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old Miss Kinsella's hand, and positive-
ly beams upon her, to Diana's intense
astonishment.

"Tell us!" cries Hilary.

"Well, Pether ye know me nep-
hew, Pether Kinsella- ye saw him last
night! eh! ye did now, didn't ye!""Diana, I hope you will be able to
say yes to that," says Clifford solemn-
ly. "This, I must inform you, is a
most important case.""Yes, yes, of course we saw him,"
says Hilary enthusiastically. She is
feeling so obliged to this old bore.

"He was a sort of Scot, wasn't he?"

"A Highland chieftain," says Clif-
ford, correcting her severely. "Of
the very first water!""Ye're right! Ye're right!" cries
old Miss Kinsella, her curls vibrating
with excitement. "A Highland chief
he was, an' lovely he looked! I
couldn't take me eyes off him all night.A matter, me dear, that made him a
thriller mad. You know he will have
his little flirtatious ways sometimes!""We know! we know!" says Clif-
ford sadly."Flirtatious, but not indecent," says
Miss Kinsella, blushing a bright
orange. "Well, an' what will you
think, me dear Mrs. Clifford, when I
tell ye that they put him down in the
list of characters for Mrs. McIntyre's
fancy-dress ball, as—" Here she
breaks down and dissolves into tears."Oh! Miss Kinsella, what is it?"
asks Diana tenderly. "There now,
don't distress yourself.""I must begin at the beginning, me
dear, if I'm to make you understand
it. When me nephew, Peter Kinsella,
arrived at the hall door, that jacka-
napes of a footman they have was
standing just inside it, with a pencil
and paper in his hand, an' had the
impudence to ask Pether about his
character!" "His character?""Yes, me dear. His character!
An' you all know what me nephew
Pether is! A reg'lar snowdrop!"Here she pauses to wipe her eyes,
which gives Hilary a chance of retir-
ing behind the *Irish Times*."Dear Miss Kinsella," says Diana,
gently, "I think the man must have
wished to know what costume your
nephew was wearing, with a view to
putting it in our daily paper, perhaps
in the *Gentleman*, or some other
society paper.""Yes, me dear. So it seems now,
but at first me nephew Pether couldn't
understand what he was at, an' you
know what a spirit he has, quite blood
thirsty when his honor is called in
question!"

"But the man explained?"

"He did, me dear. But Pether
was so flabbergasted by that time,
that he couldn't remember what he
was, so he told the man that he had
'no character,' and that the 'mistress
knew him well!'"Here Hilary gives way, and burst-
into a peal of laughter, followed by
Diana, who has been growing hysterical."Miss Kinsella, I hope you will par-
don this reprehensible merriment on
the part of my wife and my sister,"
says Clifford solemnly. "No doubt
hysteria has a good deal to do with it.
No one could hear your harrowing tale
without being deeply moved. As for
me—" Here, his voice beginningto shake treacherously, he subsides
behind his handkerchief. "When I
think of Mrs. McIntyre's face when
she heard that," says he. "Such an
aspersion on her character!""Oh, but, me dear, there's worse to
come," says Miss Kinsella, tearfully,
rather pleased with the sensation she
is so evidently creating. "It seems
that that scamp of a footman gave me
nephew Pether's message straight to
Mrs. McIntyre this morning, when she
was looking over her list. An' now I
hear they're going to take revenge on
me poor nephew, and are goin' to put
him in all the papers as 'Thady, ye
gandher.' As if," here Miss Kinsella
begins to sob wildly, "Pether would
go anywhere without his breeches!""It's frightful," says Clifford, who
ought to be ashamed of himself."You know the old lines, don't ye,
Mrs. Clifford, me dear!""Oh, Thady, ye gandher,
Ye're like a Highlandher,
For want o' yer breeches,
For want o' yer breeches!"The old lady chants them in a
shaking voice."They sound sadly familiar," says
Clifford. Both Hilary and Diana are
beyond speech."Oh! to think o' me spotless
Pether being so treated," goes on
Miss Kinsella, distractedly. "Mrs.
Clifford, me dear, you're a great friend
of Mrs. McIntyre's. I came to ask
would you go up to her and beg me
nephew Pether off! You could ex-
plain to her, me dear, that he never
meant it." Inspiration seizes on Diana."I'll tell you what I'll do," says she.
"I'll give you a little note and you
must take it direct to Mrs. McIntyre
yourself. You know you are a great
favorite of hers, and she can refuse
you nothing. I'll just explain the
case, and you can do the rest.""You couldn't come with me, me
dear!"

"I could," says Diana thoughtfully,

"but I know I should spoil matters.
You, who are so eloquent, dear Miss
Kinsella, require no advocate."The old maid brightens up percept-
ibly, and gives her head an airy little
shake. Eloquent! Yes, she has felt
that all her life. But it is pleasant to
see the fact acknowledged at last.

(To be Continued).

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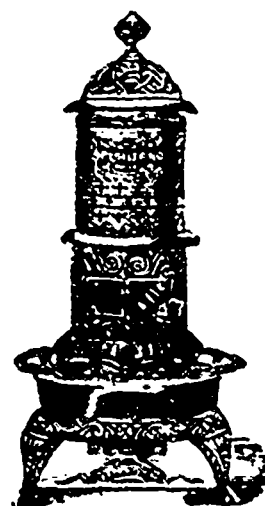
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mental or physical labor! Does sleep-
lessness rob you of mental force! make
your days a weariness and night
a torment! In brief, is life rapidly
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