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priest with an oath to mind his own business. But Father O'Hagan was a very old man, and by virtue of his office exercised a certain awe even over Lyndon's undisciplined soul.

"She believes herself to be so," he said, cautiously ; "but it was an irregular marriage. I need not hold it binding unless I choose."

Father O'Hagan gravely nodded. These words revealed to him as much of Lyndon's inner nature as he wished to know.

"I understand, then, that it would not cost you much to repudiate her, that, in fact, if it should seem expedient, you would have no hesitation in doing so?" he said, keenly.

"In my desperate plight, Father O'Hagan, what am I to do? If this interloper's claim should be established, as I fear it will, I have nothing. I am but a homeless wanderer on the face of the earth, homeless and penniless—what have I to offer Kitty, or anybody?"

"That does not alter the situation, nor lessen your sacred obligations to her," said the priest, sternly. "You are young and strong ; you must work for the woman you have wronged. It may be your soul's salvation."

Lyndon shrugged his shoulders.

"I shall go abroad. I cannot possibly take her. She must stay at Arraghvanna now that she has returned against my expressed desire."

"You have no intention, then, of bringing her here and publicly acknowledging her as your wife?"

"No, sir, I have not," said Lyndon, boldly. "I have my mother's feelings to consider. You would not have me totally disregard them?"