

"Oh, yes; the storm held off fine."

"And how did ye find the Blacks?"

"The Blacks! What put that into your head? I was never near the Blacks."

"Then it was the new teacher ye wanted to have a talk with?"

"The new teacher! What would I want to talk with her for?"

"Now, Fergie," coaxed the mother, "don't keep your mother guessing this time of night. Who was it ye went to see?"

Fergus hesitated, grew red in the face, and then, with a violently assumed air of indifference, gave the answer.

"It was Miss Atherton, the Methodist minister's daughter. You know I met her at the Convention, and promised to make a call."

All the coaxing and the wheedling vanished from the mother's manner. There was a perceptible paling of the face and sharpening of the features. She acted like one who has received a blow. Then, without any further parleying, she went to the heart of the matter.

"The Methodist minister's daughter! Oh, Fergie, what would you be doing with the likes of her? You know how your father feels, and how I feel, about these Methodists. What have we in common with them? They are all wrong in their doctrines, and what little religion they have is all sentiment and shouting. My lad, if you want to break your father's heart, then get mixed up with the Methodists. And then, as if their religion wasn't foolish enough, they are nearly all of them those poor, hivering, con-