AILEY MOORE

SALE OF THE TIMES SHOWING HOW EVICTIONS, MURDER AND SUCH-LIKE PASTIMES ARE MANAGED AND JUSTICE ADMINISTERED IN IRELAND TOGETHER WITH MANY STIRRING INCIDENTS IN OTHER LANDS

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CHAPTER XXI

THE DREADFUL STORY CECILY HAD TO TELL

Grosvenor Square keeps its own,—that is, in the vicissitudes of fortune and taste, Grosvenor Square has felt very little the changes of the last ten years. Hence Grosvenor Square is now what it was then, one of the patronized *locales* of gentle blood and perennial purses, of music-grinders, monkeys, and dancing poodles. An Italian, with a trained tortoise, attempted some time ago to introduce that species among the foreign animals that vegetated in Grosvenor Square; but an old gentleman was persuaded that the tame tortoise was a satire upon his third wife, who had grown blind from fatness, and with becoming spirit he drove the Italian boy away with his stick, and with threats of the police.

"*Deh! ma datemi qualche cosa, signore!*"

"No *cause* at all—be off!"

"*Ma— ma signore!*"

"What do I care for your *mamma?*" asked the insulted Grosvenorarian; "be off, I say!" And by way of assisting him in the operation, he poked him in the middle of the back with his stick, so that the stranger was fain to take his poor pet in his little arms, and turning his large, dark, melancholy eyes on the Englishman, he began to move on. But the Italian boy talked about the "rich" people of England not being "Christian" and said Piedmont without wealth was much happier, and in this way was muttering hard, when the surly Englishman again addressed him.

"You sir!"

"*Signore!*"

"Here, I say, you talked of your mamma."

"*Ah, signore, non capico niente.*"

"Ay, yes, to be sure—but your mamma. Here," said the big tyrant, "here!" and the Italian boy's eyes brightened like his own skies, for he found a golden sovereign in his hand.

"Confound the rascal and his *mamma*," the big Anglican muttered to himself; "Huh!" he continued. "But I certainly understood that Italian though," he went on. And this idea evidently pleased him greatly, for he kicked several things smartly before him as he went, and he looked from one side of the flags to the other, to show any one who came in the way that he "was not the man they took him for."

There are many beautiful houses in Grosvenor Square, but on the left hand as you come from the park, if you have an eye to taste, and therefore can value even external arrangement, there is one which will strike you as peculiarly noble looking. The majestic spread of the steps, the proud elevation of the entrance, the rich silk hangings, which in half-veiled luxury look down upon you, the freshness, order, symmetry of everything, even to the parrot cage, which you behold on a pedestal inside one of the drawing-room windows, everything bespeaks wealth and intellect at No. —, Grosvenor Square, in November, 1844.

This is Frank Tyrrell's house, and with him lives the rich and beautiful Cecily, his sister.

Frank and Cecily had lost their parents some two years and a half before: but their independence only made them love one another more dearly. For the vindication of Lord Kinmacarra's lady sister, we must say that many a one besides her ladyship remarked that their attachment was "truly absurd."

Cecily is at home to-day. She is sitting at a mosaic table, a handsome round mosaic, with golden frame, and very charming view of the Roman capitol. She is a few yards behind the parrot's cage, of which we have apprised the reader; for though apparently in the drawing-room, Poll is really in a beautiful *boudoir*, conveniently opening upon the more august apartments. Cecily is surrounded by everything rich and *recherche*, and beautiful and suggestive; but to-day (every day, but to-day particularly) Cecily far outshines them all. She is dressed in dark, rich, Irish tabinet, with the daintiest little collar of Limerick lace; through her raven hair there look out a few, very few shining pearls; and the transparent fairness of her cheek, is relieved by a rose tint, so soft, so faint, that it looks the reflection of the damask couch beside her. Cecily has attempted to improve a pencil-sketch, and she has spoiled it; she has opened a volume of Macaulay, and thought it "insipid;" a volume of Thackeray, and pronounced it "nonsense;" she read a few lines of Hugo, and a page or two of Baudrand's ascetic writings; but it was no use, nothing fixed Cecily Tyrrell's attention to-day. Yes, we should say one thing astonished her; that is to say, the length of the interval between breakfast and noon. She first thought her watch had stopped, and then she thought the house-clock had conspired with her watch, and finally, when beaten out of her chronometer theory, she had sense enough to laugh at herself, and courage enough to ask herself the meaning of her impatience.

That plague of all sentiment, a barrel-organ, put a momentary end to her disquisition. One of them came under the window playing "Strike the light guitar;" and the parrot, who seemed to have been roused to a sense of its own rights by the call thus made for music, commenced to sing out most lustily. A parrot's screech is not a melodious thing.

"Poll! Poll! oh Poll!" said Miss Tyrrell.

"Play for Poll!" replied the parrot.

"Silence, Poll! silence!"

"Play for Poll!" repeated the impatient bird.

There was silence for a minute, and the gorgon of musicians moved off. Then Poll commenced grumbling, and chattering, and crying, "Play for Poll!" so that she effectually drowned every minor noise. A door opened on the left of Cecily, and a servant—white coat, silver heraldry buttons, white stockings, red vest, black velvet shorts, and powdered hair—all made a low bow.

The gentleman is in the drawing-room, Miss."

"Mr. Moore!" half exclaimed Cecily.

"The handsome gentleman as was here yesterday, and brought the handsome lady with 'em," answered the servant.

Cecily was on fire—and the servant at once saw the affair to the end. He went down, and informed all in the kitchen, in strict confidence, that Miss Tyrrell was to be married in a week or two, and that the "handsome gentleman" was the same who nearly lost his life in saving her from falling over a precipice," and had shot two men, and wounded another, for saying she was not as handsome as "Clepaytray" a most wonderful young gentleman of £16,000 a year.

Before he went down, however, he told the "handsome gentleman" that Miss Tyrrell would be forthcoming in a moment; and according to the law in that case made and provided, he told "a knock at the door" that his "missus" would not be home "for the day."

Cecily, on opening the entrance to the drawing-room, found Gerald Moore gazing earnestly on a picture over the mantlepiece. It was a noble water-color drawing of a lady in full ball costume. At her feet was a young girl who had just stooped to pick up a bouquet of flowers which seemingly had fallen from the hand of the lady. Beside the lady, on a pedestal, was a parrot's cage, and a parrot which one easily recognized as "Poll;" and on the left-hand side of the apartment in which she stood, there was a light terrace glass door, that opened out on a landscape such as only a southern clime could furnish.

"Welcome!" cried Cecily, rapidly walking over, and presenting her hand. "Welcome! a thousand times!"

"Gerald for a moment—just for a moment—was off his guard; but do not blame him. The idea of a "vision" really crossed his mind—a vision of beauty—peerless beauty and irresistible power. Gerald had been sketching "a Judith," and partly coloring it, a creature from whom beamed forth the spiritual charm which the hand of heaven had flung around the heroine of Israel; he had thought upon it until the "*ideal*" used to make his heart throb and his eye moisten; every one that shadowed forth any of its perfections had an inexplicable interest for him; he had an artist's ethereal though impassioned love for the creation of his fancy; she stood before him embodied!

Cecily saw in a moment that she had made an impression; but she felt convinced that much of the effect she had produced was owing to association.

"Come now, Mr. Moore! Mamma's picture, poor mamma! Mamma's picture has brought some one to your mind—is it not so?"

"Quite true. Mamma was very, very beautiful."

"And the little girl?"

"Is the growing bud of a fair flower too."

"Who is it?"

Gerald only looked at Cecily, and smiled ever so gently.

"Yes, but you thought of some one else since you came into the room?"

Gerald looked a little surprised, but he frankly answered, "Yes."

"Do not compliment my sagacity," she said, blushing a little more deeply, "for surprise was eminently depicted on your countenance."

Cecily did not add "admiration," but as she spoke of his "countenance," she looked into the face ingenuous as spring, and indexing a spirit like her own.

There was a minute's silence. In fact, Gerald began to think he might make a little coquettish complication; a man coquette is hideous; Gerald Moore contemned such a character supremely.

"In fact," he said, "I was reminded of an *ideal*—more, however, than a dream, and I was tracing the features of my thought in that splendid pictures when you entered—"

"And spoiled the illusion?"

"No; gave the picture its last light!" And Gerald looked down, not embarrassed, but thoughtful; he had gone a little in another extreme, and *his* soul was rigidly true.

"Judith," he continued, without any affectation of the carelessness, or of deep feeling, "Judith is a favorite character of mine, and I have seen a picture of her that singularly resembles your mother, and would almost make a portrait for you."

The labyrinth of feeling! We find ourselves descending, and the ordinary world disappearing; and bonds entwining us and our power of returning every moment growing less, and less and less, and yet we have not the courage to retrace our steps. A species of curiosity deepens our interest, and opposes the resolution of reason, and we proceed on, on, on, from twilight to darkness! Light shines at length! we are in a world far from our own, and the flowers are blooming in the sunshine, while the fountain of immortality flows in through gardens that are never to wither? Poor dreamer! you will wake in the region from which you descended, and memory will mock you with the creations which experience will not permit you to revisit! Pause! proceed not further.

The parrot in the boudoir began to admire herself in a very subdued tone—the base voice of that singularly mimic—and said "Pretty Poll! pretty Poll!"

"You have got a parrot?"

"Yes, come and see; we shall be free from intrusion, and I want to have some serious conversation with you; in truth I want to unfold a tale. I wearied you about Ailey last evening?"

"Certainly not."

"Pretty Poll?" cried out the parrot, as they entered the boudoir. And then immediately, "Play for Poll," she grated out hoarsely, "Play for Poll!"

"What shall I play?" asked Cecily, going over to the cage.

"Hurra!" cried the parrot.

"What shall I play?" again demanded Cecily; "what shall I play, Poll?"

Poll got on her perch, and looked very wise; flapped her wings two or three times, and then, to Gerald's utter amazement sang out, "Did you ne'er hear of our own Ailey Moore?"

"Is that the tune?" said Cecily.

"That's the tune," answered Poll; "that's the tune! that's the tune!" Poll murmured. "Hurra, Ailey Mo-o o-ore!" cried the bird; and then it laughed and clapped its wings, and swung round on its perch.

"You see Frank has not been idle," said Cecily. "Only I would not tell Frank's secrets," said Cecily, "I could guess something. And Mr. Moore," she continued after a pause—very gravely she spoke—"I would lay down my life to see Frank—happy."

Gerald made no observation, but sat down upon the sofa, to which Cecily pointed, while she sat in her former seat, near the mosaic table, and bent her dark eyes upon the capitol.

"Your friend, the poor soldier?"

"In joy and gratitude he leaves to night for Ireland, and bears your presents to the banks of the Shannon—to Ailey."

"You found no difficulty in purchasing him out?"

"Only with himself, for he feared 'any one should say he went over to the trial' as he said, 'to do justice for pay.'"

"Your meeting with him saved the life of Lucy."

"It is incredible with what courage and coolness he performed his part. But the whole succession of events had been quite providential. His meeting that monster of a man and woman in an omnibus; his overhearing their intentions to victimize a young girl; his accidental encounter with the woman in St. Gile's; his run to the hotel to pray the attendance of the police; and his meeting me, as I passed into the very same hotel, and recognizing me as I ordered the cabman to draw up—all is most wonderful! And, indeed, I may add, meeting you and Baron St. John, at a moment when you were so much needed, both to me and the poor girl."

"She is nearly quite restored, and you must see her," said Cecily, looking fixedly at Gerald.

"Assuredly, if she wish it," answered Gerald, quite composed.

"She is very handsome," remarked Cecily.

"I dare say, poor thing. Better for her to have been born a cripple than to have ever run through such a danger."

Cecily acquired no information by her "probing,"—that is, she knew perfectly well what Gerald Moore was, and was likely to answer, yet she appeared to have had a secret satisfaction in hearing him speak unimpassionedly of a handsome woman.

"Lucy shall take Emma's place. I am quite satisfied Lucy is respectable, and she shall be my companion, more than my maid."

"God will bless you!"

"And now of poor Emma. I am afraid to speak of her. She is not mad. I cannot, and I *will* not," she added, with energy, "I *will* not believe Emma an impostor; and yet *what* am I to believe?"

"How, Miss Tyrrell?"

"Well, really, I cannot proceed, unless 'Miss Tyrrell' and 'Mr. Moore' be given up. I am 'forward,' I suppose; but there is a pleasure in being 'true' as well as in appearing 'proper.' I want, Gerald," she said, and her voice softened as she pronounced the word, "I want a—*will* you 'call me Cecily?'"

"Assuredly."

"Well, I want you to be my friend—like Frank, in some way—yet I do not know what way. Could you think of me in any such way as you think of Ailey! I love her, dear Ailey, and I would like to please you just as *she* does."

Gerald Moore was touched. He felt he was in danger, and that she, without knowing it, was floating on to "the course" which "never doth run smooth." But the rational soul rose up and seized the growing feeling, and there was a struggle—strong but decisive; Gerald shook for a minute—it was only for a minute—the sensitive was crushed.

The merely vain man would pursue this conversation to its last word, and this state to its ultimate development! but the merely vain man Cecily would have known only to pity. The merely selfish man would work the growing regard into profit, and only weigh what it was worth. The man of honor would fix his eye upon the far issue, and ask himself was he prepared; he would examine *every step of the way*, and demand of himself whether he was a legitimate traveller. The "ultimate honorable issue" Gerald looked upon as "impossible;" the road, even the spot of it he stood upon, forbidden ground for such a journey; he therefore answered—

"Certainly, I shall call you 'Cecily,' and place you with my sister before my mind."

It was all Cecily Tyrrell asked. Yet Cecily Tyrrell was not satisfied. Gerald said too little for her—he was reserved. He ought to feel more, and he *was* a man of deep feeling. But perhaps he *did* feel. Ay, perhaps, he asked himself what Frank Tyrrell would expect from Ailey's brother. She has done him justice. He is in her brother's house, paying a visit of the extremest confidence on both sides; and he is—*poor*.

Cecily rose, and, walking over to where Gerald Moore sat, she gave him her hand. He rose, looking quite perplexed, Cecily saw his heart with a glance.

"Gerald," she said, "do not be alarmed;" and she smiled angelically. "I want to pledge and seal the sisterhood with Ailey. Heaven has sent her and you in my path—and now of Emma. Do you believe in spirits?"

"Spirits?"

"Oh, well, Gerald, I mean in spirits—bad spirits assuming bodily shape and form!" Cecily was pale and grave.

"I have never seen an example, but I have no reason for disbelief."

"No?"

"By no means. In the time of our divine Lord, such manifestations were frequently permitted, and in the unbaptized countries they are by no means unfrequent. But whence or how are you interested?"

"Poor Emma Crane, my maid, seems — nay, I believe, she is a victim."

"How?"

"She came to me only on Monday, and her melancholy look interested me in her behalf. Her testimonials were admirable; and one day—just in one day, she convinced me that she had had a fine education, and possessed the kind of soul I love. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, yesterday passed, and I was quite in raptures with my little Irish maid. Last night she was discovered lying on the floor, torn and bleeding, head, face, neck, and shoulders, and, for a long while after the discovery, scarcely able to explain her sad fate."

"But——"

"I was about to say, she believes she is attacked—'obsessed' she calls it—by a devil."

"Oh, a vain fear. She is epileptic, and, having fallen, has injured her person on the floor."

"No, no, no—by no means—no, no," said Cecily, with her usual ardor. "No fall, and no scraping could inflict the kind of wounds which she carries."

"How did it happen, does she say?"

"You can see her—but, listen. On a calm summer evening, just the 20th of last May, she sat in an arbor which belonged to the garden of a dwelling in which she had been employed. Poor Emma had a mind to see the delicate beauties of the fresh young leaves, and her eyes wandered from her work, and traversed the garden, enjoying the munificence of God, in blossom, and velvet green—tree, flower, and fountain,—when her heart began to beat, and she became alarmed. She called back her thoughts, and, forcing her looks on the path before her, she saw crouched with bared teeth and blazing eye, a huge grayish rat. She screamed, called upon God, and, she adds, the Virgin Mary, and fainted. The poor girl heard and felt no more till she found herself in bed, with various applications to her head and neck, and weltering in her blood. Oh, my God!

'Freddo dalle vene—
Fuge il mio sangue al cor!'

('Cold from my veins,
The icy blood rushes to my heart!')

What think you?"

"Well, I am really interested."

"I thought you would. Poor Emma had only 'her two hands,' as she says, 'to earn a living,' and even her own story was sufficient to turn her out. She was mad or 'haunted,' the good folk remarked, and neither quality of servant would answer their purpose. But she says they were kind to her, and relieved her wants, and never spoke to her of going to the 'poor-house,' as she calls the 'workhouse.'"

"The Irish have a horror of the workhouse. Our girls cannot endure the thought of mixing with those whom they find there. But," continued Gerald, "in six months, she should exhibit much more numerous traces of those assaults than would have been a recommendation to your confidence."

"Well, I made the same remark, and I *did* feel a little dissatisfied with the explanation; but she cannot—she *cannot* be an imposter."

"What account does she give, then, of these six months?"

"She will only say, that *I could not understand her.*"

"Understand her?"

"Yes."

Gerald began to think. After a few seconds he said—

"Can I see her, Cecily?"

"Oh! poor Emma will be so glad!" answered the warm hearted girl.

Cecily rang—and the white coat, buttons, and powdered hair, appeared.

"Is Miss Crane in her room?"

"I think so, ma'am."

"Well, beg of her to come to the boudoir."

In a quarter of an hour or less Emma Crane presented herself in the boudoir. She was an interesting young woman of one and twenty. She was above the middle height, with large blue eyes and sharply-defined mouth, and well-formed aquiline nose. Emma was deadly pale, and her neck was all swathed with linens. She stopped short on seeing a gentleman before her in the boudoir, but Cecily prayed her to enter. Having had a seat beside her mistress, she was informed by her that Mr. Moore had a deep interest in her case and condition, and was a gentleman who *did not disbelieve* her, and wished to do her a service.

Poor Emma wept. It was like saying, "Who can do *me* a service?"

"But," continued Cecily, "he is just as desirous as I am to know how the six months, from May until this time, have been spent; you will surely gratify him."

Emma looked doubtingly at Gerald, and shook her head.

The young man slipped his watch-guard from his neck, and approaching poor Emma, he showed her a silver medal of the Immaculate Conception, which, in presenting to her, he kissed; he wore it just over his heart.

The young woman burst into a torrent of tears, and falling suddenly on her knees, thanked the good God a hundred times over.

"*Dolcissima Madre!*" ejaculated Cecily, "How they love *Our Lady!*" thought she.

"My dear Emma," said Cecily, "I have a medal of *Our Lady*—look." She continued undoing the cameo which she always wore. "See here, Emma," said the young lady.

This time Emma presented her lips to the Madonna; and Cecily felt the hot tears falling on her hands.

Cecily wept for company, with the unfortunate; and she thought again, this is *religion*, at all events.

"Ah! Miss Tyrrell, what an angel you would be, if you were a daughter of Mary."

"And how shall I become one, Emma—how?" asked Cecily, in her earnest way.

"Ah!" sighed Emma — and she shook her head.

"Perhaps you would speak to Mr. Moore with more freedom, were I away, Emma?"

"I'll tell everything as well before you, Miss Tyrell—he'll understand—and he can explain."

"Poor Emma," murmured Cecily.

Emma detailed the first appearance of the rat as Cecily had narrated it, and then continued—

"All the world was flying from me, sir," she said, addressing Gerald. "I could get no employment, and scarcely a lodging—while every day for a week my terrible curse appeared to me, and attacked me. I had only one friend, and he always trusted me, sharing with me the little he could obtain from his calling."

"A young man," interrupted Cecily.

"My confessor, Miss Tyrrell," answered the unhappy girl. "He has been to me the angel of God—long since, I fear, I should have died by my own hand but for him."

"His name?" asked Gerald.

"Rev. William Clones."

"I know him; he is at present at—"

"Oh!" cried Emma, falling again upon her knees, "wherever he is, may the light of Heaven be in his heart, and on his head. He has been father, mother, brother, friend, and *all* to me! What would have become of me only for him?"

Cecily was affected, and deeply interested; every "Catholic child," thought she, "has *one* friend."

"Well, sir," continued Emma, "I presented myself to him time after time, all bloody and nearly mad. Oh! the agony that came with the night time! and the doom that came in the shadows! Every gust of wind—every noise above or below me—sometimes the beating of my own heart—and my breathing, my very breathing, frightened me, and I looked into space until my eyes got dim. I could not—dare not lie down! And then my blood would freeze—and the room would rock—and while I yet looked oh! God!—oh! Virgin Mother—he stood before me on the floor, and lay down just as I saw him the first terrible day, before he flew at my throat, and tore me."

Emma shuddered.

"One kind, brave young girl stayed with me for a month; she tied me down, each night, in my wretched bed—and thus I did not roll out on the floor in the hysterics which always followed the attack."

"You went to your confessor, regularly?" demanded Gerald.

"Yes, oh yes! I should have died but for *that*. He reminded me of Christ's sufferings from the Evil One; he pointed out the life of Job, and of Our dear Lady; and he made me live on, 'under the hand of God.'"

"Well?"

"Well, sir, he, my confessor, gave me his small means, and endeavored to obtain work for me, and obtained for me many prayers from the charitable—but I lived in continued excitement; and my brain used to burn, and in fits of desperation—crazed from the memory of the night past, and maddened by the fear of the night to come, I have gone to drown myself."

"Poor Emma!" cried Cecily, while a tear rolled down her face.

"It was then, sir—" and she paused and looked at Cecily; "it was then, Miss Tyrrell, came my first relief."

"Relief?"

"Yes, miss; the poor people were beginning to be frightened at my approach, and the little children that used to play with me, and love me, flew shrieking away when I came near. The shopkeepers prayed I wouldn't come to their places, and the tradespeople were 'not home' for me; everything and every one became my enemy, and my heart was blackening against the world."

"Alas!"

"Yes, Miss Tyrrell. The world was an enemy—only *him*: and I saw the tears in his eyes when he relieved me, and the warm love of God came to my cold heart when he spoke."

"He relieved you from the monster?"

"*He believed in me.* Oh, may God bless him, he—he did; only for that I should now be in hell; he believed in me, and it struck him to obtain leave for me to lie on the boards in the sacristy, looking at the light that hung before Jesus."

Cecily started.

Emma smiled faintly, but sweetly.

"Miss Cecily," she continued; "God is near *us*, and my good father brought me into his protection. How happy I was there! For over four months I have lain on the sacristy-floor at night, and worked there during the day, and for four months my soul was heaven. To live and die there before my God would have been Paradise!"

"You were not allowed to stay?"

"The parish clergyman, merciful and good, was cautious. He said, 'However true she is, she cannot remain always here; and whatever is to be done last, may as well be done first."

"And then—"

"Then, sir, the same kind priest borrowed the money to send me to London, as I have had a good education, and can earn my bread."

"An excellent education," said Cecily, "and it grieves me to part with you—grieves me deeply."

"Alas! for three days I made up my mind that I had left the demon beyond the sea! but—oh God! oh God! Thy will—last night I knelt to pray, and I prayed for you,—miss—indeed I did; and I prayed for the pale, sad-looking face that passed me by upstairs, and you with her, miss, and my heart was light and joyful. Mother of God! having risen from my knees, I sat on a chair by my handsome bedside, and I said, 'How fortunate I am at last!' The creature stood there before me! the same malignant eye was on me, and the bloody teeth were bare—oh God!"

Poor Emma was obliged to yield to the master-hand of excitement. She fell down, and was carried to her room in a state of insensibility. Cecily accompanied her with a beating heart, and many a novel feeling. She felt herself more in the world supernatural than ever she had felt before, and the impression was anything but disagreeable. Gerald had a full half-hour to his own reflections before she returned. At length she came, so pale and majestic, and melancholy; but she looked "in light."

"Gerald," she said, sitting down quite beside him; "Gerald, I must get close to the God—the God Who made this world of mystery!—oh, Ailey!" She continued: "Gerald," she said, looking at him earnestly, "if I were that girl—poor Emma, I would rejoice! oh, to be in practical contact with the unseen!"

"Cecily! surely, surely, it would not add anything to your knowledge or convictions."

"Knowledge! I have an abundance; conviction! why, yes; I know all things are as they are stated to be—I never doubted. I go to Church, attend family prayers, and I read Dante.

Udir mi parve un murmurare di
flume
Che scende chiaro giu di pietra in
pietra.'

('I seem to hear the murmuring call
Of sunlit waters in their fall
From rock to rock.')

But the cascade of the poet and the truths of religion have been to my mind too much alike; I must *touch reality*. Oh! Gerald! the supernatural world is *so* glorious."

"Faith will move mountains."

"Yes. Emma has faith; Ailey has faith; the old priest has faith."

"Poor Father Mick!"

"Poor! Is not the world God's dwelling for *him*! Are not angels his companions and comforters? Is he not shielded from himself and all things else by the present eternity; he walks before God and is perfect; never say poor, Gerald, 'tis such a happy thing to realize the unseen! Oh! I could sacrifice everything," and she paused—"I *could*, Gerald," she repeated, energetically, "everything, to interweave my thoughts and aspirations with the world of spirits as you do, and to rely upon it in childlike confidence, like Ailey—like Ailey when she kneels before the Virgin!"

"Gerald smiled.

"The difference between stage life—between mere playing a part, and *real, real* life," she went on, "is between you and me."

"Oh! Cecily!"

"Gerald, yes, and between the masses of our people and—"

She was interrupted by a knock. The servant announced that Baron St. John would wait upon her in a quarter of an hour.

"Gerald," she resumed, "I will and must find *why* all your people make religion a fact, a fact like every fact they witness and perform, like