

will bring them down. What do you say?"

"Oh, ask Mr. Longworth, by all means," says Miss Landelle, smiling graciously upon the gentleman in the chair. "Anything in Baymouth without Mr. Longworth would be the play of 'Hamlet' with the part of *Hamlet* left out."

"Consider yourself invited then, Mr. Longworth," says Frank, gravely, "to an exclusive and *recherche* picnic on the morning of Tuesday, the 11th instant, weather permitting, on Fishhawk Island. The fast sailing and commodious young steamer, *Father of His Country*, will be at Stubb's Wharf precisely at half past nine ante-meridian. The celebrated string band of Baymouth is engaged for the occasion, and every one this side of forty can trip his or her ten light fantastic toes from that hour till eight in the evening. Preparations are already proceeding on a scale of unprecedented magnificence, and all the *elite*, the beauty and bravery, the skimmings of the cream of society, are expected to grace the festival. To none of these classes, I am well aware, can you, sir, put forth the slightest claim, but at the gracious solicitation of Miss Marie Landelle, I, sole proprietor and getter up, do by these presents invite you."

"Are you going, Miss Hariott?" says Longworth; "because if you are not

"I am going, Larry, and will protect you, or perish with you, from the sarcasms of this ruthless boy. Have you asked Mrs. Windsor, Frank?"

"Even that daring deed, madam, have I done! And she's accepted, too. You could have knocked me down—yes, and dashed my brains out with a feather, when she said yes. If there's a breeze, and there is likely to be one at that hour, there's sure to be a comfortable short chop in the channel," says Frank, with a demoniac chuckle. "Fancy Mrs. Windsor in a short chop! Fancy Semiramis, or Cleopatra, or the Queen of Sheba seasick!"

"I am afraid you are cruelly malicious, Monsieur Frank," says Marie. "Mr. Longworth, do you desert us already?"

"Must, I regret to say. May I charge

you with my regards to Mrs. Windsor, Miss Landelle. I shall not have an opportunity of seeing her until we meet at the picnic. Tuesday you say, Frank? This is Saturday, I believe?"

"I believe it is," says Frank.

"How pleasant is Saturday night! When we've tried all the week to be good, and failed mostly. Don't forget the date in the absorbing interest of the murder trial, if you can help it. I know you are perfect ghouls, you newspaper men, and dine and sup on horrors. You don't know the race, Miss Landelle: but it is my conviction that the reporter of a daily paper would rather commit a murder himself than not have one to report. *Appropos* of newspaper men, I've asked that prince of good fellows, O'Sullivan."

"Adieu, ladies," says Longworth, rising. He glances at the window. The face there looks dark and sombre in the faint light. "Good night, Mademoiselle Reine."

She bows, and when he is fairly gone returns to the piano.

The sisters and Mr. Dexter have spent part of the afternoon and taken tea with Miss Hariott. Frank lies in a sort of dreamy swoon of bliss. The night is warm and lovely, he can recline on his elbow on the short, sweet grass, and "sigh and look, sigh and look, sigh and look, and look again," at the perfect face above him to his heart's content. Life is *clysium*, Paradise is regained, to breathe is bliss—Frank Dexter is in love, Marie Landelle is here, and no other man is near to mar his rapture.

"O'Sullivan," says Longworth, late that night, as they sit and smoke together in silent sociability on the porch. "How many times have you escorted Mademoiselle Reine Landelle home from early church since last Wednesday week?"

"Never a time," responds Mr. O'Sullivan; "but I have introduced her to M. le Curé for all that, and there she was, singing like a mavis, last Sunday. Ye did well to tell me she had a voice of her own chief. I've heard Patti when she was in New York, and Nilsson and Kellogg."

"That will do," Longworth interrupts. "I, also, have heard those ladies, and I have heard Mademoiselle Reine.