

"Oh, not those beautiful birds!" says she of the empty farder. "We cannot have Hurlingham transported to the Highlands."

"Whoever tries to shoot those pigeons won't find it a Hurlingham business," he remarks.

But the Laird has a soul above luncheons, and larders, and pigeon-shooting. He is still profoundly absorbed in thought.

"No," he says, at length, to the young lady who, as usual, is by his side. "I am wrong."

She looks up at him with some surprise.

"Yes, I am wrong," he says, decisively. "Ye must keep in that island. Ye must sacrifice picturesqueness to truth. Never mind the picture; keep the faithful record. In after life ye will be able to get plenty of pictures, but ye may not be able to get an exact record of the things ye saw when ye were sailing with the *White Dove*."

"Well, you know, sir," observes Miss Avon, with a somewhat embarrassed smile, "you don't give me much encouragement. You always speak as if I were to be compelled to keep those sketches. Am I to find nobody silly enough to buy them?"

Now, somehow or other, of late the Laird has been more and more inclined to treat this sale of Mary Avon's pictures as a most irresistible joke. He laughs and chuckles at the mere mention of such a thing, just as if Homesh were somewhere about.

"Sell them!" he says, with another deep chuckle. "Ye will never sell them. Ye could not have the heart to part with them."

"The heart has to be kept in proper subjection," says she, lightly, "when one has to earn one's living."

Queen Titania glances quickly at the girl; but apparently there is no profound meaning concealed in this speech. Miss Avon has taken her seat on a shelving piece of gray rock; and if she is concerned about anything, it is about the safety of certain plates and knives, and such things. Her hand is quite steady as she holds out her tumbler for the Youth to pour some water into the chert.

Luncheon over, she returns to her work; and the band of seal hunters, taking to cigars and pipes, sit and watch the tide slowly ebb away from the golden-brown sea weed. Then, with many a caution as to patience and silence, they rise and get their guns, and set out. Already there is a disposition to slouch the head and walk timidly, though as yet there is no need of any precaution.

"*Glic-kliche Reise!*" says Miss Avon, pleasantly, as we pass.

Angus Sutherland starts, and turns his head. But the salutation was not for him; it was meant for the Youth, who is understood to be the most eager of the seal-hunters. And Mr. Smith, not having his answer pat, replies, "I hope so," and then looks rather confused as he passes on, carefully stooping his head, though there is no occasion whatever.

Then, by following deep gullies and crawling over open ledges, we reach points commanding the various bays; and with the utmost caution peer over or round the rocks. And whereas yesterday, being Sunday, the bays were alive with seals, sporting themselves freely in full view of a large party of people who were staring at them, to-day, being Monday, finds not a seal visible anywhere, though every one is in hiding, and absolute silence must have reigned in the island since ever the lobster-fishers left in the morning. No matter; the tide is still ebbing; the true hunter must possess his soul.

And yet this lying prone for hours on a ledge of exceedingly rough rock must have been monotonous work for our good friend the Laird. Under his nose nothing to look at but scraps of orange lichen and the stray feathers of sea-birds; abroad nothing but the glassy blue sea, with the pale mountains of Jura rising into the cloudless sky. At last it seemed to become intolerable. We could see him undergoing all sorts of contortions in the effort to wrest something out of his coat pocket without raising any portion of his body above the line of cover. He himself was not unlike a gray seal in the shadow of the rock, especially when he twisted and turned himself about without rising an inch from the surface. And in time he succeeded. We could see him slowly and carefully unfold that newspaper—probably not more than a week old—just beneath his face. He had no need of spectacles; his eyes were almost touching the page. And then we knew that he was at rest, and the hard rock and the seals all forgotten. For we took it that this local paper was one which contained a most important leading article about the proposed public park for Strathgovan, calling upon the rate-payers to arise and assert their rights, and put a check on the reckless extravagance of the Commissioners. The Laird himself was openly pointed at as one who would introduce the luxury of the later Romans into a sober Scotch community; and there were obscure references to those who seemed to consider that a man's dwelling-house should become nothing more or less than a museum of pictures and statues, while they would apply taxes raised from a hard-working population in adornment of places of recreation for the idle. But do you think that the Laird was appalled by this fierce onslaught? Not a bit of it. He had read and re-read it to us with delight. He had triumphantly refuted the writer's sophistries; he had exposed his ignorance of the most elementary facts in political economy; he was always rejoiced to appear before Tom Galbraith and Mary Avon as one who was not afraid to suffer for his championship of art. And then, when he had triumphed over his enemy, he

would fold the paper with a sort of contented sigh, and would say, with a compassionate air, "Poor crayture! poor crayture!" as if the poor crayture could not be expected to know any better.

At last! at last! The Laird makes frantic gestures with his newspaper—all the more frantic that they have to be strictly lateral, and that he dare not raise his hand. And behold! far away out there on the still blue surface a smooth round knob, shining and black. Without a muscle moving, eager eyes follow that distant object. The seal is not alarmed or suspicious; he sails evenly onward, seldom looking to right or left. And when he disappears there is no splash; he has had enough of breathing; he is off for his hunting in the deep seas.

What is more, he remains there. We catch no further trace of him, nor of any other living thing, around those deserted bays. Human nature gives in. The Youth gets up, and boldly displays himself on a promontory, his gun over his shoulder. Then the Laird, seeing that everything is over, gets up too, yawning dreadfully, and folds his newspaper and puts it in his pocket.

"Come along!" he calls out. "It is no use. The saints have taught the seals tricks. They know better than to come near on a working-day."

And so presently the sombre party sets out again for the other side of the island, where the gig awaits us. Not a word is said. Cartridges are taken out; we pick our way through the long grass and the stones. And when it is found that Miss Avon has roughed in all that she requires of her present study, it is gloomily suggested that we might go back by way of the other island, that so haply we might secure the materials for a pigeon-pie before returning to the yacht.

The evening sun was shining ruddily along the face of the cliffs as we drew near the other island; and there was no sign of life at all about the lonely shores and the tall caves. But there was another story to tell when, the various guns having been posted, the Youth boldly walked up to the mouth of the largest of the caves and shouted. Presently there were certain flashes of blue things in the mellow evening light; and the sharp bang! bang! of the gun, that echoed into the great hollows, Hurlingham? That did not seem much of a Hurlingham performance. There were no birds standing bewildered on the fallen trap, wondering whether to rise or not; but there were things coming whizzing through the air that resembled nothing so much as rifle-bullets with blue wings. The Youth, it is true, got one or two easy shots at the mouth of the cave; but when the pigeons got outside, and came flashing over the heads of the others, the shooting was, on the whole, a hap-hazard business. Nevertheless, we got a fair number for Master Fred's larder, after two of the men had acted as retrievers for three-quarters of an hour among the rocks and bushes. Then away again for the solitary vessel lying in the silent loch, with the pale mists stealing over the land, and the red sun sinking behind the Jura hills.

Again, after dinner, amid the ghostly grays of the twilight, we went forth on another commissariat excursion to capture fish. Strange to say, however, our doctor, though he was learned on the subject of flies and tackle, preferred to remain on board; he had some manuscript to send off to London. And his hostess said she would remain too; she always has plenty to do about the saloon. Then we left the *White Dove* and rowed away to the rocks.

But the following conversation, as we afterward heard, took place in our absence:

"I wished very much to speak to you," said Angus Sutherland to his hostess, without making any movement to bring out his desk.

"I thought so," said she, not without a little nervous apprehension.

And then she said, quickly, before he could begin:

"Let me tell you at once, Angus, that I have spoken to Mary. Of course I don't wish to interfere; I wouldn't interfere for the world; but—but I only asked her, lest there should be any unpleasant misapprehension, whether she had any reason to be offended with you. 'None in the least,' she said. She was most positive. She even seemed to be deeply pained by the misunderstanding, and—wished me to let you know; so you must dismiss that from your mind anyway."

He listened thoughtfully, without saying anything. At last he said:

"I have determined to be frank with you. I am going to tell you a secret—if it is a secret."

"I have guessed it," she said, quickly, to spare him pain.

"I thought so," he said, quite quietly.

"Well, I am not ashamed of it. I have no reason to be ashamed of it. But since you know, you will see that it would be very embarrassing for me to remain longer on board the yacht if—there was no hope."

He turned over the leaves of a guide-book rapidly, without looking at them; the hard-headed doctor had not much command over himself at this moment.

"If you have guessed, why not she?" he said, in a somewhat hurried and anxious manner.

"And—and if I am to go, better that I should know at once. I—I have nothing to complain of—I mean I have nothing to reproach her with; if it is a misfortune, it is a misfortune—but—but she used to be more friendly toward me."

Those two were silent. What was passing

before their minds! The long summer evenings in the far northern seas, with the glory dying in the west; or the moonlight walks on the white deck, with the red star of Ushinish light-house burning in the south; or the snug saloon below, with its cards, and candles, and laughter, and Mary Avon singing to herself the song of Ulva? She sang no song of Ulva now.

"Mary and I are very intimate friends," says the other, deliberately. "I will say nothing against her. Girls have curious fancies about such things sometimes. But I must admit—for you are my friend too—that I am not surprised you should have been encouraged by her manner to you at one time, or that you should wonder a little at the change."

But even this mild possibility of Mary Avon's being in the wrong she feels to be incompatible with her customary championship of her friend, and so she instantly says:

"Mind, I am certain of this—that whatever Mary does she believes to be right. Her notion of duty is extraordinarily sensitive and firm. Once she has put anything before her as the proper thing to be done, she goes straight at it, and nothing will turn her aside. And although there is something about it I can't quite understand, how am I to interfere? Interference never does any good. Why do not you ask her yourself?"

"I mean to do so, when I get the chance," said he, simply. "I merely wished to tell you that, if her answer is 'No,' it will be better for me to leave you. Already I fancy my being on board the yacht is a trouble to her. I will not be a trouble to her. I can go. If it is a misfortune, there is no one to blame."

"But if she says 'Yes!'" cried his friend; and there was a wonderful joy in her eyes, and in her excess of sympathy she caught his hand for a moment. "Oh, Angus, if Mary were to promise to be your wife! What a trip we should have then!—we should take the *White Dove* to Stornoway!"

That was her ultimate notion of human happiness—sailing the *White Dove* up to Stornoway.

"I don't think there is much hope," said he, rather absently, from her manner of late. But anything is better than suspense. If it is a misfortune, as I say, there is no one to blame. I had not the least notion that she knew Mr. Howard Smith in London."

"Nor did she."

He stared rather.

"They may have met at our house; but certainly not more than once. You see, living in a country house, we have to have our friends down in a *staccato* fashion, and always by arrangement of a few at a time. There is no general dropping in to afternoon tea."

"He never met her in London," he repeated.

"I should think not."

"His uncle, then; did she never see him before?"

"Certainly not."

"Then what does he mean by treating her as a sort of familiar friend who was likely to turn up any time at Denny-mains?"

His companion coloured somewhat; for she had no right to betray confidences.

"The Laird is very fond of Mary," she said, evasively. "It is quite beautiful to see those two together."

He sat for a little time in silence, and then begged to be excused—he would go on deck to smoke. But when, some little time thereafter, we returned from our brief fishing, the dark figure walking up and down the deck was not smoking at all. He paused as the gig was hauled fast to the gangway.

"What luck?"

"About two dozen."

"All lithe?"

"About half a dozen mackerel."

And then he assisted Mary Avon to ascend the small wooden steps. She said "Thank you!" as she withdrew her hand from his; but the words were uttered in a low voice; and she instantly crossed to the companion and went below. He stayed on deck and helped to swing the gig up to the davits.

Now something had got into the head of our Admiral-in-chief that night. She was very merry, and very affectionate toward Mary. She made light of her foolish wish to go away to the south. She pointed out that this continuous fine weather was only hoarding up electricity for the equinoctials; and then we should have a spin!

"We are not going to let you go, Mary, that is the long and short of it. And we are going to keep hold of Angus too. He is not going away yet—no, no. We have something for him to do. We shall not rest satisfied until we see him sail the *White Dove* into Stornoway Harbour."

(To be continued.)

Chic, says a writer in *Figaro*, appears to be about as difficult to define as "the salt of the earth." It is neither nobility nor distinction, nor beauty, nor opulence, nor wit: it is *chic*. It is *chic* to be noble but all nobles are not *chic*. A very *chic* education, according to the *Figaro*, is to have a private tutor first and to finish with the Jesuits or the Dominicans. It is *chic* to play at billiards; dominos or draughts are not *chic*. A man who wishes to be *chic* must never wear a frock coat before four o'clock for fear of being mistaken for his notary; he may wear old clothes, but his linen must be fine and his socks must be of silk. The article continues, in the same strain concerning rings, liveries, scarf-pins, servants and all the little details of the life of superior persons.

MOTHER'S VOICE.

I stumbled blindly on a dark hill-side,
And paused—above me rose a pleading blast,
Sent through the gloom some far off thing to greet,
And from afar a piteous blast replied—
A mother and her lamb dissevered wide—
Bleat answering eager bleat, hurrying to meet,
They met in tender transports at my feet,
And something in my soul woke up and cried:
Thrice happy lamb! but ah! what griefs were thine,
So strayed by evil hap, or evil choice!
I lonely, helpless, wild with unknown fears,
I lonely and lost—none heeding thy vain fears—
I lost in the night, left in dark pain to pine,
Thou couldst not hear thy mother's pleading voice.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

A COLOURED widow in Lexington, Ky., who is now drawing a pension of \$4 per month from the Government, recently rejected an offer of marriage, remarking, by way of explanation: "If I does, de government will take my pension away, an' nary bigger in Kalatook is wuff \$8 a month to me."

Dr. L— called upon a lady acquaintance the other day, and was met at the door by the lady's little girl. He asked her to tell her mamma that Dr. L— had called. The child went up-stairs, and presently returned. "Did you tell your mamma?" asked the doctor. "Yes." "And what did she say?" "She said: 'Oh, pshaw!'"

"DOCTOR," said a lisping fashionable belle, who had graduated at half a dozen boarding-schools, to a friend of ours, who had just been introduced to her at an evening party: "doctor, which do you prefer, tholidity of intellect or brillianthy? Them admire tholidity, but ath for me, as Shaktinears thavith in hith 'Bride of A-bidoth,' I prefer tholidity and brillianthy combined." The doctor sank into the nearest chair exhansted.

A DECENTLY-DRESSED workman came to a photographer's recently to have the portrait of his wife taken. While the operator was arranging the camera, the husband thought fit to give some advice to the companion of his life concerning her pose. "Think of something serious," he said, "or else you will laugh and spoil it. Remember that your father is in prison, and that your brother has had to compound with his creditors; and try to imagine what would have become of you if I had not taken pity upon you."

"CAN you keep a secret?" said Mr. Middle-rib, impressively, looking at his wife. "Indeed I can," she exclaimed eagerly, running across the room that she might cling to the lapels of his coat while she listened. "Well," said the 'rival man,' "you can do a great deal more than I can, then. I never could remember one long enough to tell it." She didn't say a word, but all through his breakfast that morning he kept wondering why the sugar tasted so much of salt, and how under the sun his steak got so full of sand. But he knew enough, or at least he thought he knew enough, not to ask.

HUMOROUS.

A DISTINGUISHED foreigner visiting this country remarked that the United States was the greatest country he ever saw for well-dressed beggars. He referred to the young men who hang around the church entrances. Only paupers do so abroad.

It is said that St. Louis has the politest lawyer in the country. A long and terrific rail of thunder having stopped him in the midst of an address to the jury, on resuming he bowed and courteously said: Gentlemen, please excuse this interruption."

ARTEMUS WARD once told us that the funniest story he ever heard was about an inebriated reporter, who leaned over the railing of the reporters' gallery in the English House of Lords and inquired: "Will sham noble lord please shing a comic shong?"

"Go where there is the most sin, sir," said the old clergyman's coachman, when asked which of the two calls the dominie ought to accept. The good man thought it over, and concluded that where there was most money there would be the most sin. So he accepted the call which offered the most substantial salary.

HAHNEMANN, the founder of the homo-pathic school, was one day consulted by a wealthy English lord. The doctor listened patiently to the patient. He took a small phial, opened it, and held it under his lordship's nose. "Smell! Well, you are cured." The lord asked in surprise, "How much do I owe?" "A thousand francs," was the reply. The lord immediately pulled out a bank note and held it under the doctor's nose. "Smell! Well, you are paid!"

Not long ago a new railway was opened in the Highlands. A Highlander named Donald heard of it and bought a ticket for the first excursion. The train was about half the distance to the next station when a collision took place, and poor Donald was thrown into a park. After recovering his senses he made the best of his way home, when the neighbours asked him how he liked the drive. "Oh," replied Donald, "I liked it fine, but they had an awful quick way to puttin' me out."

If you want to keep your boy at home make it pleasant for him than the street. Chalk a hopscotch in the hall, put a hog-head of molasses on tap in the kitchen, have a dog fight in the back-yard, make a "bully slide" on the cellar door, have a hand-organ and monkey in the reception-room and a German band on the stairs, hire a "Geevus" to be chased, let the boy chalk callers' backs on the first of January, throw his base-ball through the windows, ring the bells and run away, and "plug" the cook with fish-balls Sunday mornings; but even then you will have to engage a circus to drive through the premises two or three times in the season to "make it pleasanter than the street."

NEW NOTICE.

PIMPLY ERUPTIONS ON THE FACE can be driven out of the system by ACNE PILLS. They contain no arsenic or any poisonous drug; nor do they debilitate, but strengthen and tone up, aid digestion, and purify the blood. Box with full particulars mailed to any part of Canada or United States for \$1. Sample packets 25 cents (stamps). Address, W. HEARN, Druggist, Ottawa, Canada.

YOU CAN BE HAPPY.

If you will stop all your extravagant and wrong notions in doctoring yourself and families with extensive doctors or humbug cure-all, that do harm always, and use only nature's simple remedies for all your ailments—you will be wise, well and happy, and save great expense. The greatest remedy for this, the great, wise and good will tell you, is Hop Bitters—believe it. See "Proverbs" in another column.