

"To be sure I will tell you. To begin then: when For-dyce brings his wife back and introduces her into London society, you, pretty girls and ladies generally, had better look to your laurels, for she's a beauty and as charming as she is beautiful."

"My! Is she such perfection? Who are her people?" asked the ruffled hen.

"Her people? Why she has no people," he answered, innocently, "she——"

"There! What did I tell you?" interrupted the hen, pluming herself again, "I knew there was something——"

"Something?" interrupted the Colonel, "something? What about, madam?"

"Why, about this marriage. You say she is a nobody, a low creature to be ashamed of, a mere little Irish bog-trotter."

"That will do, madam," said the fiery old soldier. "She is no low born creature, but a girl to be proud of. She has no people because they are all dead, with the exception of an aunt; and as for her being a 'bog-trotter,' just wait till you see her 'trot' or walk either, and, my word for it, you'll see such grace and ease that you'll begin at once to copy her, and cry your eyes out because you won't be able to do it successfully."

"Indeed, sir," answered the ruffled one, her face crimson with indignation, while the pretty girl and some few others laughed behind their fans at her discomfiture; "indeed I do not think we will so much admire your Irish paragon that we will desire to emulate her in anything."

"Oh, indeed; I'm sure you won't, madam," rejoined Colonel Ormond; "for, of course, no old woman like yourself could be so wanting in sense as to think of trying to imitate such a sweet young creature as she is."

This speech of the blunt old soldier and the face of indignant horror with which the dowager listened to it, was