The Legend of Goldberg.

Still and ghastly in the moonlight
Lay the German village brown,
But appeared no human figure,
For the plague was in the town.

There had corpses laid unburied,
And whom death had chanced to spare
Were all hidden in the houses
From the pestilential air.

So in terror had they hidden,
Dreading night, afraid of day,
Praying, waiting, scarcely hoping,
For the dread to pass away.

Came the snow, then morning sunshine,
Came the Christmas as of old,
But no form moved in the village;
It lay silent, white and cold.

Rose that morn the singer, Caspar,
From the bed where he had lain
(He alone of all the stricken
In his house would rise again.)

"I alone," he thought, "am living;
I alone"—his eyes grew dim—
"I alone of all the village
May repeat the Christmas hymn.

"What though death may be awaiting—
What is death?—the day is bright;
I will sing the Christ Child story—
Sing it looking on the light!"

Open then he threw the shutter,
And upon the silent street
From his lips rang out the anthem,
Strong and hopeful, clear and sweet.

Through the frosty air of morning
The old Christmas anthem rang—
What was that? Another shutter
Open wide: as Caspar sang!

And another! and another!—
There was limit to the slain—
God be thanked! A score of voices
Joined with Caspar in the strain!

And they knew no more was dying,
That the hand with power to stay
Had been reached out to deliver—
This they knew on Christmas Day.

—*Stanley Waterloo in Chicago News.*

LILY LASS.

By JUSTIN HUNTLEY McCARTHY, M. P.

CHAPTER X.

A SHOWMAN'S INTERLUDE.

We makers of books, we, whose odd trade it is to create a little world of mimic lives as if our own were not enough, and more than enough, for us to manage, are by the very exigencies of our art permitted certain privileges.

In old days our brothers, the dramatists, called into their aid a solemn and stately chorus to fill up gaps in their scenic narrative by explaining to the audience events of which they could otherwise have become cognisant without difficulty.

Even to-day the Punch-and-Judy man lifts his lips from those ribs of reed which were once the limbs of the nymph whom Pan pursued down the Thessalian valley, to whisper hoarsely confidential communications to his audience concerning the deeds of his striped and hump-backed hero.

We, too, will take to ourselves the permission of explaining for our characters, whenever and wherever it might be more troublesome for them to explain themselves. Happier than Hamlet, we can see the puppets dallying, and are able to interpret for them. Here, therefore, we will allow ourselves the license of narrating certain facts concerning certain personages who have already made their appearance upon our stage and of opening with audacious fingers a few pages of long-folded family history.

The writers of plays in former days had an ingenious method, which still lingers on the posters of obscure theatres, of introducing their characters to the public and making the real and the unreal acquainted.

Thus the hero would perhaps be described as "a high-souled, noble-minded youth"; his enemy would be tersely put off as "a black-hearted villain"; the heroine's name would be followed by a little constellation of enthusiastic adjectives, depicting in the liveliest manner her physical and moral loveliness; while somebody or other in the list of *dramatis personæ* was certain to be set down as "rough but honest."

There was a simplicity about this plan of procedure which had its advantages. The nature of a man or woman was shown forth as clearly and uncompromisingly as the blazoning of a heraldic coat. You knew at once, ere ever the green curtain had lifted, the passions and principles which animated or guided the individuals who peopled the little world of the drama you were about to witness. The hero's courage, the heroine's truth and beauty, the sable dye of the villain's villany, the honesty of the hero's trusted friend, were all as familiar to you as if you had known hero and heroine, villain and friend, from childhood upwards, and all this before any one of the company made his appearance before the footlights.

This good old-fashioned plan is unhappily forbidden to the modern disciple of the improvisers of the East. Even when he does not discourse learnedly of all human beings and all human events as so many "documents," he has learned that human life is a little too complex for this simple-minded manner of cataloguing human merits and human infirmities.

In my own case the scheme would serve me little. To attempt to describe Lilias Geraldine or Mary O'Rourke by any adjective or set of adjectives would inevitably be a failure. None of the ordinary terms of eulogy allotted to heroes would precisely wrap up Murrough MacMurchad. I cannot even have the privilege of applying to Lord Mountmarvel the epithet "black-hearted villain," because I am perfectly well aware that he was nothing of the kind, but only a courageous, narrow-minded, un-idea'd, good-looking, gallant country gentleman.

But if I cannot thus label off my puppets as wise men bracket botanical specimens, I can exercise my privilege as chronicler, and say for them what it would be either expedient or becoming for them to say for themselves.

Let us then, while our men and women are becoming more closely acquainted, while they are being drawn nearer and nearer by the meshes of their destiny—let us then, run them over, and learn all that is, so far, to be learned about them.

CHAPTER XI.

WHICH EXPLAINS MR. GERALDINE.

Let us begin, therefore, with our first friend.

Mr. Geraldine was an English gentleman; that is, he was born in England like his father before him, and he had lived all his life in England His family, however, as the name he bore made clear, came from descent from Ireland, and originally from Normandy. He had a right to the ancient arms of his race, and sealed his letters with the shield *Argent a Saltier Gules* which had been borne in so many battles on the soil of Ireland, of England, or of France.

Mr. Geraldine was a scholar, a student, and an impassioned Orientalist. When he was quite a young man—he was not even now an old man—he had travelled in the East, and had returned to the quiet country home in England deeply imbued with the love of Eastern literature and Eastern lore. The ambition of his later life, an ambition which he confided to nobody, was to accomplish a translation of the Persian poet Sa'adi, which he began before he was five-and-twenty years old, and which was not concluded now that he was not far from his half century.

At one time it had not seemed at all likely that Mr. Geraldine would have given himself over bodily to a secluded student life. At one time his friends and his family thought that he had political ambition, and certain influential members of the old Whig houses saw in the young man the stuff of a possible Prime Minister.

Mr. Geraldine at first seemed to lend himself to the views of his kinsmen. While he was away on that voyage in the East, which was destined to have so important an influence upon his life, a vacancy occurred in a certain English pocket borough, which was entirely under the thumb of some of Mr. Geraldine's most illustrious kinsfolk.

These illustrious kinsfolk at once took steps to secure the return of the young Geraldine. The future M. P. was promised the patronage of the then Duke of Deptford, father of that mad, bad Duke of Deptford, grandfather of the present duke, whose devotion to our beautiful countrywoman, Miss Mermack, has redeemed the credit of his race. One of the leading Whig men of letters, Mr. Fanshawe, whose son came to such a melancholy end the other day, was good enough to draught an election address for the absent wanderer, which the clubs declared to be a very model and masterpiece of political statecraft. Everything smiled upon Mr. Geraldine's future fame and fortune—except Mr. Geraldine himself.

Mr. Geraldine returned from the East just as these preparations for his welfare were going forward. To the surprise and indignation of his family and his friends he refused to have anything to do with the schemes that had been formed. He offended the great Whig duke mortally by the letter which he wrote to that illustrious nobleman respectfully declining his proffers; he irritated the great man of letters by an address which he promptly issued to the electors of the pocket borough, in which he curtly and decisively repudiated all the opinions that had been expressed for him in the earlier address, and absolutely declined to come forward as a candidate.

From that moment Mr. Geraldine retired into private life. He had some property in one of the most charming parts of Suffolk, and he settled down in it with his books about him, and vanished for ever from the page of history.

The Whigs fished up at the last moment a new candidate, and had the satisfaction of annihilating an audacious Radical who had taken advantage of the unexpected complication to offer himself and his revolutionary doctrines to the bewildered pocket borough.

The Duke of Deptford registered a mental vow never to do anything again for the audacious Geraldine—a vow which he was easily able to fulfil, for Mr. Geraldine's name never again came before him during the remainder of his apoplectic career.

Mr. Fanshawe waited for a long time patiently, looking out for the appearance of some book by Mr. Geraldine which he might jump upon in the particular *Quarterly* over which he held sway, and such of the daily Press as he was able to influence. This would revenge him for his flouted manifesto. But Mr. Geraldine unconsciously flouted him by publishing nothing.

Of course there was a reason for Mr. Geraldine's eccentric conduct, though no one knew it. Oddly enough it was a romantic reason, and of the most conventional kind of romance.

Mr. Geraldine had started early in life by falling in love. The girl was poor, the girl was pretty, the girl was clever. She had nothing whatever to do with society, but Mr. Geraldine cared not a jot for that, and when he went away to the East he carried her plighted troth with him, and a faded red rose which he wore next his heart most sentimentally, and wrote verses to, and made a fool of himself over in desert places with only the shining eyes of the Syrian stars to watch him.

On his way home he found a letter several months old waiting for him at his bankers. It was from her; it told him terrible news; it made the conventional absurd requests to forgive and to forget, In point of fact, she had never cared much for Geraldine, and while he was away she had married somebody else, a young Irish subaltern as poor as herself.

That marriage made and marred Mr. Geraldine's life. He determined at once to renounce all public life. His ambition was dead within him; he quitted the world and gave himself up to study. For a time he returned to the East, and had some thoughts of living his life out in some sleepy town beside the Nile. But he changed his mind and came back to England, and settled down definitely in one of the fairest parts of Suffolk on a small, old-fashioned estate which he bought there.

One day a letter came from his old love to tell him that her husband was dead, and that she was miserably poor. Mr. Geraldine sent her back, by return of post, a large cheque; informed her that a sum would be payable to her quarterly at his bankers, dismissed the matter from his mind, and returned to his Sa'adi without an ache or even a throb at his heart. Some time later another letter came. She was dying, his old love wrote. Would he take charge of her little girl?

Mr. Geraldine came to London and stood for a few minutes by his old love's dying bed. She was wretchedly poor; her poverty had hastened her death. She had made no use of the money Mr. Geraldine had sent her. She died with Mr. Geraldine looking at her, and recalling his own dumb agony which had turned him in a few years into an old man with a dead heart in his breast.

Then Mr. Geraldine returned to his home, taking the little girl of three years old with him. Her Christian name was Lilias—her mother's name; he gave her his own surname. He did not wish to remind himself of the father he never had seen.

The child grew up with Mr. Geraldine, and loved him and made his life light. He never told her that he was not her father. He bade her always call him by his Christian name, and he loved to hear the baby lips lisp "Edward." Now the fair girl of eighteen called him "Edward," and it did not give him quite so keen a joy.

In his second journey to the East Mr. Geraldine had encountered in Bagdad a wandering, eccentric English nobleman, Lord Mountmarvel. A row in a hasheesh den, from which Mr. Geraldine's knowledge of Persian helped to extricate Mountmarvel, made the pair friends. They parted to meet again once later in London. Mountmarvel told Geraldine then that he had acquired at Aleppo a large quantity of Oriental manuscripts, and that whenever Mr. Geraldine liked to come over to Mountmarvel Castle, in Ireland, he could look them over and make any use he pleased of them.

Mr. Geraldine had thanked him; had promised to pay him a speedy visit, and had not kept his promise. Mountmarvel died abroad a little later, and for a time Geraldine dismissed him and his manuscripts from memory.

Now, however, in the early part of 1848, some other business led Mr. Geraldine's thoughts towards Ireland, and he remembered the offer of his old travelling companion.

On his arrival in the city of my story he wrote to Mountmarvel's son, the present lord, mentioning the parent's promise, and asking permission to investigate the old manuscripts.

We already know the answer to that letter.

CHAPTER XII.

WHICH EXPLAINS LILIAS.

Sensible persons would have described the education of Lilias as eccentric and unreasonable in the extreme. Mr. Geraldine, however, seldom paid heed to the opinions of other persons, whether sensible or senseless, and he brought up the girl, whom chance had handed over to him, in his own way.

Undoubtedly an odd way. The child of three was suddenly transplanted from the squalid succession of London lodging-houses, which had been her world hitherto, into one of the fairest country places in all England.

She exchanged the companionship of the invalid mother, whose very existence soon became dimmed in her childish memory, for the society of a man who seemed very venerable to her baby eyes. The only women her young years knew were Mr. Geraldine's elderly housekeeper, to whose care she was a good deal entrusted, and the women-servants about the place, of whom, in accordance with Mr. Geraldine's instructions, she saw but little.

What she was to learn Mr. Geraldine taught her himself. She first learnt to spell from him. The earliest word she ever remembered learning was "Ireland," on a map of Europe that hung in Mr. Geraldine's study. She learnt to form her first fat, ungainly pot-hooks and hangers, perched upon a big chair at the side of his desk, in an open space cleared for her in the Oriental grammars, dictionaries, texts and manuscripts which usually covered it.

She used to toddle by the student's side as he took his daily walks—walks no longer lonely to him now—and learned from his lips all manner of marvels, such as children always long for and seldom learn.

Her first fairy stories were the marvellous fictions of the East, which Mr. Geraldine read to her out of some wonderful volumes, in which her surprised eyes could only discern a multitude of perplexing dots and dashes, till she began to fancy that Edward himself was one of the wizards of whom he read to her.

But children seldom love what they are taught, even when they love the teacher and the lesson, so much as what they find out for themselves.

Little Lilias—Lily Lass her guardian always called her—made suddenly, and quite by chance, a marvellous discovery. One rainy day when she—a merry little maid of nine—was forced to forgo her fields and the river and the confidential alders, she was amusing herself among the big volumes in Mr. Geraldine's library.

There she came upon a collection of books devoted to the history and the legends of Ireland. The legends pleased her first, child as she was, and from that moment Aladdin and Hassan and Camaralzaman were discarded in favor of her new heroes, of Finn and Oisin, and the shadowy kings and chieftains of Irish story.

The child in her play-hours among the soft Suffolk meadows now no longer dreamed herself beneath the rose-bowers of the distant East. Her thoughts were all among the white Irish hills, in Desmond and Tara and the kingdom of Lir. A natural mound in a field by the river she promptly christened the grave of Dermat.

Later, as she grew older and read more, her ideas widened; her horizon grew vaster; the world of her fancy began to be peopled with mightier shadows. The real figures of Irish history gathered about her; she held her breath over the deeds of the Geraldines—"More Irish than the Irish themselves"—whose name she bore. In the end, however, the men of '98 filled her thoughts and demanded all her admiration. By a sudden flash of thought it was one day revealed to her that some of the old people she knew must have been alive when the United Irishmen lived.

She startled Mr. Geraldine one day by asking him if he had ever known Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Her admiration for her guardian received a slight shock when he answered in the negative, and only returned in its entirety when he explained that he happened not to be born until two years after Lord Edward's tragic death.

Mr. Geraldine was not a little surprised at the child's passion for Ireland, and the extent of her unexpected studies. He entered into her mood at once, however; talked much to her on her favorite theme, and greatly impressed her by the information that some of the United Irishmen still lived in exile in France.

Late in the afternoon of the same day on which Mr. Geraldine gave Lilias this news the scholar missed his little companion. Going to look for her, he found her sitting in a meadow that overlooked the river, with her wide, grey eyes fixed intently upon the conflagration of the setting sun.

She did not notice her guardian's approach till he came close, and, sitting down, stretched out his long legs beside her. Then she turned a grave, wistful, little face up to him.

"Of what were you thinking so deeply, Lilly Lass?" the scholar asked of the child.

The child turned her eyes again to the setting sun.

"I was thinking of them," she answered, softly.

Further inquiry revealed the fact that "them" meant the United Irishmen who still lived far away across the sea.

To her they were greater than heroes, these exiled patriots; they were demigods, more than mortal, dwelling, themselves eternally young and fair, in a land of youth akin to that land in which the legendary Oisin found his wife and his woe.

As the years went on, and her childish ideas widened, her fancy lost its fever glow, but her imagination still kindled hotly at an Irish word or an Irish name. The Irish blood in her was not, indeed, as she believed, the blood of the more than Irish Geraldines, but it asserted itself none the less, and warmly.

As she grew from girlhood into womanhood Mr. Geraldine put her more in the way of other women than the elderly housekeeper. Few of Mr. Geraldine's Suffolk neighbours were very interesting; most of them were commonplace. But no companionship could possibly make Lilias commonplace. Her own impetuous, keenly artistic nature and her strange training gave an emphatic nay to that.

When Mr. Geraldine announced his intention of visiting Ireland her old dreams took life and color again, and she could almost have cried for joy. She had followed through the English papers the story of the Repeal movement and the growth of Young Ireland, and her maturer maidenhood endowed the Young Irelanders with something of the allegorical attributes which, in her childhood, had placed Myles Byrne and Arthur O'Connor in the companionship of Oisin and Finn. It was in this mood that, for the first time, she visited Ireland.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHICH EXPLAINS MACMURCHAD.

Murrough MacMurchad's position in the world was curious and isolated. He was the last of an ancient line that had once flourished with what appeared to be an enduring prosperity. But the fortunes of Ireland and the fortunes of the house of MacMurchad went the same way. In every epoch of the country's history one MacMurchad or another was to be found playing a part more or less prominent in the struggle, and to the credit of the race always on the losing side.

The war cry of the MacMurchads, *Lav Laidir Abu*, which may be rendered, Hurrah for the strong hand, had sounded often and ominously on the ears of the Normans of the Pale. A. MacMurchad had ridden with Tyrone on his last ride against the English; a MacMurchad had been cooped up in Limerick with Sarsfield; a MacMurchad had been hanged in '98 in the face of the smouldering ruins of his old hall, a little way outside the city, where Desmond Murrough MacMurchad dwelt. MacMurchad's grave was an object of veneration to the peasantry, many of whose own ancestors had carried pikes by his side, and who fought and died as bravely and as well as the lord of the old race himself.

In fact, whenever Ireland was convulsed by any of her many efforts to shake herself free from her rulers a MacMurchad was sure to be in the thick of it. They were a fighting race, and they fought fiercely and well. When they had no common foe to battle with they fought among themselves; when the age for such feuds died out they took to duelling with a light heart, and greatly distinguished themselves thereat.

At a time when the penal laws were at their worst in Ireland Desmond MacMurchad was the head of the house. He was a Catholic, whom chance and fortune and the aid of friends had sheltered from the harshest consequences of the penal code. Generations of warfare and sequestration had not deprived the family of all its ancient splendour, and Desmond MacMurchad was permitted to enjoy undisturbed his estate and its revenues. His close friendship with Lord Mountmarvel stood him in good stead, for Mountmarvel had great influence with the Castle, and with the Court beyond the seas. It was comparatively easy to leave him alone in peace, for he seemed to care little for politics, or indeed, for anything but for the cards, the dice, the wine, and the other amusements dear to the Hell-Fire Club, of which, in spite of his hated creed and his disloyal name, he was a prominent member.

Many who have lamented the decay of the old race declared that Desmond MacMurchad's riot was assumed, that his mad mirth was forced in order to stifle within his own breast the sense of shame at the degradation of his country, of his indignation at the insults to his faith, at the ruin of his house.

What Desmond MacMurchad ever thought on any subject was given to few to know. His deeds were wild and reckless up to the moment of that wildest and most reckless of them all in which he so suddenly quarrelled with his friend Mountmarvel and killed him in the courtyard of the Crown Inn.

After that there was an end of any Ministerial toleration for Desmond MacMurchad. He fled over the seas, as has been already narrated, and died in Spain.

The family grew poorer and poorer. The rebellious spirit of the family reasserted itself after the disappearance of Desmond, and, as we have seen, a MacMurchad, Murrough's grandfather, perished in '98. Another of his kinsmen was lurking with Michael Dwyer in the Wicklow Mountains, to which the dying eyes of Emmet were turned, perhaps in expectation of the help which could not come.

Murrough MacMurchad's father had been prominently concerned in the movement which brought O'Connell forward for Clare. In that movement, indeed, what little money still lingered in the MacMurchad coffers was finally dissipated, and MacMurchad's father died not long after, leaving his young son Desmond, then a mere lad, with little in the world beyond the Red Tower, which had been unused for generations, and the devotion of a young peasant a little older that himself—Cormac.

The desolate young MacMurchad was taken charge of by a maternal uncle, who was a priest. Father Beamish took the lonely lad into his house, shared his small means with him, and his wide learning. Father Beamish was a scholar of distinction. He taught his nephew all he knew. Before the boy was nineteen he knew Greek, Latin and French. What was more remarkable in those days, though I believe it is not so still, he knew the language of his own country and his own people.

Father Beamish was a good Gaelic scholar—one of the few men who at that time seriously devoted themselves to the study of the language and the antiquities of Ireland.

Irish was the vernacular of Cormac, who was the child of Irish parents, and between the two Murrough MacMurchad attained at once a colloquial and a scholarly mastery of the language which had been the language of his house long after the Norman banners had floated from the battlements of the Pale.

When MacMurchad was one-and-twenty years of age Father Beamish died. He had amassed a little property. He had a few relations, and he left almost all he possessed to the young man. It was not much, but it ensured him a temporary means of existence