

THE LITTLE OLD SECRETARY

(CONTINUED.)

Lord Melton then petitioned for music, and the four Fitzgerald cousins, who had been accustomed to sing together, formed a group round the piano for some very good quartettes.

Lord Melton looked round for Kathleen, and asked her to "join the musicians and take part in the singing."

"I neither sing nor play," she answered quickly. "I am not the least musical."

"Not musical!" said Lord Melton, in an incredulous tone, looking at the beaming countenance on which the faint notes of the beautiful melody were calling up an expression of delight. "I should have thought the soul of music dwelt there."

Kathleen acknowledged to herself that her mother was right when she said it would be a little annoying to her to find that she could not do what others did, and what others expected her to do. Her cousins looked so happy and so attractive as they stood singing together in perfect tune and taste, that Kathleen felt a pang of passing regret, as her ears drank in the full, rich harmonies, that she was unable to take her part in them.

Lord Melton meanwhile appeared to have forgotten her, and had become quite absorbed in listening to the group round the piano, while Mons. Olivier and Miss Plumtree were equally engaged in making polite demonstrations of admiration, and Mr. Fitzgerald had settled himself for a quiet nap in his armchair.

Mr. Everard took the opportunity of coming round to where Kathleen was sitting, and taking the chair next to her said, in a low tone:

"That was rather a stern motto you chose, for one so young. May I ask what first made you like it?"

"I did not choose it," replied Kathleen. "It is my father's motto. I first heard it only; afterwards I saw it acted upon, in times which make me feel about it as—"

She stopped suddenly, for she remembered she was speaking to a stranger.

"As a soldier feels about a warfare he has heard on a victorious battlefield," Mr. Everard interposed with a smile. "I have guessed your thoughts, have I not? Now tell me about those times, I should so like to hear."

"They were the times of the great famine," answered Kathleen, drawn on by Mr. Everard's evident interest; "times that no one could forget who had passed through them. They were fearful times. All my father's tenantry were poor, except two or three well-to-do men. They used to come up to the Hill of Dermot, and sit round the house upon the ground, not begging, but in a silent despair. Oh! it was dreadful! One could not eat one's meals in peace, knowing there were human lives sinking into death close by for want of food. Everyone urged my father to take my mother and me to Dublin away from it all. But nothing would induce him to desert his post. He sold everything he had to buy food. He taught the people to make the most of the little they possessed, and owing to his exertions, though the famine was terrible at Glenmore, we hardly lost any in the pestilence."

Kathleen paused a moment, and a look of awe crept over her young face, as the remembrance of the bitter sufferings she had witnessed was brought back vividly to her mind by her own picture. Mr. Everard was watching her closely, but he did not interrupt her. After a moment's silence she went on:

"I remember once we had spent everything, and my mother said

she would part with her grand piano. Dear mother plays exquisitely, and the tones of Mrs. McDermot's piano were talked of far and near. She was offered the price it had cost when new by an English millionaire, whose awkward daughters imagined it would sound the same under their heavy fingers, as it did under her delicate and highly cultivated touch. When it came to sending it out of the house, the tears were in my poor mother's eyes, for she loved that piano as a friend. A gentleman who was staying with us, an intimate friend of my father, was quite angry and said it was a shame to deprive my mother of her favorite amusement, and to rob the house of all its attractions, and that my father would repent it when too late. It ended by an appeal to my mother's feelings. Darling mother! I shall never forget her look and tone, as she turned to the gentleman and said—'Do you suppose I could amuse myself with sweet sounds on a dumb instrument, while the living members of Christ are dying of hunger at our very doors?' And then my father's full, rich voice came out with that motto, 'Let us do what is right, come what will of it!'"

"And what did come of it?" asked Mr. Everard. "The world talks of Mr. McDermot as having foolishly ruined his health and spent the fortunes of his wife and children in fruitless attempts to contend with public calamities."

"The world is quite wrong about that, as it is about most things," exclaimed Kathleen, indignantly. "What came of all those efforts was, that whereas most of the villages around us were nearly depopulated, we only lost about a dozen of our tenantry—that my father's conduct has added new lustre to the name of McDermot, and that he is idolized among his people, as a father and a saviour. Even if it had been the cause of our ruin, I, his child, could not have wished that path of duty untrodden."

"But it was not the cause then?" questioned Mr. Everard, in a low tone, so gentle in its sympathy, that Kathleen, carried away by the recollection of the past, forgot she was pouring out her thoughts to a stranger.

"Alas, no! It crippled his resources, but it was debts he had never incurred which, coming at that moment, brought ruin on us; it was a blow from one who ought to have been his support, which broke his heart. Yet even now, hopeless as it looks, I think the right will be rewarded even here."

She paused a moment; then looking up into Mr. Everard's face, she went on again more earnestly, "Oh! if you could but see my mother, you would understand what I mean. Since I have been separated from her, her life of sacrifice, led with such sweet serenity, seems to me the most beautiful thing in the whole world. I look at the faces of every one I meet, and I never see one half so sweet as hers; and yet she seems to have nothing left to make her happy."

"Except her child," interrupted Mr. Everard. "I should think you can recall moments when you felt you could make your parents happy in the midst of trouble."

The remembrance of the last evening at her home brought a mist of happy tears into Kathleen's eyes.

But the loud music which had covered their conversation came to a sudden close, Mr. Everard, saying softly, "You must tell me about your mother to-morrow," rose, and, walking across the room, sat down by a table and began to turn over the books with the indifferent and rather critical expression of countenance which had made Kathleen dislike him at first. He suddenly seemed to hear another man, and she was panic-stricken at the way in which she had been led to reveal

her heart's burden of sorrow. She tried to recall all she had said, and to satisfy herself that there was nothing of which her parents would have disapproved. She made a firm resolution she would not again be betrayed into talking of her family affairs. She feared she had said too much already. How impertinent he must think her; he, the secretary to a great man who had an army under his control and the destiny of a great nation depending on his acts, to have a mere child as she was, pouring into his ears the petty sorrows, as they must seem to him, of one family and a few poor villagers. She flushed at the thought. Yet somehow she felt consoled, less lonely than she had done for several days past.

There was something in the quiet, almost insignificant looking gentleman, whom Dora had so contemptuously called "the little inky-fingered secretary," which inspired her with confidence. He had guessed her thoughts and given expression to them. He had shown genuine sympathy with the sufferings of the people and her family. She could not doubt his kindness of heart, nor help feeling grateful to him. His manner towards his Chief likewise pleased her. It was not in the least officious as M. Olivier's was; but whenever conversation flagged, or Lord Melton seemed at a loss, Mr. Everard was always ready to help him with a hint, or an anecdote, or to put in some little word which drew him out. Mr. Everard evidently possessed Lord Melton's confidence, and the vivid remembrance of home, which her conversation with him had called up in her mind, gave birth to a slight vision of hope as the idea crossed her: "Would he repeat what she had said to Lord Melton?" The hope vanished almost as soon as conceived.

"Nothing was more unlikely," whispered calm reason to her. "Lord Melton was here avowedly for his rest. His secretary would be the last person to disturb his repose with unnecessary details of private sorrows. And even if he should, her thoughts ran on, 'there was very little chance of Lord Melton's doing anything to turn aside the impending blow.'"

In Kathleen's eyes Lord Melton appeared essentially a cold man. If only he had shown half the amount of interest in her affairs that had been manifested by his secretary, she might have entertained some distant hope of his holding out a helping hand. But, faultless as was his courtesy, and attractive as was his conversation, she felt certain she should never know him one degree better than she had done the first evening of their acquaintance, and shrinking, even in thought, from making any appeal to the good offices of a stranger, she resolutely turned her mind away from the whole subject with the words, so worked into life:

"I will try and do the right thing myself and then, let come of it what God wills."

CHAPTER VI

"You will find One silver thread of goodness In the black serge-cloth of crime." —TUPPER.

The next morning all the cousins were eager in setting Kathleen to work at the backgrounds for their tableaux, which she had promised to produce.

The only request Lord Melton had made about the arrangement of his days was, that he and his secretary should breakfast alone, and be allowed to devote the first two hours of the morning to getting through his letters.

A letter-bag, crammed almost to bursting, came for him every day, and one nearly equally full as regularly departed.

Poor Mr. Everard, his fingers might well be inky, and Kathleen shrewdly suspected he had the lion's share of work, for M. Olivier was ready for every expedition, while his laborious colleague might be often found working away at some long document, after every one else had gone out to enjoy themselves.

On this morning Kathleen found herself as much embarrassed by the kind attentions of her friends, as she has felt herself forgotten the day before; and she was at last obliged to tell them, that "she was exceedingly grateful to them for their help in making preparations, but that she could not paint a stroke till they were all departed."

The truth was, the young people were all in high spirits at the success which had crowned their endeavors to amuse their illustrious visitor; they were eager to get up the tableaux he had proposed with the greatest possible perfection, and the backgrounds would be a most effective aid.

Kathleen's father was a most accomplished artist, and he had taken pains to cultivate the talent that his young daughter inherited from him. His favorite subjects were always sea pieces. He had pictures of the sea under every variety of aspect; before Kathleen had ever beheld the great, beautiful, restless ocean, she had dreamed about it, and seen it in her dreams. When poverty closed around them, and the oil colors and prepared canvas had become luxuries quite beyond their reach, she used to stretch common paper on linen, and dabble with the commonest color, mixed up with glue; and though this somewhat coarse and broadcast style of working might perhaps have injured the fineness of her touch, and the delicacy of coloring, it had given her in exchange a power of catching the striking lights and shadows of nature, and a freedom in delineating them, very useful in one so young.

The pleasure arranged for the day was a drive to some distant ruins, and a picnic lunch there. Hampers filled with good things, prepared for the occasion, were already brought up into the hall, and in half-an-hour the whole party were to set off. But painting was Kathleen's passion, and the thought of spending a whole day in sketching sea and sky, provided with everything she could require to bring her picture to the highest perfection of which she was capable, was a delight that made it little self-denial to her to forego the pleasure of accompanying the merry party. Her cousins, however, who found it hard to believe her protestations on the subject, admiring her immensely for her willingness to do what they wanted her to do. Cousin Jack pronounced her "a regular brick."

"We should be the jolliest party that ever came together to make a stand of," he continued, "if it were not for Lavinia Plumtree. What on earth induced you to ask her, Eleanor, just to get in everybody's way? I am sure there must be some mistake as to her being our cousin at all."

"She invited herself," replied Eleanor. "At least when she heard that you and Kathleen were invited, she wrote to father reminding him that her mother was a Fitzgerald."

"She is worse than ever," remarked Mary, making a wry face. "I am really ashamed of any one, owning the most distant relationship to us, making themselves so silly. Lord Melton with all his politeness was evidently dying with suppressed laughter over that ridiculous sentimentality of the 'souverain.'"

"It's all very well," broke in Jack, who was still pounding away at Kathleen's colors, "when a fellow has no other amusement to see

for Groceries, Drygoods, Boots, Shoes, Outfit for the whole family from head to toe, and good prices for Produce at the Shapack & Wolfe Co. General Store Humboldt, Sask. We refund your money if you are not entirely satisfied!

For Gifts in Gold and Silver see E. Thornberg Watchmaker and Jeweller Issuer of Marriage Licenses. Main St., HUMBOLDT, SASK.

Bruno Drug Store Gifts for all Occasions Gramophones with all different kinds of Records, to supply you with suitable music and pleasantries. Marlatt's Gall Stone Medicine Uder-i-ka and other Medicines, Herbs and Chemicals always in Stock. Write to us in English or German. Mail Orders promptly executed. W. F. Hargarten :: Bruno, Sask.

Fullness of Tone! Adaptability! Beauty! Let us explain, why these three outstanding qualities produce new and increased pleasure when you listen to the MELOTONE With the Melotone, the music of any Record is expressed most harmoniously. Delicate upper tones which formerly were lost, are now made audible by the sounding chamber, which is constructed of wood on the principle of the violin. The Melotone is able to play all kinds of Records BETTER than other Phonographs. The Melotone Factory in Winnipeg is the only one in Western Canada. This Instrument is fast taking the lead over all other phonographs and, as to construction, durability and low price, it is now excelled by none. It offers the largest selection of Records in Western Canada, at from 20 cts. upward. All instruments are guaranteed, and you get your money back if not everything is as represented. M. J. MEYERS Jeweller and Optician HUMBOLDT

Land and Farms! I have a number of Farms and Wild Lands for sale at low prices. Some will be sold on Crop Payment. For further particulars apply in person or by letter to Henry Bruning, MÜNSTER, SASK.

You are safe in a threefold way, if you bring your prescription to us: 1) We use for the prescription exactly what the doctor prescribed, every article being of standard strength, fresh and pure; 2) We examine and reexamine the prescription, whereby every error as to drug or quantity is excluded; 3) We are satisfied with a reasonable profit and charge the lowest prices for the best quality. These are three reasons why you should buy from us. G. R. WATSON, HUMBOLDT, SASK. DRUGGIST 720 Recall St. STATIONER

to what al draw her o there's goo fun, going intolerable Kathleen guised am "drawing that the ridiculou "Then approving ing. "No tend you l ality bette "Speak ghost," sai "Let's hea horrified the 'sweet send an a and sharp cut short her souve a glimpse background when you with that "I cou short an archly. "Give -claimed t ing up hi it, "or I over you "Do as said Ka stream o paper in a gener caught i "That solemnly carefully with w fingers "now we wer me. an absu "Well her frie to let M pitch of see its you all wise ins make a "Mek laughed innocen of the v will fit to thirt of the r they w to the o "I p our tru leen's s mischief "I see in Jac the yo shoot; sharp-learn fool"—me wh Jack every! Kathl ing. her p cover "V what I sho fool o help b but y me in "No cried ever any to un Hono He mach but b beau in w cost met such affec the then