

into her parts, "lugging them in," as Mr. Harcourt Howard said, "by the head and shoulders. Miss Moffatt's songs were a source of constant bitterness to Mr. Harcourt Howard; for, as he usually played her lover, it fell to his lot to stand and be sung to, night after night, however ill-chosen for the business of the piece might be the moment that Miss Moffatt selected for bursting into song.

"If I could even make faces at her when she sings out of tune," said Mr. Harcourt Howard confidentially to his wife, "it would be some comfort; but I'm obliged to look as if I liked it."

Mr. Trescott, however, whose facial expression was of comparatively small importance, since he sat with his back to the audience, rather approved of Miss Moffatt's mania for singing, for the arrangement and copying of the hand parts produced him some little emolument over and above his salary; but being so constantly occupied, he was very seldom able to visit Mrs. Walton's house. Alfred lounged in and out on various pretexts; to bring Cordelia to spend the afternoon; to fetch her away again; to make appointments with Jack for long rambles into the country—which appointments Alfred seldom kept, however—or to bring messages from his father to Mrs. Walton. He was always careful to inquire after her husband and Miss Janet, and gave many hints about looking forward to seeing a good deal of them in the winter, for he and his father were engaged by the Dublin manager for next season. Another circumstance which contributed to put young Trescott on an intimate footing in Mrs. Walton's family, was the following. In accordance with her aunt's express stipulation with Mr. Moffatt, Mabel was to have the part of Ophelia. Mr. Wilfred J. Percival had selected the play of Hamlet for his benefit night, which was rapidly approaching, and Mabel, thoroughly mistress of the words of the part, had yet to learn the tunes of the snatches of song interspersed through the mad scenes. "I know them well enough when I hear them, Mabel," said Aunt Mary, "but I can't attempt to sing them correctly enough to teach them to you."

In this dilemma Alfred Trescott, with much apparent diffidence, offered to bring his violin and play over the tunes to Mabel until she should have learned them by heart. Accordingly, he came to their lodgings nearly every day for a week, and made the little sitting-room over the shoemaker's shop ring with the sympathetic notes of his fiddle. Mabel had but little voice, but it was pure and fresh, and her ear was remarkably accurate. She caught from Alfred's violin, not only the notes that she had to sing, but also a certain accent and musicianly phrasing that gave a strong yet simple pathos to the quaint old melodies. Her aunt was delighted, and predicted a great success. Mabel was anxious and timid, but a few words that her aunt dropped braced her nerves and strengthened her resolution. She gathered that on the result of her performance of Ophelia might possibly depend her chance of being re-engaged by Mr. Moffatt for the following season, and even—who could tell? perhaps an appearance at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, itself! and then she would earn a salary, however trifling, and then she would no longer be a burden on her aunt, and then—and then—she might send for mamma and Dooley! Oh, she would be strong and steady and brave, and do the very best that was in her.

She thought of her part at every leisure moment, trying to form a clear conception of the hapless Danish girl, and to put herself, her own individuality, out of sight as much as possible in repeating the words. She and Corda would ramble out in the early morning whenever Mabel's presence was not required at rehearsal, accompanying Jack in his sketching excursions along the banks of the lovely river Clare, and then Mabel would pull her little well-worn Shakespeare out of her pocket, and sitting down on a smooth green velvet patch of turf, would put the book into Corda's hand and desire her to "hear her through her part." A task of which Corda was not a little proud.

On one of these occasions, Alfred had joined

the party as they sat on the river bank under the trees, the two girls busy with Ophelia, and Jack absorbed in an endeavour to transfer to his sketch-book some wonderfully rich effects of colour in the rocks and foliage on the opposite side of the silver Clare.

"I was strolling past," said Alfred, "and caught a glimpse of pussy-cat's chestnut curls glinting through the green leaves. Now that I am here, may I stay, Miss Earnshaw?"

"May you stay? Surely you have a right to be here, if you choose."

"I have no right—oh, at all event, no wish—to be troublesome to you by my presence."

He spoke with a sort of proud humility that touched Mabel.

You don't trouble me at all, Mr. Trescott, she answered. "Corda and I will go on with Ophelia just the same. Won't we, Corda?"

The child, whose cheek was flushed with pleasure at the sight of her brother, smiled and nodded eagerly; and Mabel resumed.

"And I of ladies most deject and wretched, That sucked the honey of his music vows, Now see that noble and most sovereign reason, Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh."

The young man threw himself on the grass beside his little sister, and clasping his hands above his head, listened in silence. The morning sun was shining down on the two young faces—Mabel's so earnest and absorbed, Corda's so smiling and eager. Little flickering lights and shadows from the leafy boughs above touched their glossy hair, and passed and changed as the breeze moved them. At their feet the river ran gurgling over its pebbly bed, and Mabel's pure voice rose thrillingly into the clear quiet air.

"Do you know Beethoven's Moonlight sonata for the pianoforte, Miss Earnshaw?" asked Alfred, when Mabel had ceased her recitation.

"I have heard it," answered Mabel, "and exquisitely lovely it is. But my skill as a pianist never reached so far as to execute it fittingly."

"I think your Ophelia will be just like the first movement of the moonlight sonata," said Alfred turning his dark eyes upon her dreamily.

At that moment a short angry bark close to his ear made young Trescott spring to his feet with a stifled exclamation, which would have been a loud unmistakable oath but for Mabel's presence, and a fierce threatening gesture.

"Why, Lingo, Lingo—good dog—poor old fellow—don't you know us?" said Mabel, holding out her hand, into which Lingo immediately thrust his nose hastily, and then turned to bark at Alfred again.

"Oh, Mr. Shaw!" cried Mabel, as old Jerry appeared between the branches of underwood, "I'm so ashamed of Lingo this morning. He doesn't know his friends."

Mr. Shaw stood leaning with both hands upon a thick gnarled stick that he always carried, and gazing at the group before him with an inscrutable face.

The dog ran up to his master, and looking into his face, wagged his tail in an apologetic manner.

"Doesn't know his friends, Miss Bell? Faith, I never knew him make a mistake that way yet," said the old man, shortly. Then turning to Lingo with an air of confidential remonstrance, such as one might assume towards a friend whom one respected, but who had been hurried into an imprudence. "What did I say to ye," said he, "when we were talking together this morning before breakfast? You're too hasty and outspoken altogether."

Lingo ceased wagging his tail, stretched himself at his master's feet with his nose to the ground, and gave vent to a muffled sound that was neither a bark nor a growl, but something between the two.

"Of course," said Jerry Shaw, with imperceptible gravity, "so you remarked this morning, and I dare say you're right. But it don't do to say these things, and so I'd convince you if you weren't as obstinate as the deuce."

Alfred Trescott stood leaning against the trunk of a tree with folded arms, and contemplated Lingo and his master with a sidelong sinister scowl.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Shaw," said the

young man, "you ought to try and teach that dog of yours better manners. If it had been a stranger he'd come up to just now, tearing and barking, he might have chanced to get an ugly kick. People don't like to be startled in that way by a strange dog."

Jerry Shaw remained as motionless and unmoved whilst Alfred was speaking as though buried in a profound meditation that deadened his senses to all outward things. But, as soon as the young man held his peace, Mr. Shaw turned on him with surprising suddenness.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Mr. Alfred Trescott?" said he, as though becoming aware of Alfred's presence for the first time. "I hope I see you well. Glad to find you abroad so early this morning. Nothing like early rising for young people. I've been an early riser from my youth upward, and you can all see what it has done for me." And old Jerry laughed a short, bitter, abrupt laugh, that came out of his throat without causing a muscle of his face to move. "Good morning, Miss Bell. Take care of yourself. I've known it to be dangerous sometimes, sitting out on the turf."

"Dangerous?"

"You might—catch—cold," snapped out the old man, winding up with an usually prolonged sniff. "Come along, Lingo. I suppose you have forgotten there's a ten o'clock call, sir, that you're settling yourself there for the day. Good morning to you, ladies and gentlemen. Oh, by the way," added Mr. Shaw stopping short, and fixing his lacklustre grey eyes full on Alfred Trescott. "I would advise you to give up any idea of kicking Lingo. He mightn't like it. And I have a curious mirth that perhaps I might as well mention. I always find kicking catching. And old Jerry Shaw tramped away through the crackling brushwood, with Lingo trotting soberly at his heels.

(To be continued.)

TRAFALGAR.

IN 1803, Napoleon, having secured the alliance of Spain, ran his sword through the Treaty of Amiens, and war then broke out between England and France. Lord Nelson was appointed commander of the Mediterranean fleet, and for fourteen months blockaded the harbour of Toulon, watchful as a cat for a mouse. On the 18th of January, while the English were anchored off Sardinia, the French fleet slipped off to sea, but Nelson was upon their track the instant the news reached him.

Although only forty-six years of age, Nelson was already a shattered man. Fragile, thin, and sickly, weakened by ague in childhood, beaten down by fever in the East Indies, almost killed by dysentery at Honduras, always sick at sea, an eye lost at Corsica, an arm at Cadiz, cut about the head at the battle of the Nile, struck in the side in another engagement, his cough dangerous, he scarcely hoped to fight more than one more battle. Yet his heart was sound as ever, and the unquenchable lion spirit glowed within him, in spite of all vexatious disappointments, the French reluctance to a fair open sea-fight, and all the mean Admiralty intrigues, shuffles, and ingratitude. "My own fleet," said the sea hero, in his own fervid way, "is well officered and well manned, would to God the ships were half as good!" The ships were, in fact, scarcely fit to sustain the alternate fretfulness and violence of that stormy winter in the Mediterranean. "The French fleet," he wrote home, "is in high feather, and as fine as paint can make them; but our weather-beaten ships, I have no fear, will make their sides like a plum-pudding, and some day we shall lay salt upon their tails."

The pursuit was tedious and baffling—between Biche and Sardinia, to Naples, then quick to snap them off Egypt; then a sweep across the channel between Sardinia and Barbary; next frigates discharged like rockets at Gibraltar and Lisbon; after this a dash to Barbadoes, and back home again, fevered, chafed, and vexed; then on to Cadiz, a sweep across the Bay of Biscay, a cruise towards Ireland, a visit to Cornwallis