

II.

At Monkswold all was hurry and bustle, excitement and delight. Great preparations were being made for a grand reception to be given to the heir and his bride on their return. All alike were eager and anxious, for Harold was beloved by both servants and tenants for his kindly nature and courteous manner to them all. At length all was completed, the last touch given to everything, and the blissful day that was appointed for their home-coming had arrived. A large house party was assembled at the "Wold" to do honor to the occasion. The little village of Monkstown, a few minutes drive from the "Wold" from which it took its name, had donned holiday attire and turned out *en masse* to greet the bridal party as they left the train. Soon the distant shriek of the locomotive was heard, then the thunderous race over the rails, the last few puff-puffs, and the breathless, life-like, iron monster drew up at the station. A willing guard ran forward, threw open the carriage door, and immediately Harold Fordyce jumped out and turned to assist his wife to alight; then, giving her his arm, led her out to where the carriage from the "Wold" stood waiting. As they appeared, cheer after cheer arose on the still air, until it seemed as if the clouds above were filled with ringing voices.

"This is all in your honor, my darling. I have returned alone many a time and never met with a like reception," said Harold, laughingly; "so be sure to acknowledge it graciously." Kathleen turned her blushing face towards the crowd of onlookers and bowed her thanks repeatedly.