

the sisters. Isabella was a very personification of mirth and gladness; the house perpetually rung with the sound of her songs, which she carolled with the native sweetness of a skylark, or echoed her merry laugh. Her elder sister's person and face were more striking at first sight, yet scarcely more lovely. Isabella's figure had the airy lightness and grace of a sylph. Her face was neither Grecian nor Roman, but Irish, purely Irish. A profusion of light sunny hair, curling from their very roots, like richly chased gold, flowed in wavy luxuriance over her exquisitely turned neck and shoulders. Her's was one of those faces which the pen and the pencil are equally inadequate to paint—its chiefest charm lay in its ever varying expression. A critic would have discovered abundance of faults in it—he would have said that her nose was too small, her lower lip too large and full, and her forehead too broad—he might even have asserted that her soft, swimming blue eyes were too large—or, or in fact, he might have said many such things; but if he was young, and a man, I strongly imagine that by the time he had ended his critique, he would begin to wonder at his preconceived notions of female beauty. She was a young, happy being, that care had never yet approached, and who seemed likely to make light of, at least, the lesser evils of life. Such were the girls who hung on Colonel Brock's neck, on his return from his American campaigns: Alice having attained her 16th birth-day, and Isabella rapidly approaching her 14th. The Colonel had nearly made up his mind to retire from the service, and superintend the finishing of their education in person, but whilst he was deliberating on the step, his regiment was again ordered on active foreign service, and with his chivalrous notions of honor, his leaving it was out of the question; he accordingly again left England, at its head, after having spent a happy month with his daughters, promising them that when peace should again present the opportunity, he would finally sheath the sword which had now, for more than a quarter of a century been actively employed in his country's service. He was still "seeking the bubble reputation" at the present time. Old Mr. Dawkins was, according to his custom, discussing his chocolate and newspaper together, and the young ladies were laughing at some sally of Isabella's when Dawkins entered the room.

"I see, Henry," said the old gentleman, as Henry took his place at the table, "that the wars of those young vagabonds who keep us in hot water every evening, have terminated seriously last night. I cannot, for the life of me, fancy how the gentlemen of the neighborhood have allowed their sons to continue such a discreditable affair so long."

"Merely to keep the lads out of mischief at home, I suppose, Sir,—or, perhaps, to strengthen their thews and sinews; but does your paper mention particulars?"