

they look upon her as a half Catholic."

"Now, Caroline, you cannot suppose that in this enlightened year of our Lord, 1851, a young lady is going to be immured in a convent against her consent, and she a Protestant! The very land would cry shame upon it—queen, nobles, and people."

"Well, if you have anything to say about it, for or against, just say it to mamma, without teasing me," was Carry's answer. "I believe the affair is decided on, and for my own part I don't see any objection to it; but I have never interfered in the matter, even by a single word—I have had other things to think of. Nor if a word would place Lina in the convent, would I utter it, so indifferent is the whole business to me."

"Nor yet speak the word that would keep her out, Carry?"

"She can keep herself out, by marrying Alfred."

"What end do they propose by her residence there?"

"Her ultimate conversion, I believe, Father Ignatius dwells on most."

"Conversion of herself, or her money—or both?"

"Don't be absurd. I am very sure of one thing, that if she knew half the comfort of the Roman Catholic religion, she would turn to it of her own accord. I am surprised anybody can remain of a different persuasion."

"Comforting, is it?"

"Very," repeated Caroline. "You may lapse into no end of little sins, that in your religion would be called crimes, and might lie heavily on the conscience; but in ours we get absolution for them all, as often as we like to go to confession."

"What a consoling faith that would be to some of us blades of the town! We have perpetually, or deserve to have, some peccadillo weighing down our conscience."

"Then why in the world don't you all become Roman Catholics?" rejoined Caroline, earnestly. "You might do anything you liked then."

"And so clear the arrears of sin periodically, as with a feather. I will think of it, Caroline."

"Here they come, mamma and Lina. Don't get bothering now, cousin, about the convent; keep peace until the wedding is over."

"And you gone, Caroline? Perhaps I may."

"Dinner, ma'am," cried the stiff old butler, appearing at the drawing-room door.

Aunt's face and her turban glowed together at these words. I knew the signs well enough—a storm was brewing.

"Who told them to serve dinner? How could you think of such a thing? Captain Fitzhenry is not come in."

"The Captain does not dine here, ma'am. He said he had business at the railway-stations, and should not be back."

Aunt flounced to the dining-room and down we sat—at least, we should have sat down, but aunt remained standing, with her eyes fixed to an opposite door; so of course we did the same.

"Can she be waiting for Fitzhenry?" I mentally exclaimed; when the entrance of father Ignatius solved my query. I was beginning to forget the routine of Dashingly House, or I might have remembered that the holy father dined there, on an average, five days out of the seven. I knew father Ignatius of old; and a perfect model of a father he was towards Mrs. Dashingly and all her household. He chanted an elaborate grace—all Latin—the footman removed the covers, and down we sat.

Sixteen courses of fish; five of eggs, omelets, and the like; a few of butter; seven of sweets and pastry; the richest of wines; coffee and liquors. The repast brought to my notice that it was Friday.

"Nephew," said my aunt, "I never permit a sinful dish of flesh to appear at my table on these days of abstinence, whoever may be seated at it. Captain Fitzhenry has good-humoredly accommodated himself to my customs; need I request you to do the same to-day, and hold it as a fast?"

Certainly she needed not, and when I thought of my usual dinner, a solitary chop and a pint of porter, and compared it with the rich board before me I wondered whether it did not, of the two, better deserve the name of fast.

"These periodical fast-days, my son," cried the priest to me, "are wholesome for the soul."

"Perhaps more so than would be for the body, holy father, if it attacked but half of the fast before us."

"Highly good," repeated the priest, these days of mortification."

"Is Fitzhenry not a Catholic, Carry?" I whispered, in reference to Mrs. Dashingly's late remark.

There were never such quick ears as that priest's, I do believe! Caroline sat beside me, and my question was a whispered one; but he had caught it, and was answering before Carry could speak.

"A docile young man!—a worthy gentleman, is he of whom you speak, my son. I have sought and held frequent converse with him, and his deference to my opinions is remarkable. Reared though he has been in the tenets of an opposite creed, he is perfectly willing to listen to reason; and I think I have succeeded in confuting, to his own satisfaction, some of the more heretical of his doctrines. Had we found him otherwise, I might have held it my duty to warn my good daughter here against entrusting the welfare of that lamb in his keeping."

The priest bowed to Mrs. Dashingly, and waved his finger at Caroline, lest the company present should not understand that they were the daughter and the lamb spoken of.

"I should have stopped his pretensions in the bud, and refused him altogether," cried aunt, who in the present advanced stage of the affair could afford to talk largely. "And, indeed, I do not know that I should not deem it right to do so, even now, were it not for the promise he has made."

"A tractable young man—a teachable spirit!" apostrophised the priest *par parenthese*, burying his face in a whole boatful of rich melted butter.

"What promise?" I asked looking at aunt.

"A promise honourably undertaken, on his part, that six months after Caroline shall have become his wife, he will, if she should still wish it, embrace the Roman Catholic faith."

"If all those who have been trained to walk astray would but take pattern by his example, what a blessed world it would be!" ejaculated the priest, with a sidogroan towards Lina.

"He has done all he could to convert her," chimed in Mrs. Dashingly, alluding to the captain, and looking daggers at Lina, who, what with the priest's groans and aunt's words, was turning crimson. "He has assured me so himself twenty times, and feelingly bewailed her state of spiritual darkness to me."

"Ah!" sighed the priest, as he hesitated between potted lampreys and roast salmon, casting an eye alternately upon the tempting aspect of each, "that estimable young heretic is three parts of a saint already. He has promised his sweet lamb that when she is his wife, if she likes to endow a chapel, she shall."

"A generous fellow, this bridegroom elect of yours, Carry," I whispered.

A flashing, beaming, triumphant glance shot from her eyes towards me, as she looked up for a moment from her plate. It told that she was quite as sensible of the advantages to be derived from a rich and submissive husband, as they were.

For myself, I was anything but anxious to see him. He was already sketched, drawn, colored and hung up in my mind's eye—a harmless milksop of a baby, about twenty, who dared not say his soul was his own, and whose head had been constructed to carry as few brains as possible. Who else would be taken (in) by a young flirt like Caroline? Somehow, since aunt had so kindly helped to cure my own infatuation, I had grown wonderfully alive to the real worth and attractions of my fair cousin.

I rose after dinner when the ladies did, fearing Father Ignatius, if we were left alone together, might carry my faith by storm, as it appeared he had almost done the captain's, and send me back to Glasgow a conscientious Papist; but the priest had risen also, and was leaving us to go his own way. However, I did not care to drink wine by myself, so I followed them, and leaning over the back of Carry's chair, made violent love to her, by way of passing away the time. She was relapsing into her old coquettish ways ere I had been there ten minutes—on my honor she was—and we were on the point of as hot a flirtation as ever, when the room door suddenly opened, and the butler popped in his head:

"Captain Fitzhenry."

(To be Continued.)

"NOT BAD."—A crusty old bachelor from the country came into town a few days ago for the purpose of paying his addresses to the idol of his heart, and fearing that a few grey hairs showed the footprints of old Father Time rather deeply, he stepped into a barber's shop in the neighborhood of the Police Office and politely requested the hair to be dyed a "perfect black." The usual chemicals were applied and temporarily produced the desired effect. He started for the abode of his 'lady love,' but he had scarcely crossed the threshold when a laugh from his intended father-in-law plainly told him that all was not right. A mirror was placed in his hand and to his utter astonishment the exposure to the atmosphere, before the liquor had time to evaporate, had failed in its effect and turned his hair a "perfect crimson." He left!

EUROPEAN NEWS.

THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY.—RUMORED DEPARTURE.—On Wednesday His Excellency the Russian Ambassador, Baron Brunnow, gave notice to the servants not immediately waiting on his Excellency, that their services were no longer required, as the Baron was about to leave the country. Every preparation had been made to enable his Excellency to leave at once. Diplomatic relations between Great Britain are broken off. It is reported that his Excellency Baron Brunnow, Ambassador of the Czar at the Court of St. James's, left London at an early hour on Friday morning.