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## FLORENCE O'NEILL.

The Rose of St. Germains;

THE SIEGE OF LIMERICK.

BY AGNES M. STEWART. Author of "Life in the Cloister," "Grace O'Halloran," etc.

#### CHAPTER XII.

A GILDED PRISON.

Little did the fair flancee of Sir Regi nald imagine why it was that his re turn, which she so much dreaded, was delayed far beyond the time the king

and queen had expected him.

The events of the last few weeks had told immensely on her health and personal appearance, for though, as yet, open restraint had not been re-sorted to, she yet felt herself the victim of a species of espionage exceedingly painful to bear. The queen in sisted on her presence at court, and her thoughtful countenance not unfrequently drew forth many a sally from Mary, who was by no means deficient in the art of making cleverly pointed sarcastic speeches, which showed Florence that the great condescension of the queen was little else than assumed.

The thought of St. John's return, too, whose bethrothed bride she was, filled her with consternation, for then, unless she had strength of mind to re sist, and Mary would well know why she refused to fulfill the contract into which she had entered, what a life she must eventually lead? A hanger on at the court of Mary, with the image of the queen's betrayed father ever before her eyes, never again to see her adored mistress, but ever to bow be-fore the throne of the queen and pay homage and obedience. This was the life Florence pictured to herself would be hers, and yet she had no ower to break the bonds which bound

escaped her lips by which Mary could be guided, but her clever, penetrating mind was not far wrong. She saw daily the smile became more languid. the color on the cheek grew paler, the violet eyes would tell a tale of recent tears, and the queen would exult in the power she thought she possessed of forcing on a marriage between parties with whom, strangely enough, the deepest affection was interwoven with strong political feeling, which had hitherto bid fair to destroy that warmer emotion to which we have alluded.

Spitefully, then, did Mary note the changes in her countenance, and on one occasion when Florence seemed ouried in deeper thought than usual, Mary observed, as she leant over the embroidery frame, the unbidden tears fall on the gay silks she was forming into flowers. The tones of the queen's into flowers. voice sounded sharp and imperious, and quickly recalled Florence to the remembrance, for the moment forgotten, of the royal lady in whose presence she sat, and who now commanded harshly rather than requested her to leave the room on a commission she wished her to execute.

"Minion," she angrily exlaimed as the girl's form vanished from her "I will punish you yet for the folly with which you are acting. She positively dares to brave me to my very face, to tell me as plainly as if she did so in words, 'I am betrothed to John, but I will not marry him, and I dread to see him because he is true to you and yours.' Well, well, we shall see who will be mistress yet, Lady Florence," said Mary aloud, ping the floor nervously with her foot, and a small red spot glowing on her cheek, for her exasperation was now at its height, "to St. Germains you never shall return, and it will be well for ou, should you refuse to wed St. ohn on his arrival, if the home at Kensington, which our condescension has awarded you, be not exchanged for a chamber in the Tower, if all we

RUN DOWN WITH

#### DYSPEPSIA STOMACH Liver



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"For fifteen years, I was a great suf-ferer from indigestion in its worst forms. I I tested the skill of many doctors, but of grew worse and worse, until I became so weak I could not walk fifty yards so weak I could not wait firly yades of without having to sit down and rest. My of stomach, liver, and heart became affected, and I thought I would surely die. I otried Ayer's Pills and they helped me oright away. I continued their use and am now entirely well. I don't know of anything that will so quickly relieve or the terrible suffering of dys. and cure the terrible suffering of dyspepsia as Ayer's Pills."—John C. Pritchard, Brodie, Warren Co., N. C.

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Received Highest Awards AT THE WORLD'S FAIR 



hear of this conspiracy, and in which your name is worked up, be found to be correct.

Then the queen laughed and smiled with pleasure at the thought that she held Florence at her mercy in her gilded prison, and that if she really had meditated a return with Ashton and the others to France, that all her plans were circumvented, and even as her light steps sounded in her ear in the ante-chamber without, she murmured to herself:

"Yes, yes; I will force her to own and should my will be resisted, there can be torture inflicted, my dainty Mistress Florence, even on limbs as delicate as yours." Forcing a smile to her lips, for she felt strangely nervous and uneasy, Florence re-entered the queen's closet, and gracefully bending her knee presented the queen with the article for which she had been sent. For one moment their eyes met, and just for that moment the fine features of Mary wore an expression strikingly like to her unfortunate father, and for a brief space the girl's fears were lulled to rest, for in glance there was assumed kindness; and as if anxious to erase from the mind of her protegee all remembrance of her recent harshness, the queen endeavored to amuse her by an account of the fine doings with which the New Year would be ushured in at Kensing-

"Alas," thought Florence, "the New Year at hand and I not at St. Germains.

At this thought her countenance again wore the look of abstraction which so annoyed the queen, and a severe reprimand already trembled on her lips when William of Orange entered the apartment. Instantly rising on the king's entrance, Florence quitted the boudoir.

'Something has disturbed you, said the queen meeting William as he advanced towards her. "Tell me quickly what or who it is that has occasioned your annoyance.'

"St. John has gone over to Sarsfield," was the reply, and William's voice was guttural from suppressed passion; "he, the recreant, whom I had the most favored; he, on whom I have lavished every mark of esteem, has ungratefully deserted to those who fight for your father.

'No, my beloved, it cannot be possible that you have met with such ingratitude," exclaimed the queen, forgetful in her indignation at the defec tion of Sir Reginald, of her own and her husband's ingratitude to her father. Has he arrived in England? If so, let him at once be arrested.

"In England, indeed!" replied William ; "I would that he would make him feel the weight of our vengeance; it may reach him yet. No, he is with Sarsfield, who has named him his lieutenant, and whose sworn friend he has already become, so says my informant, adding that St. John was indignant at the way in which his name had been used, and by the mischievous wretch, Benson, having been placed as spy on the actions of Sarsfield.

"And think you he had received our summons to return to England before he threw off his allegiance?" and the voice of the queen was husky and tremulous as she spoke. "I should think not," was the reply.

"Nay, it is almost certain that he must have left headquarters very quickly after his arrival, perhaps im-mediately. What had we best do with this girl-this O'Neill-on whose ac count we have summoned him here?

"Detain her at the palace till we see the issue of the present plot. my beloved husband, are obliged almost immediately to leave England Confide to me the task of unraveling this knotty web, and of severely pun-ishing its ringleaders, however lofty and exalted my be their rank. I shall regard this Florence as a prisoner, but treat her as a favored portegee-not allow her to feel her imprisonment in its true light, but watch her very closely nevertheless. I note every change in her expressive countenance and have read every secret of her heart; she only feared St. John's return because she was resolved not to wed him, minion as she is, whilst he was loyal to us. Now she shall know of his disloyalty, because the pleasure she would otherwise feel will meet with a sting in the reflection that she is with me, and that he dare not now claim her for his wife. Really, I en-joy," added the queen, "the thought of the new sorrow in store for this young fool with a fair face who has presumed to make herself the judge as to whether Mary of Modena or myself should be her queen, but enough her; St. John is rich, is he not? of course you will see that his estates be

instantly confiscated to the crown. "Steps shall be at once taken for that end," said William his usually grave and calm countenance disturbed as he mused over the defection of St. John, whom he had really favored beyond many others, "and now be wary and not over-indulgent in my ab-sence," he continued, "for I leave you at the helm of government again, and above all crush this conspiracy immediately ; do not hesitate to single out for capital punishment the principal offenders, who ever they may

"I will not be wanting, my beloved lord," said Mary, "nor shall I fail to count the days and hours of your absence. Truly," and Mary sighed wearily as she spoke, "my spirits are out of tune at these constant defections, but we must hope the best; our work cannot but be good, as God never fails to send us some little

It is laughable enough certainly, but nevertheless perfectly true, that this princess, at the very moment when she was really engaged in promoting her own interest and that of her fondly-loved consort, by means which were often far from good, and at times positively sinful, would quiet her conscience, or perhaps strive to do so, by endeavoring to believe that it was not her own work she was about, or her own empire she was striving to establish, but rather the work of

Almighty God Himself. Then turning to the king, the usual affectionate parting took place be-tween them, and Mary sought, in the solitude of her own apartment, to de-vise schemes for bringing wholly within her power those who were at the head of the present conspiracy, amongst whom she numbered, not enwithout foundation, the fair descendant of the O'Neill's.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE CAPTIVE.

When Florence left the presence o the queen, she little thought still greater anxiety was in store for her in the fact that Sir Reginald, whose arrival she so much dreaded, whilst she believed him the adherent of the Dutch Monarch, aware that the queen would hurry on her nuptials and re tain her at her own Court, was really still in Ireland, and, moreover, that he was fighting in behalf of the rights of James under the command of Sars-

Not long was she allowed to remain in ignorance of his defection from the cause of William; the following morning the queen, who was a much better tactitian than the unsophisticated Florence, chose the time when both herself and the captive, for such the latter really was, were engaged, Florence at the embroidery frame queen at the beloved occupation of her leisure moments, knotting fringe, to convey the starting intelligence to her.

Though Queen Mary was an inveter ate worker, her busy fingers in no way weakened her powers of govern ing during the long and frequent periods of the Dutch King's absence, when engaged in carrying on his continental wars, or managing his trans-

marine possessions.

But while the queen's head was bent over her everlasting work, the changes in her countenance could not be discerned. She had just parted with William, and her fond heart always ached when this was the case: more over, day after day some startling in-telligence, connected with a new plot, or fresh conspiracies springing out of the old one, in which the unfortunate Nevill Payne had been engaged, conspired to ruffle and disturb equanimity of temper which was too often assumed, as on this occasion, when her blood was at boiling heat, concerning the defection of Sir Regi-

"I have surprising news for you," she said: "it is not likely Sir Reginald will return to London; if he does, he will be at once consigned to the Tower.

As the queen uttered these ominous words, she observed Florence start and turn deadly pale, the needle fell from her hand, affection at that momen gaining the day over loyalty to the exiled court at St. Germains, and on the impulse of the moment, she arose and casting herself at the feet of the queen, her eyes streaming with tears, she was as one transformed into the

To the Tower, gracious Madam, ah! no, no, what evil hath he done? In the whole realm of England you have not a more loyal supparter of your throne than he.

"Your betrothed is a traitor to our cause," said the queen bitterly, "he has taken up arms under the Jacobite General Sarsfield: but why these tears, you exhibited no signs of pleas ure when I told you the king had summoned him hither for his nuptials spare your grief now, I shall attach you to my own person; I do not intend you to leave the court. I shall not be long before I find a more fitting mate for the heiress of the O'Neill's than he would have been.'

Then Mary's handsome face again bent over her frame, and a sickly smile sat upon her lips, for well sh knew the woman she tormented was in secret pining to return to St. Germains. She knew the news of Sir Reginald's defection could bring her no relief, as whilst she was in England it would enforce a separation, also that the quarrel between them had originated solely in one feeling, that of a deepseated loyalty to her own dethroned and exiled father.

The queen then exulted in the power she possessed of detaining Florence at court, knowing that whilst she must at heart be pleased at what she had told her, she must sorrow more intensely than ever over her adverse fate that detained her so unwillingly in London. 'We are going to oe very gay this

winter," continued the queen, "so put a bright face on the change things have taken; nay do not look so lachrymose, child," and the queen put forth her hand to assist her to rise, "the king and myself were well pleased to further your interests, by pushing on your marriage with this ungrateful St. John, before he had thrown off his allegiance, so have we those same interests still at heart, consequetly, I appoint you from this moment, one of my maids of honor. and promise you a far better spouse that the traitor you have lost; nay, nay, he is not worth your tears," she added, as they fell on the hand Florence raised to her lips ere she resumed her seat.

Scarce conscious, indeed, of what she did, she stood for a moment beside Queen Mary's seat, and forgetful of prudence and caution, was about to mplore her to allow her to return to France, and have flung back in her face her profferred friendship, but even as the words trembled on her

lips, the queen arose, saying:
"Poor Florence, I shall leave you to yourself for the next few hours, during which you must grow resigned to that which you cannot, by any means, amend, and I shall expect you to accompany me to to the theatre to night, as one of my ladies in atendance, nay, not a word, it must be," she added, "I am your best friend in not allowing you to remain long brooding over your sorrow alone:" then as the queen reached the door, she suddenly paused as if a thought had occurred to her, saying: "by the way, did you not come to England under the care of one Mr. Ashton, formerly one of the gentlemen of the household of-of the late queen.

As Queen Mary spoke, the expression of her features indicated what was passing in her mind: there was that about her which might well intimidate a young woman trammeled as Florence The name of Ashton awakened all her fears, and as she raised her eyes with a troubled expression on her countenance to that of the queen, the very enquiry seemed to paralyze her, besides, she was herself com-promised, if the queen knew anything concerning the conspiracy, so she re-plied at once in the affirmative.

"And you were to return to St. Germains under his protection in about a week from the present time?

"Yes, gracious Madam," said Florence, with somewhat more of calmness in her manner, "it was the wish of the queen, my mistress, that I should go back to St. Germains at Christmas, but Mr. Ashton-

"Had not completed his arrangements," interrupted the queen in an ironical tone enough. "Rumors have reached my ears, implicating himself and others. Be thankful that you are safely attached to the English Court, and have nothing more to do with such persons.

As the queen spoke, she hastened from the room, and for a moment Florence stood in the same position, as one dazed and bewildered under some heavy stroke.

Then, almost mechanically, she gathered together the gay silks and gold thread, with which she was embroidering a scarf for the queen, and hastened to her own room.

"Fatal, fatal day," she murmured, when the rash idea took possession of my poor weak woman's heart, leading me to think that I could benefit those loved; alas, alas, I have but brought ruin on my own head, and failed to aid their cause. Ah, Reginald, and royal master and mistress, what will be your feelings when you hear I am detained at Queen Mary's Court, in truth, but as a captive, whilst she

feigns herself my friend." "Was there no way to escape," she thought, "no, none." Indeed, the only chance for her own personal safety consisted, she felt convinced, in patiently and quietly submitting to the will of the queen, aware that it was extremely possible she might soon find a home in the Tower, were it known that in the slightest ways she had interfered in the contemplated rising. She knew too how ruthless and deter-mined the queen had shown herself. that at the period of which we write, On mere suspicion of Jacobitism, it was no unusual thing to be apprehended on privy Council warrants, at a theatre, a ball, or a party, and be suddenly consigned to that gloomy fortress,

the Tower. Sensitive, haughty, and imperious, the young heiress of the O'Neill's felt acutely her position; she was to be the constant attendant of the queen, un less some fortuitous accident released her, compelled to dwell with her as her favorite portegee, but in reality prisoner under no very mild surveil-lance, separated from Sir Reginald, who had now, by his adhesion to James, himself removed the only obstacle that had existed to her union, as well as prevented from ever returning to St. Germains, whilst no small part of her suffering would arise from the necess ity she felt existed for hiding it under a cheerful exterior.

For the present, indeed, the queen would excuse her tears, as they might be naturally supposed to flow from her separation from Sir Reginald; this at the very moment, too, when she would have joyfully yielded him her hand.

"A round of dissipation is before me, too," sighed she as she rose wearily from the couch, against which she had knelt whilst giving free vent to her anguish, "and poor Ashton, how will t fare with him and myself, and Lord Preston, if that conspiracy be de-

TO BE CONTINUED.

As the strength of a building depends upon the solidity of its foundation, so health depends upon the condition of the blood. and cause the vital fluid to become vigorous and life giving, Ayer's Sar saparilla is the most powerful and effective medicine in use.

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perfectly cured.
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Do not neglect coughs, colds, asthma, and bronchitis, but cure them by using Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup.

#### THE FIDDLER

The fiddler — I could not tell you his real name, but prefer to keep to that by which he was most famil liarly known — was first violin in a small theatre. He was tall, pale and sickly looking, with jet-black straggling hair that hung down over his forehead. Refined in speech, and of a loving and gentle disposition, he was liked by all he came in contact with.

Fare had dealt harsbly with him. He had come of a good family, and had learned music under the best masters. But on the death of his father, who had speculated unwisely, he found himself destitute.

He went to London, expecting that his talent would be at once recognized, and that he should very soon make a fortune. But he was sadly disappointed, for there he found more musicians than could be employed.

Finally, after months of weary waiting, and when he was on the verge of trying some other way of making a living, he got an engagement in one of the small theatres.

True, it was wretched remuneration, but it was a commencement, and he never entirely lost hope of something better turning up.

At the end of six months his application at one of the larger and better class theatres was successful. It was only a change of places, but instead of thirty he received sixty shillings a week.

Very spon after that he married, and in the following year his daughter Helen was born.

Five years afterward a great misfortune came to him. His poor wife died, and he was left a widower with his little girl.

Misfortunes, as a rule, do not come singly, as so it proved in this case.

The fiddler, like most of his class, was at the mercy of circumstances, and through no fault of his own he lost his engagement.

Then, and only then, did he thoroughly regret that he was a musician.

For almost twelve months he did nothing. No matter how hard he tried he could not get an engagement. He was not the only unfortunate—he was only one among many.

When the little money he had saved was almost exhausted, he was taken on again at the theatre where he first cemmenced.

almost exhausted, he was taken on again at the theatre where he first cemmenced.

The fiddler lived with his daughter in a room above a public house in a poor and noisy neighborhood. The frequenters of the palace below were not, as a rule, noisy, and the sound from the great thoroughfare reached the place only as a kind of murmur. Helen was a sweet little creature, the image of her mother in feature and expression, but her complexion resembled her father's. She was not very strong, and was often troubled with a wearisome cough.

In the evenings, before he went to the theatre, the fiddler smoked his long German pipe, which Helen always filled. Then she would sit down at his feet and watch him in silence. She loved to see the blue smoke curl up in clouds round about him.

But there came a time when the fiddler could not smoke in the room, for it affected Helen's throat, and made her cough worse. Then he would take his fiddle and converse for hours with some of the old masters. He would become unconscious of Helen's presence and play as if inspired.

You never heard such music in your life. He would play little melodies which brought tears welling to your eyes. The notes seemed to pierce you through and through. They went straight to your heart—soft, tender notes that recalled to your mind all that you had cherished and lost.

One evening the spell was rudely broken. The people from the place down-stairs sent up asking him to play something lively and gay, as his solemn, church music was making everybody miserable.

The enchantment was broken. The fiddler put the instrument away with a heavy heart and he played no more that night.

Helen grew worse and worse; the cough became more hollow and painful; her eyes were very bright, and her skin like alabaster, with a flush on the cheeks. When she began to put her hand to her chest when coughing, the father called in a doctor.

The poor child had been ill a long time, but she had disguised it from her father as long as possible; but her efforts had become more and more feeble as she grew worse.

"Dear me!" said the doctor, when he had seen Helen; "very sad, very! Lungs have been diseased for a long time."

He prescribed for her, and came again and again, but at each visit he gave out less hope of her recovery.

He prescribed for her, and came again and again, but at each visit he gave out less hope of her recovery.

"Almost into the winter," he said, "and the poor child, dear me! Shell never see spring. Lungs most gone!"

There came one day with the doctor a nurse, who, although used to pitiful and painful cases, could not keep back her tears at the sight of the poor faded girl. From that day the kind nurse would not leave Helen. She decided to, remain and nurse the little myalid, and many a strengthening beverage and dainty dish dil she give the child in sevret which the father could not possibly have bought.

Many have won the name of hero by one gallant deed, but these nurses in our large towns who live a life of self denial—giving the best years of their life up to the care and attention of the poor and sick—deserve the name indeed.

The poor fiddler was almost heart-broken. Every penny each week was spent in medicines and better food for the invalid, but nothing could benefit her. He had not the means to send her even out of London.

The child clung round him in affection mingled with lear, but he was often afraid to look upon her.

"Father, dear father, are you angry with

look upon her.

"Father, dear father, are you angry with your little Helen?" she asked one day as he sat moodily with his face buried in his hands.

He sprang to his feet and clasped her in his arms, and asked her to torgive him if he

his arms, and asked her to tergive him it he seemed unkind.

After that he was always cheerful in her presence, for he saw that it made her unhappy to see him sad.

Sometimes the fading girl would ask to be carried to the window to see the sun—the winter sun, like a huge ball of blood—sink down behind the housetops.

Occasionally some of the neighbors who had known her came to see her, but she was so changed that very few could recognize her.

so changed that very few could recognize her.

And, little by little, the hideous disease advanced, sapping up slowly but surely its helpless victim's strength. At times it made her face bloodless, like the face of a corpse, At others, oh, cruel mockery! it painted the cheeks like the blush of a rose; it added fire to her eyes and lustre to her skin, thus raising false hopes in the breast of the poor father, who saw her change from day to day.

One morning the fiddler was informed that One morning the hidder was informed that to of the stairs. He immediately hurried down and found an old gentleman pacing up and down, mumbling all the while to himself.

"You play the fiddle at the — theatre?" he abruptly asked the fiddler, when he appeared.

he abruptly asked the honer, appeared.

"Yes, sir. Will you come in. It—"

"I intend to give a party to night and had engaged T—— to give us a tune on the fiddle. Unfortunately, he is indisposed and will not be able to appear. Will you come?"

"I am engaged at the theatre and—"

"Until what hour?" asked the visitor importantly.

"Until what hour?" asked the visitor impatiently.
"About 11 o'clock. I could come any time after that, if it is not too late."
The visitor thought for a moment or two, then he suddenly said, at the same time thrusting a card into the fiddler's hand:
"To-night at 11:30 I shall expect you. Do not disappoint me and you will not regret it."

That evening when the fiddler went in to see his daughter before leaving for the theatre she did not recognize him, and the poor man hurried away with a heavy load at his heart.

It was close upon midnight when he reached the address indicated on the card, and as he was led into the room by his host,