

imagination, his mother was made comfortable and little Susie enjoyed the advantages of a good school, there rose before his eyes, as he looked into the misty darkness, the image of a pretty bright-eyed young English girl who had assisted his mother in the days of her school-teaching. Very pretty soul-lit hazel eyes were those of Alice Barford, and it seemed as if the witchery of their spell was on Harry this evening. Alice was an orphan and almost alone in the wide world. Harry knew she returned the affection he lavished upon her, and no wonder he scarcely felt the ground under his feet, or noticed the obstacles in his path.

When he arrived at his boarding-house the door was opened by the landlady, Mrs. Leland, herself. She was much more attentive than usual, and her manner convinced Harry that the news of his good fortune had gone before him.

On entering the supper room he perceived that Eli Gordon, one of his fellow clerks,—and one who had aspired to the situation which had been awarded himself—had arrived before him, and was sitting at one side of the wide fire-place with a heavy cloud on his brow, and, there was little doubt, with wrathful feelings in his heart.

"I give you my congratulations, Mr. Clifford, very heartily," said Mrs. Leland. "But we are all surprised; we thought Mr. Gordon would have been the fortunate one."

While she spoke Gordon rose from his seat, muttered an oath, and commenced walking up and down the room with nervous steps.

Mrs. Leland kept a second-class boarding and lodging-house for young men who were too poor to afford better accommodations than could be found there. She also had a few rooms which were plainly fitted up for the entertainment of chance guests, two of whom were present when Harry Clifford entered.

With one of these persons he exchanged a formal bow and a cold "good evening," while the other he grasped warmly by the hand, exclaiming. "Back so soon, Teddy Walters! What cheer?"

"I've sped well, Master Harry," was the answer, in a rich Irish brogue, returned by the pedlar youth—for such he was, "and it's news I have for yourself when we two are alone."

Supper was now ready, and the person with whom Harry had exchanged the formal bow, rose from his seat, tossed the remainder of a stick, which he had been whittling to a point, into the fire, and joined the party at the table.

He was a tall, lanky man with small eyes and a hooked nose. On the whole his countenance had a disagreeable cast, and strangers who saw him for the first time usually turned to get a second sight to make sure what feature or features gave the expression to his face. He was an American, about the same age as Harry—or it might be a year or two older. His occupation was suspected, if not known to a certainty, by all who frequented Mrs. Leland's "boarding and lodging house for young gentlemen." He dealt in contraband goods, and was usually called "the lucky smuggler;" and a good profit he made, too, on one thing or another—take the months together—this Mr. Job Robinson. When supper was over and the other occupants had retired to their rooms, Harry drew his chair near to that of his young friend, Teddy Walters, and asked for his news.

"Well," began Teddy, "it's myself that made well with my pack this trip. There is many a one of the farmer folk that spent their money with me instead of going to the stores. But I was to tell my news."

"When I was come to Squire Greely's—Mrs. Greely always buys a trifle, if only to encourage an honest