

of the sea captain of the future. 'Young and very fair,' with a 'light moustache,' a 'cluster of bright golden hair,' and a 'small hand very prettily formed and very white,' he would scarcely find much favour in the eyes of the directors of the Cunard or Inman lines nowadays. For the pretty captain, Morna braves the anger of the simple fishermen, who are anxious to put the unlucky arrival 'again in the pond'; nurses him, and, of course, falls deeply in love with her charge, treating him with the naive *abandon* of a Venus Aphrodite blended with the chaste reserve of one of her own oysters. Purely *pour s'amuser* he beguiles time with the handsome fisher girl, but is ultimately himself caught by the inexorable power of love. Compelled by a barbarous want of civilized reasoning on the part of the object of his desire, he ultimately marries the girl, and takes his handsome peasant bride to the shores of Normandy. The halcyon days of early love-making soon pass, however, and Captain Bisson wearies of his toy. The 'small, very prettily formed white hand' yearns to clasp the waists of other belles, and the 'light moustache' curls itself into anything but graceful forms when addressing his *cara sposa*. Ultimately, with a disregard of consequences unaccountable even in the hero of so melodramatic a novel as this, he arranges to marry another, and his wife finds herself one dark night running out to sea in the clutches of a villain of still deeper dye. From the advances of this ungentle gentleman she is saved—and herein lies, we suspect, the moral of the whole story—by a rare faculty she possesses of swimming. After an extremely *mauvais quart d'heure* on deck, she plunges boldly overboard, and, despite a 'rising wind,' an 'ebbing tide,' 'great black waves urging her back,' and 'clothes saturated with water,' reaches the land, a feat which would be creditable to an otter and is simply marvellous in a girl. After a series of adventures which would do credit to the 'transpontine drama' or the *Porte St. Martin*, the *deus ex machina* descends in the shape of a friendly donkey, who applies his hoofs with super-asinine intelligence in the proper quarter, and Morna is restored to Eagle Island and her friends. In the last scene of this strange eventful history poetic retribution is strained to a point where credence refuses to follow. Captain Bisson again tempts the waves in the same locality, a storm arises, and the self-same spot which introduced him to the islanders whose hospitality he has so abused, is the scene of a second shipwreck, and he finally disappears before the eyes of his wife into the tempestuous waves of the Crag na Luing.

Despite grave defects of construction, born of a too dramatic mind, and no inconsiderable amount of doubtful taste in treatment of things sacred and moral, there are many

points of good descriptive writing in the novel, and for readers who can condone its blemishes in consideration of its better features, the 'Dark Colleen' will while away an hour agreeably enough.

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