

caught the kneeling man by the shoulder. At the sound of his voice the woman's eyes opened.

"Fingall! Oh, Fingall!" she said, and reached up a hand.

The bearded man stooped and caught her to his breast.

"Cynthia! Poor girl! Oh, my poor Cynthia!" he said.

In his eyes, as in hers, was a sane light; and his voice, as hers, said indescribable things.

Her head sank upon his shoulder, her eyes closed. She was asleep. Fingall laid her down with a sob in his throat, then he sat up and clutched Pierre's hand.

"In the East, where the doctors cured me, I heard," he said, pointing to her, "and I came to find her. I was

just in time. I found her when I got here yesterday."

"And she knew you?" whispered Pierre.

"Yes; but the fever came hard after." He turned and looked at her, and, kneeling, smoothed away the hair from the smiling, pathetic face. "Poor girl!" he said. "Poor girl!"

"She will get well?" asked Pierre.

"God grant it!" Fingall replied. "She is better—better."

Lawless and Pierre softly turned and stole away, leaving the man alone with the girl.

The two stood in silence, looking upon the river beneath. Presently a voice crept through the stillness. "Fingall! Oh, Fingall!"

It was the voice of a woman returning from the dead.

Dell's Triumph

By HELEN MATHERS, Author of "Cherry Ripe," etc.

THE girl thrust out a little naked foot, beautiful in form and colour, spanned by a tan-coloured strap, and laughed.

"The doctors are for ever preaching the open air cure," she said, "urging us all about more air and light, and less clothing, yet the moment we women leave off our hats and stockings, you men grumble!"

"Do you ever read your Bible?" said the man. "You'll find in it finer rules for manners and conduct than in any book on etiquette ever written; and there's a remark about a fair woman without decorum being like a jewel of gold in a pig's snout that you will do well to consider."

"Oh! you mean that rubbish about our going with uncovered heads to church," she said, lightly; "as if the parson oughtn't to be delighted to see us there at all! Besides, that text in the Corinthians applied to Orientals—not us. Those poor women wore a heavy veil, concealing even their features!"

"Bare-headed, bare-armed, bare-footed," said the man, "what is there to distinguish you gentlewomen nowadays from a pack of factory girls out for a spree? Heavens! If when one meets a group of you on the sands the men's arms aren't round your waists, one feels that they ought to be!"

The girl laughed again. She was beautiful in a warm, slumbrous way, with a skin like ivory, and rich dark hair and eyes; but now she shot a quick glance at the man's face as he looked thoughtfully out to sea.

"Whose fault is it," he said—"the women who give too much, or the men who ask so little? We only demand modesty, decency; we don't want to share the woman we love with the whole world. There should be charms, there should be graces, jealously hidden from the world, and kept only for home consumption. In the free-and-easy, go-as-you-please manners of women towards men, of men towards women, is to be found the real reason of the failure of chivalry on the one hand, of true womanliness on the other."

"Oh!" cried Lenore, with lazy scorn; "we don't faint at a mouse, and die of a migraine as our grandmothers did, if you mean that!"

"But did they?" said the man. "There must have been good stuff in those girls, physically and mentally, to make the splendid mothers they did. With our own parents went the last of the old school. Motherhood nowadays is practically a lost art. The man who wrote the line 'To suckle fools and chronicle small beer' was a fool himself, and a vicious fool at that!"

"Now you are indecent!" cried the girl; yet she was not angry. He knew that she would not resent any-

thing that he might say. His nostrils contracted disgustfully, as he moved a little further from her.

It had all gone so pleasantly from first to last—this untrammelled companionship of man and girl—winked at by a blind and complaisant world that had itself set a lax standard of morals and manners. Yet the man knew well enough that it was all wrong—that there had been no true courtship—the courtship that should be the dim, cool, fragrant alley leading to the sacrament of marriage in the temple (for marriage is a sacrament to all true women), as it would have been to Dell, from whom Lenore had stolen him; and now he was to slip by a side wicket, as it were into marriage, as men and girls nowadays drifted, without respect, without illusion.

Lenore drew nearer, and rubbed her soft cheek against his coat-sleeve. Yes, that was how she had detached him from Dell, by giving so much to keep him away (and Dell had given so little), and now he had come to see that modesty was the first and chiefest good in a woman, modesty and love of home and little children, and beauty was of very little account when it made itself cheap. Dell's winsome, homely face seemed to him now the sweetest thing in life, as representing the sweetest things life had to give, in love, good repute, and honour, at that moment.

He sat quite rigid—his nerves crisping in revolt under Lenore's unwelcome caress—knowing that he had come to the turning of the ways, that to marry this girl meant the wrecking of his future life, and that if he had not the courage to break with her now, he would inevitably break with her after marriage. And as she sat watching his stern, lean face, his silence, his stillness frightened her.

This was more than mere huffiness. Suddenly she felt danger in the air, and sat up straight.

"I know who it is," she said angrily, "it's Dell."

He shook his head. "I have not seen her for over a year," he said. It was for exactly a year that his intimacy with Lenore Lepell had lasted.

"Dove-eyed, demure, gloved," (she would die of shame to be seen even putting on her gloves in the street!) "and a little mother to a host of squalling brats—apparently she is your ideal of what a woman should be!"

"Listen, Lenore," he said. "We have had a good time, you and I, and now we are going to part. No one will say anything. In the present lax state of society our affairs are no one's business but our own, and plenty of men are ready to take my place—for beauty is so very, very rare."

Suddenly it struck him how horrible it was that he should be sitting here, saying these things—incredible