charm the aspect of youth; venerable also under the white hairs of the old man, and which at every stage of life sets as it were an aureola of honour and respect on the brow of the man who possesses it: if it reigns amongst a people, it clothes that people with the force and the austere splendour of all manly virtues—I speak of purity of morals. This, I repeat it, is the glory of Ireland. . . . Religious and chaste, the Irish people is also valiant—a nation of warriors; and it could not but be so; for piety and purity of morals, those lofty virtues, whilst they inspire devotion, also inspire valour. While licentiousness enervates nations, these virtues preserve in them a generous blood and a vigour always young. From these spring always the gallant races, the vigorous stocks, the robust nations of the earth: such is Ireland. Wherever the Irish have fought their bravery was admired; and their military reputation makes them equal to the best soldiers of the world: they are with justice reputed the principal strength of the British army: and how often have they turned the tide of victory! It was an Irishman, Lord Gough, who won the battle of Guzerat in 1849. An Irishman, Lord Keane, led the English troops into Cabul, and planted the English standard upon the walls of Ghuznee. . . . Sir Henry Pottinger, General Gillespie, and other heroes of the Indian wars, were Irish. The Duke of Wellington was an Irishman; his brother, Marquess Wellesley, had been Governor-General of the British possessions in India. . . . Who is there that does not know how Sir Charles Napier (who was not however an Irishman) gained the great battle of Meeanee against the armies of Scinde? He had but 3000 soldiers, of whom 400 only were Europeans; but then it was an Irish regiment, and from the county Tipperary. Beholding them from far off, sustaining single-handed all the brunt of battle, struggling with unshaken gallantry against countless hordes, then shortly after dashing forward, overturning every thing, scattering every thing before them, he could not restrain himself from crying out, ‘Magnificent Tipperary!’”

¹ Sermon preached (1861) by the Bishop of Orleans on behalf of the poor Catholics of Ireland, in the church of St. Roch, Paris.

