

incognita in a country market waggon with no attendant but her courageous cousin, M. De Lesseps, of Suez Canal fame. Within the walls of Paris Ollivier and his colleagues had been already ignominiously dismissed, and the Count de Palikao (Gen. Montauban) had formed a new Government which, in its turn, had to fall with the flight of the Empress, to be succeeded by the Government of the Committee of National Defence under the proclamation of the Republic.

Amidst all these national reverses and political changes the Parisians have carried themselves with exceeding fidelity to the national cause. As under the Empire, so under the nominal Republic, Gen. Trochu continued to prepare for the defence of the capital, which has been in imminent danger since the fall of Sedan. There has been wondrous activity, admirable good conduct and great courage displayed by the population, despite the excesses of a few roughs and red-hot Republicans. The work of defensive preparation has been steadily pushed forward until it is believed the Prussians will be compelled to retreat from under its walls without accomplishing their cherished object of capturing it. When all classes have joined in the patriotic work of saving the capital, it is hardly to be expected that the students of Paris, ever ready as they are to make themselves heard in moments of excitement, would be behindhand in taking their share of the perils and the duties of the hour. The foregoing illustration shows a group of them preparing to man the ramparts; and doubtless, as occasion offers, they will perform their duties with characteristic courage and impetuosity. The following extract from a letter written from Paris, when the Prussians were on their march from Sedan, and daily expected at its gates, will be read with interest, as shewing the changed aspect of the city and the devotion of its occupants:

"What is the visitor at Paris to do now? He must wander forth in the wilderness of empty hotels and boarding-houses, the open gates of which still silently and drearily yawn for him. He calls instinctively for a journal to see what is going on in the way of amusement to-night. There is actually nothing. The theatres, concerts, and gardens are closed. He can at least console himself with a stroll in the Champs Elysees. They must be open, and many a pleasant hour does he remember to have wiled away, seated in the thickly-peopled shade of the trees and watching the ceaseless stream of carriages ebb and flow past him in its way to and from the Bois de Boulogne. The Champs Elysees are, indeed, open; but they are unapproachable from, if he can trust his eyesight, dust. Fancy dust in the Champs Elysees!—not a casual cloud, flying vainly from one water-cart to fall before the spouts of another, but dense volumes, rolling along unchecked, and hiding whatever there is to hide: it is not much. A few lean horses, the bony relics of some overworked battery, are being slowly led along, or a waggon passes crammed with the quaint medley of mattresses, crockery, chairs, and children, that, with the tired cow, dragging behind, forms some French peasant's whole stock of goods in the world. There is nothing for it but to try the Boulevards. Here the change is less, but still it is striking. The usually crowded cafes scare you with whole rows of empty chairs. Some of the shops are shut. They have neither customers left nor assistants to wait upon them. Many of the jewellers have packed out of sight most of their glittering wares, as if resolved not too severely to tempt the countrymen of Blucher; and, looking into one shop to-day, I saw its "young ladies" engaged, not with bonnets or ribbons, but in making *la charpie*. There is little excitement of any kind in the streets; and perhaps endless caricatures of the Emperor are, with one exception, the most prominent signs of the times.

"This exception is the provincial Garde Mobile, the heroes of the hour. They have been swarming in shoals into Paris for the last few days, and one can hardly go a dozen yards without coming upon a group of their blue blouses. They are most of them fine manly-looking young fellows, and no doubt are capital raw material for soldiers, if there were only time to lick it into shape. But some of them handle a rifle as if, which is not improbable, they had never handled it before, and don't appear to know the first elements of drill. It was quite touching to watch, this afternoon, a party of the rawest of them painfully, though most willingly, mastering the A B C of rifle practice, and to think that in a few days, almost hours, they might be matched against such troops as the Prussians. But they will have the advantage of fighting behind walls, with veteran troops to support and set them an example; and they certainly don't look as if they wanted stamina, earnestness, or pluck. Indeed, about the downright earnestness of all the Parisians—or, at least, the vast majority—there cannot be the slightest doubt, whatever may be thought of their endurance under a severe test. It is all the better, in English eyes, for its unusual freedom from noisy demonstration. Their tranquillity is very remarkable, considering what enthusiasm underlies it. I was standing in the street a day or two ago, watching a large body

of outsiders who hang on to all the regiments here suddenly stopped, faced me full, and, thrusting a bullet into my hand, exclaimed, 'Take, citizen, the bullet of a Franc-Tireur.' If he had just torn it, still dripping with blood, from the heart of my bitterest enemy, his manner could not have been more severely melo-dramatic. Yet the corps was going along in the most quiet, matter-of-fact way. The citizens are working too hard to have much superfluous strength left for noise.

"I have spoken about the quiet and dreary appearance of the Boulevards, but anybody has only to step to the nearest open space, in which there is room for drill, to find it full of energy and life. It was close to the Madeleine that I saw the patient provincials learning the alphabet of drill. Their rifles were levelled full at the sacred windows. That so recently lazy lounge, the Palais Royal Garden, looked to-night as warlike and workmanlike as a barrack. In fact, wherever there is room for them, one comes upon bodies of men going through some exercise. They are usually in all varieties of civilian undress, though carrying rifles, and you may imagine what a singular effect is produced by this unusual combination of wide-awakes, rifles, and military manoeuvres.

"For the moment it is very fine—indeed, sublime. There are few grander spectacles than an army of soldier citizens rising en masse to fight for hearth and home. But think of the future: think of the excitable and daring French populace, always ready for change, and deeply imbued, many of them, with the rabidest Socialism, all armed with rifles, and mastering drill. It requires no gift of prophecy to see that, unless there are some singularly cool heads and able hands at the helm of the State, capable of dealing with a great national crisis, the streets of Paris will run with blood shed in civil strife. One can only hope that, to the perils of a siege outside the walls of Paris, will not be added the horrors of anarchy within."

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HILDA; OR, THE MERCHANT'S SECRET.

BY MRS. J. Y. NOEL.

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(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

CHAPTER XV.

HILDA AT INNISMOYNE.

Nothing can surpass the wild sublimity and solitary grandeur of the scenery along the south-west coast of Ireland. A succession of noble bays indent the shores, and between these, stretching away towards the Atlantic from the cultivated country, are vast headlands where rugged mountains lift their bare summits to the skies.

On the southern shore of one of these peninsulas stood Innismoyne. It was an ancient edifice—the grey walls weather-stained, and in one wing dilapidated, the numerous chimneys and windows almost hidden by masses of luxuriant ivy. The style of its architecture was nondescript for changes, and additions had been made at different periods, but the appearance of the whole was imposing. The situation of the mansion was wild and solitary. It stood at the head of a cove running in from Bay in the form of a crescent. Behind it, and stretching away for miles towards the ocean, were precipitous mountains, forming an impassable barrier to the wild dash of the Atlantic, and sheltering the dwelling from its fierce gales. In front the view was open to the bay, commanding the magnificent scenery of the headland opposite, with the blue mountains of Killarney and the Reeks dimly seen through the shadowing clouds.

Having described the situation of Innismoyne, we will now introduce the reader within its ancient walls. Entering the wide hall and ascending the broad oak staircase we pass into that antique-looking apartment called the library. The dark wainscot, the mullioned windows, the groined ceiling, with its delicate tracery, speak of other days; so does the massive old-fashioned furniture and rich but faded carpet. That white-haired, stately-looking old man sitting in a fauteuil reading the *Times*, is also in keeping with the appearance of the room. The only thing modern is that fashionably-dressed young lady standing at the open window looking out upon the splendid view it commands. Through the interlacing boughs of clustering ivy poured the warm rays of the meridian sun, bathing in glorious light the graceful figure of Hilda Tremayne, and gleaming on the silvered head of her grandfather, showing the many lines which sorrow and passion had graven in his handsome face.

It was now some days since Hilda's arrival

at Innismoyne. Colonel Godfrey's reception of her had been kinder than his letter had led her to expect. Her appearance had impressed him favourably; he saw at a glance that he need never be ashamed of her; that she was one who would grace a pageant. The grief of the old man was very bitter when Hilda related to him the privations and sufferings her mother had endured. His grief was the more poignant because mingled with self-reproach for having so heartlessly neglected her and left her to stem the tide of poverty unaided. All the paternal love which had been for so many years pent up by the barrier pride erected was now poured out upon Hilda, all that was left him of his unhappy daughter. Hilda on her part felt her feelings of resentment towards him softened by his professions of regard, and by the deep self-condemnation he expressed for his unnatural treatment of her mother.

"Do you know, Hilda, we are going to have our retirement broken in upon," said Colonel Godfrey, suddenly looking up from the newspaper he was reading. "I received a letter this morning from Lady Millicent Godfrey, the widow of my son, Roger. Well, my lady writes me word she is about to visit Innismoyne. She wishes to be here when Cecil comes of age. We must of course give a dinner to the tenantry, and a bail will be expected by the families in the neighbourhood. The time is gone when such doings would give me pleasure, but I do not see how a little gaiety can be avoided. What do you say, Hilda?"

"Certainly not, grandpapa; at such a time festivities are always expected. What sort of person is Lady Millicent?" continued Hilda rather anxiously. She remembered she was Sir Gervase Montague's aunt, one of the aristocracy too, and the idea of meeting her was rather formidable.

"Well I cannot say much in her favour. She is a fashionable lady of elegant appearance, with cold, stately manners and a selfish nature. How she captivated Roger I cannot imagine, for no two persons could be more dissimilar in character, he possessing a frank, generous disposition, she haughty and reserved, in fact a heartless woman of the world. And yet in married life such extremes meet. If it were not for the sake of her son, Cecil—it's a pity he was not called after his father—I would never endure her presence at Innismoyne."

"But you like cousin Cecil, do you not? he seems to possess a noble nature."

"Of course, I do like him," said the Colonel, warmly. "He is like his father in disposition as well as features. A true Godfrey he is! and I am glad of it! a fine-looking young fellow, too! with such splendid dark eyes! You have the Godfrey eye, too, Hilda! You are like your poor mother. I knew you were her child the moment I saw you. It seemed as if she had come back to me again. For the moment I forgot the years that had passed, and that she was lying cold and lifeless in the Godfrey vault. Oh, how could I have forsaken her as I did! If Roger had lived he would not have done so! but he died in India, soon after she left us."

A short silence ensued, Colonel Godfrey bowed his head upon his hands to hide the tears which welled up from the bitter fount of memory, the waters of which were always stirred by any allusion to his unfortunate daughter. Recovering his composure at length, he resumed:

"Lady Millicent's daughter will be a young companion for you while they stay, but I do not expect an eternal friendship will be the result of your acquaintance."

"Why! Is she like her mother in character?"

"In many respects she is. She has been brought up in the school of fashion. You are aware, I suppose, that she is the child of a former marriage."

"Yes, I remember hearing that from Cecil. Is Miss Clifford beautiful?"

"The world says she is—I do not. Her beauty is of that blond style which puts you in mind of a wax-doll—flaxen hair, alabaster complexion, blue eyes—very light blue, with such a cold expression."

"She has not the Godfrey eye," said Hilda, with an arch smile.

"No; is it not Byron who praises the light of a dark eye in woman. I quite agree with him; there is no soul in light eyes!"

"How old is Miss Clifford?"

"A few years older than you. You are about Cecil's age, I think.—And, by the way, it is rather strange she is not married yet. I suppose she is waiting for some prize in the matrimonial lottery. The young peer who is coming here with them is the prize, I suppose."

"Then Lady Millicent and her daughter are not coming alone?"

"No; she always brings gentlemen in her train to enliven the solitude of this wild place, as she calls it. My Lady would never honour Innismoyne with her presence, if it were not to see her son who, you know, always resides here since he left college."

"And who are the gentlemen coming with Lady Millicent?"

"Lord Ashley, Sir Gervase Montague and Lord Percy Dashton."

"Sir Gervase! repeated Hilda, in surprise; there must be some mistake; I left him in Montreal."

"That may be, but he is now in England, and will be here with Lady Millicent and her party in a few days. They are to leave Brighton—where Lady Millicent and her daughter have been spending some weeks—next Monday, and the rapid travelling of the present day will bring them to Innismoyne some hours after they cross the Channel. I am sorry for this interruption to our pleasant seclusion," continued Colonel Godfrey. "For my part I should prefer yours and Cecil's society altogether. What a pleasant time we might have here all by ourselves without any visitors!"

"Very pleasant," Hilda readily acknowledged, but she did not so freely confess that she had no objection to the arrival of Lady Millicent's party, since Sir Gervase Montague was one of the number. Was not this unexpected visit of Sir Gervase to Innismoyne another proof of his devotion to herself. What a thrill of joy did the certainty of his love send through her frame. But soon too came the thought that she must put away from her the happiness within her reach—that she must sacrifice the passionate desires of her heart on the altar of duty.

One week passed away and Lady Millicent and her party have reached Innismoyne. There was a want of warmth in Lady Millicent's manner on being introduced to Hilda, which her stately politeness did not conceal, and Colonel Godfrey detected a gleam of vexation as well as surprise in her haughty eye, as it rested on her beautiful niece. Miss Clifford was a little more demonstrative of affection; but Hilda thought that her cold formal kisses were given for effect—it might be to excite the envy of the gentlemen present. The happiness Sir Gervase Montague felt at seeing Hilda again after their short separation flashed from his expressive eyes. Her manner was reserved, the Baronet thought it cold and the flush of pleasure faded from his face, leaving it clouded with disappointment. Lord Ashley had nothing aristocratic about him but the title. His figure was tall and its proportions massive; his face was uninteresting, its expression stupid. What a contrast between him and Sir Gervase Montague! If Hilda had met him anywhere else but in her grandfather's drawing-room, she would have mistaken him for a farmer; he looked more like a plebeian than a peer. And yet this nobleman was one of the best *partis* in the fashionable world, and one whom Miss Clifford hoped would lay his coronet at her feet. Lord Percy Dashton was an elegant-looking young man with a refined and intellectual countenance. He was a great admirer of Miss Clifford's, but the worldly-minded young lady preferred the burly peer, because Lord Percy had only the slender fortune of a younger son.

CHAPTER XVI.

COLONEL GODFREY'S GUESTS.

It was the evening of Lady Millicent's arrival—with her suit, as Colonel Godfrey laughingly called the guests who accompanied her to Innismoyne. The gentlemen had just joined the ladies in the drawing-room after dinner. They found them busy with their fancy work, while a conversation was kept up at intervals on general topics.

"Miss Tremayne is as enthusiastic as you are, Gervase, in her description of Canada," Lady Millicent observed, addressing her nephew, as he placed himself at the work-table beside the two young ladies.

"Did you really like it, Montague?" enquired Lord Percy, throwing his elegant figure into a chair near Miss Clifford, and beginning to admire the piece of delicate work which served to show the white-blossoms of her small jewelled hands.

"Of course I did, Canada is a fine country, the scenery charming, in some places magnificent."

"But is it not fearfully cold there? the winter so severe that people get frozen to death?" As Lord Percy Dashton made this remark he turned for information to Miss Tremayne.

"Such cases are not frequent, although the cold is often intense," and Hilda sighed when she thought of her own bitter experience of it in by-gone days, when lightly clad she went shivering through the streets of Quebec, wending her way through the deep snow.

"A young college friend of mine whose brother is an officer in the Canadian Rifles, said it was quite a common thing to get the nose or ears frozen," observed Cecil Godfrey; "but he also said they had rare fun in Canada, skating and sliding down ice-hills in some Indian kind of vehicle, I forget what he calls it."

"A toboggan," observed Hilda.

"Yes, that was the name. I should like that kind of diversion. It must be capital."

"I suppose it is only gentlemen or boys who partake of that amusement," observed Lady Millicent.

"Ladies also enjoy it, it is really pleasant, quite exciting too," remarked Sir Gervase.

"Did you venture down an ice-hill in one of those vehicles, Gervase?" asked Miss Clifford. "Is it not attended with some danger?"

"There is some risk of fracturing a limb if