

broke from the circle at this singular declaration. The doors were closed by the coroner's desire, and the girl was asked to point out the person whom she recognised, but terror for the consequence prevented her from complying with the request for some time. At length, however, the coroner succeeded in inspiring her with sufficient confidence to speak out. "There he is, then," said the girl, "standin' a-nigh the table, in the sailor's clothes."

Confounded beyond expression by the strangeness of the accusation, Dorgan could do nothing but gaze around him in wild amazement, until he was roughly seized upon and dragged before the coroner, who, after inquiring his name, taxed him, in consequence of some private information which he received from one of the bystanders, with entertaining a spite at the deceased. This Dorgan denied in the sense in which he saw the word was then used. He confessed to being displeased with the old man for having refused him his daughter's hand, but added that he came home now with an altered spirit, anxious to see and be reconciled to him.

"These were not, justice compels me to declare," said a voice behind Dorgan, "the sentiments which I heard you express towards him yesterday evening. In the parlour of the Bee-hive I heard the young sailor speak in terms of the vilest reproach against my poor murdered friend Maccloughlen." Dorgan looked over his shoulder, and beheld the clergyman with whom he had been speaking. "I cannot, nor am I anxious to deny that I did use such expressions," said he, a little confused, in spite of his consciousness of right, at the corroborative force which this unfortunate circumstance was likely to give to the mistaken testimony of the child; "but I spoke then under unusual irritation, and had been drinking."

The unfortunate young man then called upon his host of the preceding evening, who was also present, to attest that he had not been out of his house during the whole of the night. But here again the evidence was against him. The landlord declared that he had heard him get up in the middle of the night, and walk for some time through his room; and added, that his wife had informed him that she had heard the door open and shut a short while before. In despair at thus finding the web of conviction gradually but strongly weaving around him by an inexplicable combination of circumstances, Dorgan as a last resource requested that Miss Maccloughlen might be immediately called, and from her evidence, as it had been stated by the little girl that she also was present when the murder was committed, he fully expected that the horrible mystery would be cleared up, or at least that his innocence would be established. On Miss Maccloughlen's entering the apartment, a dead silence took place, when Dorgan, after pausing a moment to summon all his presence of mind, advanced towards her, and taking her hand,

while she seemed scarcely conscious of the action, in his, said gently, "It is a sad meeting that has been reserved for us, Pennie, but do you not know me?" When the distracted girl recognised her lover, which until now she had not, she uttered a shrill and piercing shriek, flung herself upon his neck, and hung, in a convulsion of mingled tears and sobs, around him. After the interchange of many expressions of affection and regard between the lovers, and when Pennie had been calmed and soothed by the endearing language of her lover, she was called upon to state what she knew regarding the dreadful transaction, and she proceeded to give a similar account of it to that which had already been given by the little girl. On being asked how the person was dressed who actually murdered her father:

"I think in a sailor's dress, like Dorgan's," she said carelessly, being yet unaware of the charge that was against him.

"You do not think it was I, then?" said Dorgan, smiling.

"You," replied the girl, pausing as if to comprehend his question; "I should sooner say that it was his own act—or as soon—"

"Are you quite certain, Miss Maccloughlen, that this was not the man whom you withheld from the deceased?" She had been represented by the little girl as having struggled with the murderer, endeavouring to drag him from her father.

"Certain that Dorgan did not murder my father! Am I certain of my existence? I would stake a thousand lives, if I had them, that Dorgan would not have stirred one of the grey hairs upon his head, in enmity, if it were to make him master of the universe."

"My own sterling girl!" exclaimed Dorgan, delighted with her ready confidence; "when all are turned against me, I have at least one friend in you."

The coroner, however, could not overlook the strong circumstantial evidence that was against the suspected murderer, and he pressed Miss Maccloughlen to say whether she had not observed any peculiarity about him by which she could recognise him again.

Recollecting herself, she said that she had grasped something which was hanging to his coat, and brought it away with her in the struggle. "It is this," she said, and handed to the coroner Dorgan's Trafalgar medal. Dorgan lifted his hand to the breast of his coat in a state of mind which language is incapable of describing, and found, indeed, that this testimonial to his bravery was not there. The evidence borne against him by the medal was conclusive, but it was only so through his own act and deed. Conscious of innocence, he at once acknowledged that the medal was his, and resolved to abide all consequences rather than seek safety in evasion or falsehood.

"It is all a dream; a wild, improbable, impossi-