

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN LONGWORTHY.

M. F. KOAN IN AVE MARIA.

III.—A Family Circle.

There was no doubt now that John Longworthy's hat and coat had been found. But this did not help the police forward much. The coat, picked up by Miles Galligan, was looked at by thousands and pictured in all the papers. Miles Galligan now became the hero of the moment. He bore his part in the various "interviews" with such amiable sprightliness, and managed to use the prevalent political "catch-words" of his party with such effect, that he dated his election to the Assembly—which occurred later—to the "boom" he received at this time.

Isaac and Rachel, who had foolishly sold the coat for only double what had been paid for it, were inconsolable; and Isaac allowed the disappointed and energetic Rachel no commission on the sale. Where had he gotten the coat? This question met Isaac on every side. He had bought it from a man in the Bowery—a drunken man—a man who spoke English well. He had bought the coat in the dark—about midnight, he did not notice that it was such a good coat until the next morning. This statement covered him with ridicule. Nobody believed it; but, as nobody could disprove it, Justice had to keep on her bandage for a while.

The search stopped at the coat. John Longworthy's servant identified it, the *Herald* clerk identified it, even the news-boy added his testimony. Isaac either knew nothing more or he was obdurate. He had acquired the coat in the way of business, that was all he knew about it. This was a great blow to Miles Galligan, who had taken the detective fever badly. He had long talks with Longworthy's servant. He examined every article in the lost man's wardrobe. The only peculiarity about the linen was that over the initials "J.L." there was a faintly traced Maltese cross. It was not a crest—merely a mark Longworthy had fancied. Even the newspapers began to see that the police could do nothing with the Polish Jew, unless they put him to the torture after the manner of earlier times. As this was impossible, what could be done? Amateur detectives tried to bribe Isaac into telling more. At first he wept and swore he knew nothing; then the amateur detectives pocketed their money and went away. Isaac learned from this to be silent and suggestive until he had the money safe in his pocket, after which he wept and swore that he knew nothing. He was prepared to follow this up indefinitely.

After a time the newspapers dropped the subject of the disappearance. John Longworthy's books, which had sold rapidly during the investigation, ceased to be called for. In a month's time the police, Longworthy's executors, and Miles Galligan, were the only folk who kept up a deep interest in the search. Miles' interest was due to the fact that he was idle; he had no taste for study, or even for much reading; he had too much respect for himself to lounge in bar-rooms, and he was weary of "pressing bricks for the city"—as he euphuistically called his aimless walks. Moreover, there was a large reward ready for the person who would discover either the murdered one or his murderer. And Miles Galligan's funds were becoming much reduced.

The Galligan's lived in one of the most comfortable precincts of the East Side. It is too near Canal Street to be fashionable, or even liked by nice people who do not pretend to fashion. There the houses are roomy, substantial, solid-looking. They are possibly as ugly and as unornamental as man ever made, but they are as respectable in appearance as a Hollandish burgher. They have seen better days. Many a befurred sleigh dashed up to their wide doors fifty years ago, and let down groups of gay callers on the New Year's Days of that time. But the snows of last year are gone. How much more reason have we for asking, more hopelessly, where are the snows of eighteen hundred and fifty? How many times had "She Wore a Wreath of Roses" and "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls" echoed through those drawing-rooms, now fast becoming tenement houses? There is an odor of old-time grandeur about them still, like the

altar of roses which even now lingers, it is said, in one of the Empress Eugenie's rooms in the Tuileries.

In one of these old houses Miles Galligan and his sisters lived. Mary, the older, taught school; she was a sweet-tempered girl of twenty-five or thereabouts, somewhat fragile in appearance, with black hair and the veritable dark-blue Irish eyes. She was an object of wonder to all the Europeans who lived in the neighbourhood. They were not used to seeing this combination of the raven's wing and the shadowed turquoise. And Mary, who among Americans was thought to be a rather plain but sweet-looking girl, became noted as a beauty of the first class in the Gorman and Hebrew quarters around her bailiwick. These appreciative people were never tired of admiring her. Nevertheless, in her own circle, Mary was set down as settled on the list of old maids; and she had rather accepted the position, until Arthur Fitzgerald saw her one Saturday evening, when he was waiting outside the confessional—saw her in the act of putting a calla lily at the foot of the altar of the Blessed Virgin. She looked so gentle, so recollected, so womanly in the act—and what act could more become a woman?—that he could not get her out of his head. Rossetti's vision of the Blessed Damosel was earthly indeed compared to his remembrance of the sight of the maiden and the lily on that Easter Saturday.

Fitzgerald found it difficult to meet Mary and her sister Esther. They never attended those public assemblies in which the whole ward, Jew and Gentile, joined for the purpose of merrymaking. They had no father or mother now, and though they amused themselves very pleasantly at home, they were not given to public amusements.

Part of their house was rented to various respectable people. The rest they reserved for themselves. The house had been bought by their father shortly before his death; it now furnished their only source of income, except what Miles and they could earn. Esther was assistant music-teacher in a neighbouring convent school. She was prettier than her sister, four years younger, and with a girlish brightness about her, which was delightful because it was entirely unaffected. She was rosy, brown-haired, quick in her movements. If Mary might be likened to the soft color of the tea-rose, she had something of the perennial hue of the lady-apple. Mary would have sacrificed her last drop of joy in the world to make Esther happier. Somebody who knew them named Mary "Duty" and Esther "Beauty." And there was this much truth in it all; if anything could tempt Esther from a duty it was some glimpse of the beautiful. Mary often laughed and said that she was an artistic "Little Red Riding-Hood," forgetting her errands to pick flowers on the way.

"But I have never met a wolf yet!" Esther generally retorted.

"The wolf always comes from among the honeysuckle vines, just as one's head is bent closely over the strawberries; and he has time to scent the neglected pot of butter and fresh cakes for which one's sick grandmother is waiting."

Mary's wisdom always called forth a new application of the fable from Esther, who persisted in holding that, after all, Red Riding-Hood would have gotten into trouble some other way, and there might have been no wood-cutters to get her out of it.

When Miles was in some municipal department or other, in some capacity or other, he was absurdly generous, his sisters thought. They were economical. Mary, from acquired habit, was always so; Esther was so by snatches. She liked pretty things, and pretty things cost money. Miles, when he was "out," found his sisters very good friends; they delighted in keeping him in neckties and other accessories; and Hannah Dempsey, their old servant, petted him as if he were still a boy. The sisters hated politics and adored Miles. That he had no intellectual resources; that he was much inferior to them in tone of thought and refinement of manners; that he did not understand everyday illusions of theirs, did not matter to them. He was Miles, and that he should remain their own Miles, and graciously keep awake an hour or two in their company once or twice or week, was all they asked.

These young women were very happy. Their long vaca-