

leading merchants and an old commercial acquaintance. On his departure, native gratitude for the kindly treatment received prompted him to ask his host as a favor to allow the latter's son, a youth of nineteen, to accompany him to Ireland on a visit. To the delight of young Gomez, who with the natural longing of youth for strange scenes and distant prospects rejoiced at the opportunity thus offered of satisfying a heart wish, the invitation was accepted.

After an uneventful voyage the Mayor and his young friend arrived in Galway. The welcome extended to one who had come as the special guest of the chief magistrate was warm and wholehearted. From his host and hostess to the humblest person that trod the streets of the ancient town, he received the most courteous treatment.

A round of festivities and such entertainments as were peculiar to the age and at which he was regarded as the special guest, opened up for the young Spaniard a new world. Much, it is true, of what he saw was Cadiz in another form. But the system of government, the conditions of life that it helped so largely to mould, presented differences material and inexplicable. For instance, he could not understand the philosophy, if there were any, underlying the constant and irritating interference on the part of the military authorities with the transactions of ordinary business. The effect of this meaningless interposition pervaded everything.

But the social charm of the homes and gatherings to which, as the guest of the chief magistrate, he had been invited, was irresistible. For friend and companion he had the Mayor's only son—a youth of his own age. Bright, winning,

commanding in his native city a popularity rare for one of his years, was Walter Lynch. There was a touch of waywardness in his nature, to which an impetuous, though kindly temper lent a sinister factor; but this was overlooked by those who came within the influence of his magnetic personality. At his first meeting with young Gomez he conceived a liking for him that was almost fraternal and which was cordially reciprocated. Besides an equality in years, their tastes and aspirations ran on the same lines. Every attention that it was possible to show the visitor was cheerfully paid by the son of his host.

In one of those confidences which at an early stage of their friendship were so freely exchanged, Gomez was informed that, shortly previous to his arrival, Walter had become engaged to one of the most lovable girls of her day—the daughter of an old and wealthy family. The proposed alliance had met with the approval of the parents of both. Gomez was soon introduced to his friend's betrothed. He, at once, felt the influence of a beauty and goodness such as he had never seen. As the comrade of her future husband, Agnes (history withholds the surname) treated him with a marked and charming kindness, both at her own home and at those social functions which the Mayor in honor of the stranger made more frequent and splendid than those it had been his practice to give.

Cloudless indeed were the days that the two youths spent together. When social claims left them free, a sail in the bay, or a ride on horseback through the country roads and lanes—now to Ardfoy where the influence of a royal past still lingered; again to Kilcolgan Castle