THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

July 27, '81,

CHARLIE STUART AND HIS SISTER.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING. PART II.

CHAPTER IX .- CONTINUED.

This is the age of general improvement and the TRUE WITNESS will advance with it. A well known figuae in a gray suit, stood a tew yards off, pacing restlessly about and smoking. He flung away his cigar and hur-Newspapers are starting up around us on all ried up to her. One glance at her smiling sides with more or less pretensions to public favor, some of them die in their tender inface was enough, his own flushed with rapture "I have come for my answer," he cried. "O Edith, my darling, don't let it be 'No.'" fancy, some of them die of disease of the heart after a few years, while others, though She laughed aloud at his vehemence--it the fewest in number, grow stronger as they advance in years and root themselves all the

was the sort of wooing she liked. "I should like to please you, Sir Victor-what, then, shall it be?" "Yes ! a thousand times, yes ! Edith, my

is their life. However, we may criticise Darwins theory as applied to the species there is no doubt it holds good in newspaper enter-prises, it is the fittest which survives. The TRUE WITNESS has survived a generation of love-my love-yes!" She was smiling still-she looked him

frankly in the eyes, as no other woman on earth, in such an hour, ever looked at the man she loved. She laid in his, one slim, brown, ringless hand. "Since you know it so much, Sir Victor, let

its circulation still further, and we want its friends to assist us if they believe this jourit be as you please. Yes!" nal to be worth \$1.50 a year, and we think

CHAPTER X.

HOW TRIX TOOK IT.

without exception the cheapest paper of its It was half-past twelve by all the clocks and watches of Powyss Place. Miss Stuart sat alone, in the pleasant boudoir or sittingthe country and two dollars and a half in the room, assigned her, her foot on an ottoman, a city, but the present proprietors having taken novel in her hand, a frown on her brow, and most beautifully dressed. In solitary state, at half-past ten, she had breakfasted, twenty or twenty-five per cent would mean something and would not only enable the old subscribers to retain it but new ones to waited upon by the trimmest of handmaidens been removed for over an hour, and still Miss Stuart sat alone.

Her mamma had called to see her, so had Lady Helens, but they did not count. She wanted somebody else, and that somebody the best." did not come. Her novel was interesting and new, but she could not read; her troubles were too many and great.

First there was her ankle that pained her, stand upon it for the next three days, and who gave a large party, and at that party it was morally and physically impossible she could play any other part than that of wallflower she who was one of the best waitzers, and lov ed waltzing better than any girl in New York. is it any wonder, then, that an absorbing no-

vel failed to absorb her? 115 The door opened and Edith came in. At | wife !" all times and in all array, Miss Darrell must of necessity look handsome. This morning in crisp muslin and rose colored ribbons, a flush on her cheeks and a sparkle in her eyes, Miss Darrell was something more than handsome-she was beautiful. Something, that was more the memory of a smile, than a smile | with Charlie, and he with you. itself, lingered on her lips-she was so bright. ly pretty, so fresh, so fair, that it was a plea-sure only to look at her.

sending the name of a reliable person who will act as agent in their locality for the pubmuch, I hope?"

She came up behind Miss Stuart's chair, put her arms around her neck, stooped down and kissed her forehead. The frown on Trixy's face deepened-it was the last straw that broke the camels back, to see Edith Darrell looking so brightly handsome, priviliged to go where she pleased, while she was chained to this horrid chair.

"It does hurt," Trixy responded crossly. " lwish I never had on ankle, sooner than go spraining it this way. The idea of horrid floors, like black looking-glasses, and slipperier than a skating-rink. Edith, how long is it since you got up ?"

"Now for it 1" thought Edith, and the aile she strove to rep

"O Trix." She twined her arms still closer father would disinherit him, and your father round her neck, and laid her cheek coaxingboat on Killarney's lake he was talking ofme?"

" Of-you !" The two words dropped from

Trixy's ashen lips. Of me, dear, and he thinks at this moment that you understood him so. Trixy-don't shaking and the cousinly agreement." be angry with me-how could I help it-he Don't be sarcastic, Beatrix ; it isn't your proposed to me yesterday afternoon." Trix forte! I have nothing to confess to Sir repeats the words like one who has been stunned by a blow, in a dazed sort of tone. "And you-refused him, Edith.

"Accepted him, Trixy. I said yes to Sir Victor Gatheron this morning in the grounds." Then there was a pause. The ticking of ding?"

the little Swiss clock, the joyous warble of the thrushes, the soft rustle of the trees preternaturally loud.

Beatrix Stuart sat white to the lips, with auger, mortification, amaze, disappointment. Then she covered her face with her hands, and burst into a vehement flood of tears.

"Trix !" dear Trix !" Edith exclaimed, shocked and pained; "good Heaven, don't cryl Trix, dearest, I never knew you were in love with him."

"In love with him!" cried Trix, looking up, her eyes flashing through her tears, " the odious little wishy-washy, drawling coxcomb! No. I'm not in love with him-not likelybut what business had he to go talking like that, and hemming and hawing, and hinting, and-oh!" cried Trix, with a sort of screech 'I should like to tear his eyes out!"

"I dare say you would-the desire is both natural and proper," answered, Edith smothin smiles and lace cap. The breakfast had ering a second desire to laugh; "but, under the circumstances, not admissable. It was stupid proceeding, no coubt, his speaking to you at all, but you see the poor fellow thinks you understood him, and meant it for

"Thought I understood him !" retorted Miss Stuart, with a vengeful glare. "Ob, shouldn't like to make him understand me! The way he went on that night, kissing my hand, and and Trixy did not like pain. Secondly, it calling me Beatrix, and talking of speaking to was quite impossible she could venture to pa, and meaning you all the time, is enough -enough to drive a person stark, staring mad. was to watch Sir Victor during those three All Englishmen are fools-there !" exclaimed days ? Thirdly, next week Lady Helena Miss Stuart, sparks of firedrying up her tears. "and Sir victor Catneron's the biggest fool of the lot ?"

"What for! for wanting to marry me?" "Yes, for wanting to marry you. You, who don't care a bad cent for him!"

"How many bad cents did you care, Miss Stuart, when you were so willing to be his " More than you, Miss Darrell, for at least

I was not in love with any one else." "And who may Miss Darrell be lov

with, pray ?" "With Charlie," answered Trix, her face still afire. "Deny it if you dare! In love

She was looking up at her rival, her angry gray eyes so like Charlie's as she spoke, in everything but expression, that for an instant "Good morning, Trixy," she said. "How Edith was disconcerted. She could not meet is your poor dear ankle?" It dosen't hurt them. For once in her life her own eyes fell.

"Are we going to quarrel, Trix? Is it worth while, for a man you have decided we neither of us care for-we who have been like sisters so long ?"

"Like sisters!" Trix repeated bitterly. "Edith, I wonder if you are not scheming and deceitful !"

"Beatrix !" "Ob, you needn't 'Beatrix,' me! I mean it. I believe there has been double dealing in this. He paid attention to me before you ever came to New York. I believe if I hadn't been sea-sick he would have proposed to me on the ship. But I was sea-sick,---it's always my luck to be everything that's miser-

this is awful !"

isn't the heavy father of the comedy, to rage ly alongside of Miss Stuart's. "There has through four acts, and come round in the been a borrid mistake. All the time in that fifth, with his fortune and blessing. Obar-boat on Killarney's lake he was talking of lie and I have common sense, and we have

shaken hands and agreed to be good friends and cousins, nothing more." "What an admirable thing is common

sense | Does Sir Victor know about the hand-

Victor when I am married to him ; neither your brother nor any other man will hold the place in my heart (such as it is) that he will. Be very sure of that." "Ahl such as if is," put in Trix, cynically; "and when is it to be, Dithy-the wed-

"My dear Trix, I only said yes this morning. Gentlemen don't propose and fix the wedding day all in a breatb. It will be ages from now, no doubt. Of course Lady Helena will object.'

" You don't mind that ?"

"Not a whit. A grand-aunt is-a grandaunt, nothing more. She is his only living relative, he is of age, able to speak and act for himself. The true love of any good man honors the woman who receives it. In that way Sir Victor Catheron honors me, and in no other. I have neither wealth nor lineage ; in all other things, as God made us, I am his equal !"

She moved to the door, her dark eyes shining, her head erect, looking in her beauty and her pride a mate for a king.

"There is to be a driving-party to Eastlake Abbey, after luncheon," she said ; "you are to be carried down to the barouche and ride with your father and mother and Lady Helena-Charlie and Captain Hammond for

your cavaliers." "And you."

" Sir Victor drives me."

"Alone of course?" Trixy says, with a last little bitter sneer."

"Alone of course," Edith answers coldly. Then she opens the door and disappears.

CHAPTES XI.

HOW LADY HELENA TOOK IT.

But the driving-party did not come off. The ruins of Eastlake Abbey were unvisited that day, at least. For while Edith and Trixy's somewhat unpleasant interview was taking place in one part of the house, an equally unpleasant, and much more mysteri-

ous interview was taking place in another, and on the same subject.

Lady Helena had left the guests for awhile and goue to her own room. The morning post had come in, bringing her several letters. One in particular she seized, and read with more cagerness than the others, dated London, beginning "My Dear Aunt," and signed "Incz." While she sat absorbed over it, in deep and painful thought evidently, there came a tap at the door; then it opened, and

her nephow came in. She crumpled her letter hurriedly in her hand, and put it out of sight. She looked up with a smile of welcome; he was the "apple of her eye," the darling of her life, the Benjamin of her childless old age-the fair-haired, pleasant faced young baronet.

Do I intrude ?" he asked. " Are you busy ? Are your letters very important this morning ? If eo

"Not important at all. Come in, Victor. I have been wishing to speak to you of the invitations for next week's ball. Is it concerning the driving-party this afternoon you want to speak ?"

"No, my dear aunt ; something very much pleasanter than all the driving-parties in the world; something much more important to me

She looked at him more closely. His face

ed it. "Thank heaven she has accepted me-Without her my life would not be worth the having '

"Who is she?" she asked, without looking up. "Lady Gwendoline, of course." "Lady Gwendoline ?" He smiled and lifted his evebrows.

" No my dear aunt a very different person from Lady Gwendoline. Miss Darrell." She sat erect and gazed at him-stunned.

"Miss Darrell | Edith Darrell-the American girl, the-Victor, is this a jest-"

"Lady Helens, am I likely to jest on such a subject! It is the trtuh. This morning Miss Darrell-Edith-has made me the happiest man in England by promising to be my wife. Surely, aunt, you must have sus-

pected-must have seen that I loved her." "I have seen nothing," she answered blank-ly, looking straight before her---"nothing. I am only an old woman-I am growing blind

and stupid, I suppose. I have seen nothing." There was a pause. At no time was Sir Victor Catheron a fluent or ready speakerjust at present, perhaps, it was natural he should be at a loss for words. And her ladyship's manner was the reverse of reassuring. "I have loved her from the first," he said, breaking once more the silence--" from the breaking once more the silence—" from the very first night of the party, without knowing it. Jn all the world, she is the only one I can ever marry. With her my life will be su-premely happy, supremely blessed; without her—but no! I do not choose to think what

my life would be like without her. You, who have been as a mother to me all my life, will not mar my perfect happiness on this

day of days by saying you object." "But I do object !" Lady Helena exclaimed, with sudden energy and anger. "More-I absolutely refuse. I say again, you are too young to want to marry at all. Why, even your favorite Shakespeare says: 'A young man married, is a man that's marred.' When you are thirty it will be quite time enough to talk of this. Go abroad again-see the world -go to the East, as you have oiten talked of doing-to Africa-anywhere! No man knows himself or his own heart at the ridiculous age of twenty-three !" Sir Victor Catheron smiled, a very quiet and

terribly obstinate smile. " My extreme youth, then, is your only ob-

iaction ?" "No, it is not-I have a hundled objections -it is objectionable from every point. I object to her most decidedly and absolutely. You shall not marry this American girl with out family or station, and of whom you know absolutely nothing-with whom you have not been acquainted four weeks. Ov, it is absurd-it is ridiculous-it is the most preposterous folly I ever heard of in my life." His smile left his face—a frown came in-stead. His lips set, he looked at her with a

face of invincible determination. "Is that all ?" he demanded. I will an-

swer your objections when I have thoroughly heard them. I am my own master-butthat much is due to you."

"I tell you she is beneath you-beneath you !" Lady Helena said vehemently. "The Catheron's have always married well-into and holding out her hand, "forgive me if in my excitement and haste I have said what I ducal families. Your grandmother-my sister-was, as I am, the daughter of a marouis."

"And my mother was the daughter of a soap-boiler," he said with bitterness. " Don't let us forget that."

"Why do you speak to me of her? I can't bear it. You know I cannot. You do well to taunt me with the plebeian blood in your voins-you, of all men alive. Oh, why did you ever see this designing girl? Why did "Precisely! You look angry and incredu-lous, but later you will understand. She is she ever come between us?

She was working herself up to a pitch of passionate excitament, quite incomprehensione of our family-more at present I cannot ble to her nephew, and as displeasing as it was incomprehensible.

"When you call her designing, Lady Helour hands. Postpone the driving-party, or was flushed, his eyes bright, a happy smile ena," he sail, in slow, apgry tones, 'you go make my excuse; I shall not leave my room was on his lips. He had the look of a man to a little too far. In no way has Miss Darrell to-day. To-morrow, if it be possible, the whom one great good fortune had suddenly tried to win me---'tis the one drawback to my truth shall be yours as well as mine. perfect happiness now that she does not love me as I love her. She has told me so frankly and bravely. But it will come. 1 feel that such love as mine must win a return. For the rest, I deny that she is beneath me; in all things—beauty, intellect, goodness— she is my superior. She is the daughter of a scholar and a gentleman; her affection would honor the best man on earth. I deny that I am too young--I dony that she is my inferior ... I deny even your right, Lady Helena, to speak disparagingly of her. And, in conclusion, I say, that it is my unalterable the mysterious ladies on earth! Whatever determination to marry Edith Darrell at the earliest possible hour that I can prevail upon

"Would you do this, Victor? Would you have strength to give up the girl you love? My boy, my son, I don't want to be hard on you, I want to see you happy, Heaven knows, and yet-"

"I will be happy—only tell me the truth and let me judge for myself."

He was smiling-he was incredulous. Ledy Belena's mountain, seen by his eyee, no doubt, would turn out the veriest molehill. "I don't know what to do," she answered,

in agitated tones. "I promised her to tell you if this day ever came, and now it is here and I-oh!" she cried out passionately, af can't tell you !"

He grew pale himself, with fear of he knew not what.

"You can, you will-you must!" he said resolutely. "I am not a child to be fright ened of a bogy. What terrible secret is there hidden behind all this ?"

"Terrible secret --- yes, that is it. Tenible secret-you have said it !"

"Do you, by any chance, refer to my wo. ther's death? Is it that you knew all these years her murderer and have kept it secret?" There was no reply. She covered her face with her hands and turned away.

"Am I right ?" he persisted.

She rose to her feet, goaded, it stemed, by his persistent questioning into a sort of frenzy.

"Let me alone, Victor Catheron," she cried. "I have kept my secret for twenty-three years-do you think you will wring it from me all in a moment from me now? What right have you to question me-to say I shall tell or shall not? If you knew all you would know you have no right whatever-- none--no right to ask any woman to share your

life --- no right, if it comes to that, even to the title you bear !'

He rose up too ... white to the lips. Was Lady Helena going mad ? Had the an-nouncement of his marriage turned her brain? In that pause, before either could speak again, a knock that had been twice given nn. heard, was repeated a third time. It brought both back instantly from the tragic, to the decorum of every day life. Lady Helena down; Sir Victor opened the door. It was

servant with a note on a salver. "Well, sir," the baronet demanded abrupt.

"What do you want ?" ly. "It's her ladyship, Sir Victor. A lady to

see your ladyship on very important business "

"I can see no one this morning," Lady Helena responded ; "tell her so."

" My lady, excuse me; this lady, said your ladyship would be sure to see her, if your ladyship would look at this note. It's the lady in mourning, my lady, who has been here to see your ladyship before, Which this is the note, my lady."

Lady Helena's face lit up eagerly now, She fore open the note at once.

"You may go, Nixon," she said. "Show the lady up immediately. She ran over the few brief lines the note contained, with a look of unutterable relief.

"Victor," she said, turning to her nephew

should not. Give me a little time, and every-

thing will be explained. The coming of-In

-this lady-is the most opportune thing in

"I am to understand then," Sir Victor said

coldly, "that this strange, this mysterious

lady, is in your confidence ; that she is to be

consulted before you can tell me this secret

say. Go, Victor; trust me, believe me, nei-

ther your honor nor your love shall suffer at

which involves the happiness of my life?"

the world. You shall be told all now."

Lite the letter, it was signed " Inez."

amounts until the club is completed. We have observed that our paper is, if possible, more popular with the ladies than with the other sex, and we appeal to the ladies, therefore, to use the gentle but irresistible presure of which they are mistresses in our behalf on their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons, though for the matter of that we will take subscriptions from themselves and their sisters and cousins as well. Rate for clubs of five or more, \$1.00 per annum in advance.

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TRUE WITNESS FOR 1881.

The TRUE WITNESS has within the past

year made an immense stride in circulation, and if the testimony of a large number of our

subscribers is not too flattering it may also

more firmly in public esteem, which in fact

men all but two years, and it is now what we

they do. We would like to impress upon

their memories that the TRUE WITNESS is

It was formerly two dollars per annum in

charge of it in the hardest of times, and know-

ing that to many poor people a reduction of

enroll themselves under the reduction, they

have no reason to regret it. For what they lost

one way they gained in another, and they assisted the introduction into Catholic

families throughout Canada and the United

States of a Catholic paper which would de-

premiums or "chromos" as an inducement to

subscribers, even if they believed in their

efficacy. It goes simply on its merits as a

journal, and it is for the people to judge

whether they are right or wrong. But as we have stated we want our circula-

tion doubled in 1881, and all we can do to

encourage our agents and the public generally

is to promise them that, if our efforts are

seconded by our friends, this paper will be

still floquin enlarged and improved during

the coming year. On receipt of \$1.50, the subscriber will be

entitled to receive the TRUE WITNESS for

Any one sending us the names of 5 new

subscribers, at one time, with the cash, (\$1.50 each) will receive one copy free and \$1.00

cash; or 10 new names, with the cash, one

friends of the above very liberal inducements

to subscribe for the TRUE WITNESS; also by

lishers, and sample copies will be sent on ap-

out Canada and the Northern and Western

States of the Union, who can, by serving our

interests, serve their own as well and add

materially to their income without interier-

ing with their legitimato business. The TRUE WITNESS will be mailed to clergy-

man, school teachers and postmasters at \$1.00 per annum in advance.

confine themselves to any particular locality, but can work up their quota from different

towns or districts; nor is it necessary to send

all the names at once. They will fulfil all

the conditions by forwarding the names and

Parties getting up clubs are not obliged to

We want active intelligent agents through-

Our readers will oblige by informing their

one year.

plication.

copy free and \$2.50.

The TRUE WITNESS is too cheap to offer

fend their religion and their rights.

But we want to extend its usefulness and

may term an established fact.

class on this continent.

claim a stride in general improvement.

In conclusion, we thank those of our friends who have responded so promptly and so cheerfully to our call for amounts due, and request those of them who have not, to follow their example at once.

"POST" PSINTING & PUBLISHING CO. 741 CRAIG ST., MONTREAL, CANADA.

HONORED AND BLEST.

When a board of eminent physicians and chemists announced the discovery that by the fact being Sir Victor had utterly forgotcombining some well known valuable reme dies, the most wonderful medicine was produced, which would cure such a wide range of diseases that most all other remedies could be dispensed with, many were sceptical; but proof of its merits by actual trial has dispelled all doubt, and to-day the discoverers of that great medicine, Hop Bitters, are honored and blessed by all as benefactors. - Democrat.

THE QUEEN'S PRIZE AT WIMBLEDON

For some time during the competition for the Queen's Prize at the rifle meeting it seemed highly probable that one of the Canadian team, Sergeant Walker, would carry off as we have got lately, I don't think half-past the gold medal and £250 presented by Her twelve is the break of day. Edith, upon your Majesty. He was among six others who had an aggregate of 56 over the two first ranges, that being the highest on the register. He rather fell off at the 1,000 yards, though his chances of success were brilliant at the first two or three shots. He finished with 75, which falls into the tenth place, being eleven less than the winner, who made three points more than was ever known in the history of the competition and twelve more than was made last year. The name of the winner is Private Beck. He belongs to the 3rd Regiment of Devon volunteers. His score was **3**6.

EPPS'S COCOA-GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING-"By a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well selected cocos. Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast tables with a delicately flavored beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills. It is by the judicious use of such articles of diet that strong enough to resist any tendency to floating around us ready to attack wherever there is a weak point. We may escape many a fatal shaft by keeping ourselves well fortified with pure blood and a properly nourished frame."- Civil Service Gazette. Sold only in packets labelled --- " JAMES EPPS & Co., Homeopathic Chemists, London, England." Also makers of EPPS'S CHOCOLATE ESSENCE for afternoon use.

The College Record says of an undergraduate: "X-takes a concave mirror to look at his mustache."

ny face. Luckily, standing behind Trixy's chair, Trix did not see it. day."

"How long? Oh since nine o'clock. You know I'm not a very early riser."

"Did you go straight down to breakfast?" "The breakfast hour was ten. It doesn't

- take me all that time to dress." "Where did you go then ?"
- "I walked in the grounds."
- "Edith 1" with sudden sharpness, "did you see Sir Victor ?"

"Yes, I saw Sir Victor."

"Where ? In the grounds too?"

"In the grounds too; smoking a cigar."

"Edith !" the sharpness changing to suspicion and alarm. "You were with Sir Victor 1ⁿ

"I was with Sir victor. That is to say Sir Victor was with me."

"Bother ! What did you talk about ? Did he ask after me?"

"Ye-e-es," Edith answered doubtfullyton Miss Stuart's existence in the dizzy rapture of his acceptance-" he asked for you, of course."

"Was that all? He's a pretty attentive host, I don't think," cried Trixy, with hitterness, - having a young lady laid up by the le -the ankle in his house, and never so much as calling to see if she is dead or alive !" "My dearest Trix," said Edith struggling

with a laugh, "gentlemen don't call upon young ladies in their chambers at break of day, even though they have a sprained ankle. It isn't de rigeur.'

"De rigger be blowed! It isn't my chamber; it's my private parlor; and aristocratic word, did he say anything about-about-you know what?"

"Marrying you? No, Trixy, not a word." She put her arms close around poor Trixy's neck, and hid her face in Trixy's chestnut hair,

"Trix pet, dan't you think there may have been a little-just a little, misunderstanding that night at Killarney ?"

"Misunderstanding | I don't understand you, Edith," Miss Stuart exclaimed, in increasing alaum. "For goodness sake come round where I can see you, and don't stand there like a sort of 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' I like to look people in the face when I talk to

them.' "In one moment dear; please don't be cross. I have something that is not pleasant to say that you won't like. I am afraid to

tell you. Trix, there was a misunderstand-ing that night." "I don't see: I don't believe there was.

Edith Darrell, what do you mean ? He asked me to marry him-at least he told me he was a constitution may be gradually built up until in love with me in a stupid, round about way, and asked me if he might hope, and if disease. Hundreds of subtle maladies are there was any dauger of a refusal, or a rival, when he spoke out and that balderdash. He said he meant to speak to pa and ma, as plain da Fitzallen. You're a sentimental goose, as print. Now, how could there be a misunderstanding in all that ?"

"It was as you say, swfully stupid of him, but these Englishmen have such different ways from what we are accustomed to. There was a misunderstanding, I regret. He means to speak to your father and mother to-day, but-not about you." "Edith !" Trix had sprung up, pale as

death and with flashing eyes. "What do you mean? Speak out, I tell you !"

able—and you were with him night and come.

"Night and day! Good gracious, Trixy,

"You know what I mean," pursued Trix loftily. "You got him in love with you. Then, all the way to Killarney you flirted with Charlie-poor Charlie-and made him jealous, and jealousy finished him. You're a very clever girl, Edith, and I wish you a great

deal of joy," "Thank you you say it as if you did. I don't take the trouble to deny your charges; they're not worth it-they are false, and you know them to be so. I never sought out Sir Victor Catheron, either in New York, on board ship, or elsewhere. If he had been a out." prince, instead of a baronet, I would not have done it. I have borne a great deal, but even you may go too far, Trixy. Sir Victor has done me the honor of falling in love with me

-- for he does love me, and he has asked me to be his wite. I have accepted him, of course; it was quite impossible I could do otherwise. If at Killarney, he was stupid, and you made a blunder, am I to be held accountable? He does not dream for a moment of the misunderstanding between you. He thinks he made his meaning as clear as day. And now I will leave you; if I stay longer

we may quarrel, and I-I don't want to quarrel with you, Trixy." Her voice broke suddenly. She turned to

the door, and all the smallness of her own conduct dawned upon Trix. Her generous heart-it was generous in spite of all thissmote her with remorse.

"Oh, come back, Edith I" she said, "don't go, I won't quarrel with you. I'm a wretch. It's dreadfully mean and contemptible of me, to make such a howling about a man that does not care a straw for me. When I told you, you wished me joy. Just come back and give me time to catch my breath, and I'll wish you joy too. But it's so sudden, so unexpect-O, Dithy, I thought you liked Charlie all ed. this while ?"

How like Charlie's the handsome dark grey eyes were: Edith Darrell could not meet them : she turned and looked out of the window

"I like him, certainly; I would be very ungrateful if I did not. He is like a brother to me,"

"A brother! Oh, a brother," retorted Trix. with immeasurable scorn and dignity. "Edith, honour bright! Haven't you and Charlie been in love with each other these two years!" Edith laughed.

"A very leading question, and a very absurd one. I don't think it is in either your brother or me to be very deeply in love. He would find it feverish and fatiguing-you know how he objects to fatigue ; and I-well, if love be anything like one reads of in books, an all absorbing, all consuming passion that won't let people est or sleep, I have never felt it, and I don't want to. I think that

sort of love went out of fashion with Aman-Landon in too large doses." "But you like him," persisted his sister,

don't you.Dithy !" "Like him-like him! Her whole face lit up for a second with a light that made it

lovely. "Well yer, Trix, I don't mind owning that much-I do like Charlie-like him

"Agreeably important then, I am sure, judging by your looks. What a radiant face the lad has!'

"I have reason to look radiant. Congra tulate me, Aunt Helena; I am the happiest man the wide earth holds." " My dear Victor !"

"Cannot you guess ?" he said, still smiling : "I always thought female relatives were particularly sharp-sighted in these matters. Must I really tell you? Have you no suspicions of my errand here?" "I have not, indeed ;" but she sat creet, and

her fresh-colored, handsome old face grew pale. "Victor, what is it? Pray speak

"Very well. Congratulate me once more; I am going to be married."

He stopped short, for with a low cry that was like a cry of fear, Lady Helena rose up. If he had said "I am going to be hanged," the consternation of her face could not have been greater. She put out her hand as though to ward off a blow.

"No, no !" she said, in that frightened voice ; " not married. For God's sake, Victor, don't say that!"

"Lady Helena !" He sat looking at her, utterly confounded.

"It can't be true," she panted. "You don't mean that. You don't want to be married. You are too young-you are. I tell you I won't hear of it! What do boys like you want of wives ?---only three-and-twenty !"

He laughed good-humoredly.

"My dear aunt, boys of three and twenty are tolerably well grown ; it isn't a bad age to marry. Why, according to Debrett, my father was only three-and-twenty when he brought home a wite and son to Catheron Royals."

She sat down suddenly, her head against the back of a chair, her face quite white.

"Aunt Helena," the young man said anx. you ; I have been too sudden with this. You look quite faint; what shall I get you ?"

He seized a carafe of water, but she waved it a way.

"Wait," she said, with trembling lips; wait. Give me time-let me think. It was sudden ; I will be better in a moment."

He sat down feeling uncommonly uncomfortable. He was a practical sort of young man. with a man's strong dislike of scenes of all kinds, and this interview didn't begin as pro-

misingly as he had hoped. She remained pale and silent for upward of five very long minutes; only once her lips whispered, as if unconsiously:

"The time has come-the time has come." It was Sir Victor himself who broke the

embarrassing pause. Aunt Helens," he said pettishly, for he was not accustomed to have his sovereign will disputed, "1 don't understand this, and will you pardon me if I say I don't like it. It must have entered your mind that sooner or later I Miss Stuart, and have taken Byron and Miss would fall in love and marry a wife, like other

ed at."

"But not so soon," she answered brokenly. Oh Victor not so soon."

"I don't consider twenty-three years too soon. I am old-fashioned, very likely, but I so well that I won't marry him. For it means | do believe in the almost obsolete doctrine of | just that, Trix-ruin. The day we became early marriage. I love her with all my heart." anything more than friends and cousins your 'His kindling eyes and softened voice betray- !

her to fix our wedding day." She looked at him; the unalterable determination he spoke of was printed in every line of his set face.

"I might have known it," she said, with suppressed bitterness ; " he is his father's son. The same obstinacy-the same refusal to listen to all warning. Sooner or later I knew it must come, but not so soon as this."

The tears coursed slowly over her cheeks, and moved him as nothing she ever could have said would have done.

"For heavou's sake, annt don't cry," he said hurriedly. "You distress me-you make me feel like a brute, and I-really now, I don't think you ought to blame me in this way. Miss Darrell is not a Lady Gwendoline. certainly-she has neither rank nor wealth, but in my sight their absence is no objection whatever. And I love her; everything is said in that."

"You love her," she repeated mournfully. "Oh, my poor boy, my poor boy!"

"I don't think I deserve pity," Sir Victor said, smiling again. "I don't feel as though I did. And now tell me the real reason of all of this."

"The real reason ?"

"Certainly; you don't suppose I do not see it is something besides those you have given. iously, approaching her. "I have startled | There is something else under all this. Now let us hear it, and have done with it.

He took both her hands in his and looked at her-a resolute smile on his fair blonde face.

"Troubles are like certain wild animals." he said; "look them straight in the eye and they turn and take to flight. Why should I not marry at twenty-three? If I were marrying any one else-Lady Gwendoline for instance-would my extreme juvenility still be an obstacle?"

"You had much better not marry at all." "Why! live a crusty old bachelor! Now, now, my good aunt, this is a little too much. and not at all what I expected from a lady of your common-sense."

"There is nothing to make a jest of. Victor. It is better you should not marry-better the name of Catheron should die out and be blot- me one day and say : 'Look here, Miss Darted from the face of the earth." " Lady Helena."

"I know what I am saying, Victor. You would say it too, perhaps, if you knew all."

"You will tell me all. Oh yes, you will. You have said too much or too little now, I must hear 'all,' then I shall judge for myself. } I may be in love-still I am amenable to slow, accented manner of speaking was so reason. If you can show me any just cause perfect. Only for an instant; then he was or impediment to my marriage-if you can grave, almost reproachful. convince me it will be wrong in the sight of Heaven or man, then, dearly as I love her I he said.

strong indeed.

He bowed coldly-annoyed, amazed, and went. What did all this mean? Up to the present, his life had flowed peacefully, almost sluggishly, without family secre's or mystification of any kind. And now all at once here were secrets and mysteries cropping up. What was this wonderful secret-who was this mysterious lady? He must wait until to-morrow, it appears, for the answer to both. "One thing is fixed as fate," he said to himself as he left the room, "I won't give up Edith, for ten thousand family secrets-for all others may have done, I at least have done nothing to forfeit my darling's hand. The doctrine that would make us suffer for the sins of others, is a mistaken doctrine. Let

to-morrow bring forth what it may, Edith Darrell shall be my wife.

CHAPTER XII.

ON ST. PARTRIDGE DAY.

As he descended the stairs he encountered Nixon and a veiled lady in black ascending. He looked at her keenly-she was tall and slender; beyond that, through the heavy crape veil, he could make out nothing. " Mysterious, certainly !" he thought, " I wonder who she is ?" He bowed as he passed her ; she bent her head in return ; then he hastened to seek out Edith, and tell her an important visitor had arrived for Lady Helens, and that the excursion to Eastlake Abbey would be postponed. He was but a poor dissembler, and the girl's bright brown eyes were sharp. She smiled as she looked and listened.

" Did you know i could tell fortunes, Sir Victor? Hold out your hand and let me tell you the past. You have been upstairs with Lady Helena; you have told her that Edith Darrell has consented to be your wife. You have asked her sanction to the union, and have been naturally, indignantly, and peremptorily refused."

He smiled, but the conscious color rose. "I always suspected you of being an enchantress-now I know it. Can you tell me the future as truthfully as the past?"

" In this instance I think so. "You shall never marry a penniless nobody, sir.' (And it is exactly Lady Helena's voice that speaks) 'Your family is not to be disgraced by a low marriage. This girl, who is but a sort of up-per servant, hired and paid, in the family of these common rich American people, is no mate for a Catheron of Catheron. I refuse to listen to a word, sir-I insist upon this preposterous affair being given up.' You ex-postulate—in vain. And as constant dropping wears the most obstinate stone, so at last will her ladyship conquer. You will come to rell l'm awiully sorry, you know, but we've made a mistake. I leturn you your freedom -will you kindly give me hack mine?" And Miss Darrell will give Sir Victor Oatheron her best curtsey and retire into the outer dark-

ness from whence she came." He laughed. Her imitation of his own

"And you know me no better than this!" "I take back my words; you are no will give her up. But your proof must be secress. I love my aunt very dearly, but not all the aunts on earth could part me fron She looked at him doubtfully-wistfully. you. I would indeed be a dastard if a fer

men. That time has come, as you say yourself. There is nothing I can see to be shock-