

The Silgo Bells.

[Lines written upon hearing the splendid chiming of Silgo Cathedral.]

With heartfelt pleasure Both memory treasure A fond remembrance Of that dear old tower; And the scenes of childhood, When like a bird in wildwood, I gambol'd freely, O'er mead and down, Again I've rambled, Where of yore I gambol'd, Where the dew enambled, Each grove and hill, But a new voice stealing, O'er my chords of feeling, Fills my heart with rapture By thy shore, Lough Gill, Thy bells of Shandon Toll blithe and bland on The peaceful slumbers of Mahony; And the pale stars twinkle, Where 'twas I was sleeping, By Ann Bell Lee.

Stigo Champion

LITTLE DORINDA.

WHO WON AND WHO LOST HER.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD, M. A., F. S. A.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE BALL.

The ball was at high tide. Hoarse shouts, as the carriages were called, came from the streets, whence the crowd saw, on the canvas which had enclosed the long balcony, some amusing "Chinese shadows" flitting spasmodically, and were tantalized by the inviting sounds of Waldteufel's last entrancing valse. Within, the business of pleasure was rampant and riotous, the wonderful gymnasts, the dancers, using their feet, arms, hands, tongues, and eyes all together to the melancolic strains. Two of the patient beings who take daughters to balls stood looking rather wistfully across the room— anxious parents. "She is a long time away," said the lady. "What do you think?" "Dorinda is driving home the nail—must have clenched it by this time." "I don't know. She is such a perfect child. Ah, see! there they come!" Afar off in the door, were standing the pair; a tall, gaunt, rather "bulky" man of about forty; scarcely good-looking, though he might seem so to indulgent eyes—certainly gaunt—with a large mouth, and bushy brown, gorse-like moustache. On his arm was the brightest creature in the room—Dorinda Fanshawe by name, the young lady in whom her parents were so interested. How she sparkled, as well from the brilliance of her hair, eyes and complexion as from the restless movement of her prettily-turned head and neck! She was small, the top of her head scarcely reaching to his chin—but she seemed really what she was—a high-born, cultured little maid with a dash of haughtiness ever ready to dissolve into the most engaging smiles. "This is always the young lady in whom her mother, without knowing her looked kindly at her; not being able to help it. At intervals during the night Mrs. Bellamy—who has not drunk Bellamy & Co.'s good beer?—But Lady Doubleton was bringing them out, and enabled them to give this most successful of balls.—Mrs. Bellamy, then had come with her to the most hopeful of young brose-elder son and heir—whom Dorinda received good-humouredly. "My son, Joe! Won't you dance with him, Miss Dorinda Fanshawe?" She was too good-natured to refuse. Indeed, from the same wish not to hurt feelings, she had not the heart to decline or ever throw over a number of undesirable "hands" upon her mother and called reptiles, and who took up valuable time and profitable dances which could have been laid out on useful, desirable men. And thus too, have ceremoniously introduced the reader to Dorinda, only daughter of Sir John and Lady Fanshawe. The parents had to wait with scarcely-concealed anxiety, for it was hard to get through the crowd. Finally, the gaunt man, Mr. Naylor, had restored his partner to mamma. Dorinda was much excited.

"Not a bit! Well done, Algy!" she said with admiration. Mr. Naylor then departed, and her mother stooping down, whispered anxiously, while the father listened eagerly. "What have you to tell us? But I suppose nothing done. Ah child! always!" "What! Oh, that! Of course, if I had let him he would. But there's no hurry." "No hurry!" The father drew a deep-drawn sigh. He was a grave distinguished looking man, who had been in the diplomatic service—or rather his lady, who conducted all the business of their lives. Dorinda heard the sigh, and turned to him impetuously. "Do come with me," she said. "Let me lean on your arm," and she patted it fondly, "and walk through the rooms. You know, dear, she whispered as she drew him away—"you know I'd sooner be on that arm than with the finest lover in the world—the best part of them all, you know that?" And she gave the arm she prized, a little squeeze each time she used the words "you know," and seemed to wish to draw him closer. "Now, tell me what is it? Why did you sigh in that way?" He smiled on her with great love. You look at everything, Dorry, dear, so cheerfully. You hardly know what a sigh is. God grant that you may never know it. But you see—Would you know, he added abruptly, "what I and your mother feel like to-night? Why not tell your dear?" "Not till, my own!" She was always full of these little phrases. "Well—no, no; as a gambler at Homberg does—remember our pleasant time at Homberg!—when the cards are being dealt, and all has is on the table. He must feel nervous, Eh?" Dorinda began to look grave. "Well, my dear, to-night all depends on you—as I have been trying to hint to you lately. You see, we have been living terribly beyond our means and now I am at the end of my tether. This last season has done it, and I can do no more."

Dorinda listened in genuine wonder. "Do you mean to say we are poor, instead of being rich?" "Nothing could describe our state better." "I am so glad—I am, indeed. Now we can live all together in a small house or lodgings. Oh, and I shall be so glad to work—work for you, my own. We'll all work." "Your work, my poor child, would do little for us. At what? With what? Ah, no." "Then, I'll look at you working. Oh, I should be so de-lighted—she loved these little capricious bits of emphasis—to sit and watch you. That's all I'd ask—to be allowed to do that. Really and truly, yes, but I see you don't believe me." The father first smiled, then sighed again. "That's all very well in the novels. You can save us, you know you can." She paused, looked down a moment, then lifted her head slowly. "What? By this Mr. Naylor?" "It is much easier than working in a garret." She grew a little silent. "Indeed, I meant to get him to propose to night." Then reflected. "Indeed, he wants no getting," she added, suddenly dismissing her grave manner, and bursting into a laugh. "Is that all? Oh, it's nothing! Wait a little, my dear, and you shall see what you shall see." They had now returned to mamma, Husband and wife interchanged a look. She was satisfied. Presently arrived Mr. Naylor once more. He had been standing in one position watching this promenade. She tripped lightly away with him at once, looking back with a significant nod to papa. Her position was now changed. She felt she must invite or encourage what she before repelled. "I am not going to ask you to dance," said Mr. Naylor, "but to talk. Do you object?" "Pray," said Dorinda, opening wide her mischievous eyes, "what does that mean. Don't all women like to talk?" "Because I wish to talk before, and you checked me for some reason or other. Perhaps it was a charitable one; and if so why—" "Let us sit down here and talk, and have it out once for all," she added smiling. After a pause he said abruptly, "I would ask you, what do you think of me? I mean what idea have you of me?" She laughed. This was going to be exciting! "Well, we have known you, let me see—three months, and I believe we have seen you nearly every day, and yet"—She stopped with a puzzled look. "Yet you do not know what to think of me. Let me tell you what I am. I had a rough, hard life, sent away from a child by parents that did not care for me. Out there where I met hard cruel men and had cruel treatment. I was very wonderful if I became hard and cruel myself. Is it?" "But I don't quite believe you," she said gently and in a low voice. "We have not found you so." "Kind and like you to say so; but I am," he went on. "Still I could wish to be changed and made better, if some one would take that trouble. Do you think there is anyone?" He paused and Dorinda also paused. "In short," he said "if you would think it worth your while—your father and mother have been good enough to give me some hopes, and if you"—

Now there was something a little too business-like in this, mode of "proposing," and our Dorinda interested as she was had no idea of dispensing with the conventional, old-established "laying at one's feet" of the property known as a heart. So she said gravely, "If I would accept—take me. I know I am unworthy of you, and have little to recommend me, but," he smiled, "but my money! But what could be expected of me? I have lived with, breathed eaten, and drank money. It is all I have to offer. You shall have abundance of it—no end of it, as they say. Whatever you like, wish, or dream of, I shall take it as a favor if you will tell me what you wish, and in return try and like me a little, and let me love you a great deal." Dorinda was not a little dazzled by this splendid prospect, and could not help smiling with satisfaction. Moreover, there was something straightforward and even pathetic in the appeal. In fact, without in the least feeling that it was a little too much, she was ready for "driving the nail home," as her mother had put it. So she smiled and put out her hand. She was not nervous or excited, as might be expected. On the contrary, she was composed and pleased at the new situation. "I am sure I ought to be very much obliged to you," she said, "but let me quite candidly recommend, old-fashioned way, for paying me so great a compliment, and I shall try to be worthy of your regard. I have never thought of it seriously, as yet, so it comes on me rather by surprise." "Then consider it well first. Pray, do consider it till to-morrow," he said with earnestness. "It is no trifling matter. If you entered on this light-hearted way, it would be terrible for you. I speak for your sake. I have still so much of the savage—the barbarian—in me that if I felt I had been played with, I think I would do something wild or awful." She laughed. It was impossible to make her think of it seriously. It was so piquant and novel, this getting a proposal, and this her first! These were strange words of warning to be addressed to her, though. She became grave for a moment. "It would be a pity to run any risk, and it is not too late," and her eyes became roguish. "What I mean is this: It will be serious—there will be no looking back. I am jealous by nature—a jealous barbarian, as I told you. And so those who would involve their lives with me"

"Their lives!" and she drew away a little. "Oh, how dreadful! What do you mean?" "I mean risk living with me—undertake a responsibility. Don't think the worse of me for warning you; that is because I really love you." She smiled triumphantly. "There, yes," she said in a low voice; "I agree. Will that be enough?" "I think you can hardly know," he went on, "and hardly guess, how much my heart is set on this, and what a changed being I am. I hardly know that I live or breathe. I can scarcely believe in my good fortune. Don't laugh, for I know it sounds absurd in one of my age; and Dorinda noticed then that he was actually trembling. All which gave her most intense pleasure, and made her like the man. They returned to her parents. "Good night," said he to them gravely. I have arranged with Mrs. Dorinda to-morrow early. May I hope to find you?" Dorinda looked down shyly, and the pleased papa and mamma knew that all was settled happily.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUITOR.

Now about the Fanshawe family. The Fanshawes were persons of a good stock, with a handsome place in the country, having three children, another son, besides the youth who have seen at the ball. But, of the whole party of five, it was Dorinda that attracted attention. A truly elegant little person, with her quiet name and her graceful style, a beauty after Chalon—a style set off with pearls and lace, and which seemed old-fashioned amongst the earlier and more "dainty" decorations now in vogue. She was as high-spirited as she was high bred, and with fine courage of a higher sort than the merely brute courage of facing moral dangers. On her father she depended more than on her mamma, rather than on the wild good-looking lad who had been placed at a naval college, and was ever in scrapes. She cared nothing for money, and was careless as to spending it, because she assumed, as a matter of course, that there was abundance in the family. And her father an ambitious man, had been very wasteful in striving to carry out the object of his ambition; aiming at having high office as governor of an important colony, he had lavished all his means. Many a picture had father and daughter sketched together of their future state in this situation—They all to be like royalties, and his own Dorinda a little princess, with all the colonists bowing and worshipping, and she ordering about the aide-de-camp. With this view Fanshawe House was always filled with company; influential persons were always staying there on visits; and Sir John's moderate resources became gradually crippled. And then it was whispered—They all to be like royalties, and his own Dorinda a little princess, with all the colonists bowing and worshipping, and she ordering about the aide-de-camp. 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