LUKE DELMEGE.

BY THE REV P. A. SHEEHAN, AUTHOR OF "MY NEW CURATE," "GEOFFREY AUSTIN: STUDENT," "THE TRIUMPH OF FAILURE," "CITHARA MEA," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

CIRCE.

"I'll insist on cook taking an action for libel against that fellow," said Dr. Wilson, the morning after the great dinner. "Why, he touched nothing but a biscuit and an apple. Did he think we were going to poison him?"

No! Not exactly. But the "great man," besides being extremely abstemious, as all great thinkers ought to be, had really some uncharitable suspicions about the cookery of the outer barbarians. He stirred the soup as carefully as if he expected every moment to turn up a baby's finger, for he had heard that a great archbishop had once had that delicacy offered him by a Maori chief; and really you don't know, you know! And he passed by dish after dish as if he were playing "Nap" and held a decidely bad hand. But withal, he was very nice and brilliant; and though pang after pang of mortification and shame shot through the anxious breast of the hostess, and she feared that it was all a *fiasco*, after her days of work and nights of worry, nevertheless the afterthought: "But he is an Englishman, and a near cousin to the Duke of B——" acted as a soothing and mollifying unguent on hurt and bruised feelings. Then, too, the quick sword-play of words between the "great preacher" and Mrs. Wenham —!!! What, you ask, with a line full of notes of exclamations, do you mean to say Wenham—Circe!—was there? Yes, indeed, and very much in evidence. There had been an angry intermarital debate as to the propriety of asking her, on that same night when Louis was peremptorily ordered from his father's house; but the name had already been inserted on Mrs. Wilson's list, and how could they think of offending one of the greatest potentates at the Castle? The doctor bit his lip. It wasn't a case for explanations. And he was obliged to admit that Mrs. Wenham was charming. With the splendid individualism of her race, she came to the banquet in a simple dress. Whilst some of the other guests had as many rings on each finger as the poles of a curtain, she had but one. But in a moment she coolly monopolized the conversation, or rather dualized it with her distinguished fellow-countryman. The imperial and dominant race assumed proprietorship here, as in all other departments. The Scythians were silent.

It is quite true, in the beginning, Circe gave a little start of surprise on beholding so many representatives of the Church Militant around her. But this quickly subsided. After all—that is, after she had, by a vigorous process of reasoning, conquered that instinctive and reverential dread of the priesthood which is common to Mrs. Wenham and the world, and argued, rather vainly, that they were no more than those Ritualistic clergymen whom she had met so often, and so often despised, she concluded that they were, after all, only humans, and, as such, legitimate and easy prey. And, to save time, she thought she would conquer the *generalissimo*, and all the sub alterns would then capitulate?"

"You find the country interesting?"

"Yes," he replied, feeling his way. "So far, I am, indeed, highly interested."

"Your first visit?"

"My first visit,' he replied, "and one to which I have eagerly looked forward."

"I hope, then, you will turn the pleasure into a study. You will find a good many things to interest you."

"I have found a great many things; and even a larger number of interesting persons so far," he said with a bow and smile.

"If you had had the good fortune and the better taste of being at the Horse Show these last days, you'd have seen still more interesting studies. There was an immense number of clergymen there—more, indeed, than I have ever seen at the hippodromes elsewhere. I should say it was a curious ethnological study—that almost universal taste of Irishmen for horseflesh."

"You speak as if you had not the honor of being an Irishwoman," said the great one.

"I am English—or rather Scoto English," said Circe.

"It is quite a disappointment," said the great one; but they shook hands metaphorically across the table, as Stanley and Livingstone, when they stepped out of the shade of the palms and bamboos, and recognized the pith, helmets and revolvers. It was the only trace and visible sign of civilization that had been left them.

"That passion for horses and dogs has always been a characteristic of our people," said a Monsignor. "We must have been a nomadic race at one time."

"I have been reading somewhat like it in one of Matthew Arnold's poems," said a lady. "I think it was 'Sohrab and Rustum.'"

"Is he not the author of the 'Strayed Reveller?'" said Dr. Wilson directly to Mrs. Wenham.

She looked at her interrogator blankly for a moment, then colored a little, then frowned, then answered:

"I never read modern poetry." It was a bad hit, but she and passed through many campaigns.

"By the way, Mrs. Wilson," she said blandly, "I understood that your boy was in Dublin. I did hear some ladies enthuse rather too markedly about him a few days hence. But how can the boy help being so handsome?"

"Jezebel!" said the doctor, between his teeth.

"And it is quite a series of conquests," said the woman of the world, turning to Barbara; "you, little witch, mesmerized that young fool, Kendal at the Denison's the other day. By the way, doctor, look out for the list of Jubilee honors. Great complaints that the medical profession has never yet been sufficiently represented or acknowledged there."

"*Wer kann die Weiberchen dressiren*," said Father Elton, breaking in upon the conversation from a quiet chat he had been carrying on with the younger of the two Monsignori. He did not understand the sword play between the doctor and Mrs. Wenham; but he saw that there was some veiled antagonism there, and it interested him.

"You are well read in ancient legion and poetry?" he said, turning towards Mrs. Wenham.

"Not quite as well read as you *savants*," she said, bridling under the interrogation; "but quite well enough acquainted with them to know that they used up human thought, and that all the pallid and sickly growths of modern times are ideas transplanted into uncongenial climates and soils."

"There, now, Dr. Calthrop," said Father Elton, "there's what your clever countrywomen think of all your miraculous discoveries in science—pallid and sickly transplantings."

"I didn't include science," said Mrs. Wenham; "but as *you* have said it, I adhere to it," which was generous of Mrs. Wenham, and seemed to imply a new interest in this Roman priest.

"I would give a good deal to be assured of that," said Calthrop with slow emphasis, for he was a heavy man; "I assure you I am quite tired of the defication of my masters, and I have long suspected that they have but feet of clay."

"It is only a simple and familiar fact in all human history. I cannot speak much for your department, doctor, for I am extremely sorry to say I do not know what it is, but there is one general and unmistakable fact or principle in nature—flux and reflux; and there must be, as George Eliot puts it, an equivalent systole and dia stole in all human inquiry."

"Carlyle is the author of that expression, I think," said Father Elton.

"No! George Eliot," said Mrs Wenham, looking steadily at him. "I won't permit my favorite to be robbed by a Scotch parrot, that screams in broken German."

"Oh! oh!" said Father Elton, "and you said you were half Scotch. Is there a general propensity among the Celts to turn the spit?"

"Your remark, Mrs. Wenham," said Dr. Calthrop, after a good deal of thought, "has impressed me. I shall look up the ancients. And you say there's nothing new under the sun?"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Wenham; "even human nature is unchanged. Even your Christianity," she said, looking calmly around on all the clerics, from her great fellow-countryman down to the Canon, and up again to Father Elton, "is but a repetition of the ancient philosophies, Greek, Egyptian, and Hindoo."

"Except that?" said Father Elton, insinuatingly.

"I except nothing," she said, fixing her glowing eyes upon him.

"Except that?" Father Elton repeated, smiling.

"Except that the ancient philo sophies made their professors humble: and—" she stopped, fearing to pro ceed.

"And that Christianity is the culmination and perfection of all. Dear me, think of a nineteenth-century lady actually quoting St. Augustine!"

"Oh! the days of miracles are not yet departed," she laughed.

"No, indeed," said Father Elton, drawing himself together. "I remember," he continued, "a rather curious incident that occurred to myself only a few months ago. You all heard of Knock, of course. Well, I am was really anxious to see for myself all that could be authenticated about these marvellous apparitions. So I went down, put up for a few days in an improvised hotel, and looked around. I saw nothing but the miracle of the people's faith and piety, and the mir acle of suffering ever patiently borne. We are the most incredulous of mortals, except when facts swim into the sunlit domain of faith. Well, one evening at dinner, I sat near a young gentleman from Dublin, who also had been prose cuting inquiries. He asked me bluntly what I thought—that is, what the Church thought about miracles. I explained the doctrine as simply as I could. When I had finished, he said in a simple way:

"'I am an unbeliever. I was brought up a Protestant, but I have lost all faith. But I am of a rather curious turn of mind; and I have so much natural religion left that I am interested in other people's beliefs. This brought me here. I shall test every case, I said, and ascertain where delusion ends and miracles begin. I know the tremendous power exercised by the mind over the body and how nervous maladies can be cured by mere mental concentration. But let me see one clear case of consumption or hip disease or cancer healed, and I shall think it necessary to retrace my steps and reconsider my position. Now just watch this! A few evenings ago, just at the dusk, I went up to the church accompanied by my mother and sister. We stood opposite the gable where the figures were supposed to have appeared. There was an immense crowd, staring with dilated eyes to see what was about to come out from the invisible silences. Probably I was the only cool and exact ing and incredulous spirit there. My mother and sister were Protestants, but sympathetic. I stood between them, leaning one hand on the shoulder of each. The Litanies—is that what you call them?—commenced. I had no sympathy with all those metaphorical expressions: "Ark of the Covenant," "Morning Star," "Tower of David;" but I admit they were beautiful. The innumerable candles were lighting; and I was looking around, coolly scrutinizing the faces of the believers, when to my utter amazement I saw the statue of the Virgin slowly expand to life-size: I saw the flesh-color come into the cheecks and neck; I saw the eyes open widely and looked down with infinite pity at me. I was entranced, fascinated, mesmerized. I pressed my hands heavily on the shoulders of my mother and sister, and cried in a passionate whisper: Look! look! It was not a momentary phasis; it lasted all through to the end of the Litany; and there I stared and stared at the phenomenon; and all the time the eyes of the Virgin were fixed on me with that peculiar expression of sadness. "Don't you see it?" I cried passionately to my friends. "See what?" they exclaimed. "Why, the apparition! Look! look! before it disappears!" "You are bewitched!" my sister cried; "there is absolutely nothing but the statue and the lights!" I said no more, but continued to gaze. Once and again I shut my eyes and then rubbed them vigorously. But there was the apparition unchanged until at the last strophe of the litanies a mist seemed to swim before it, and then slowly the figure dwindled down to the size of the statue, the flesh tints disappeared, and in a few moments I saw nothing but the clay image and the lifeless eyes. But were I put on oath then, I should have said that there was an apparition. The hallucination lasted only a little while. When I had got back to my hotel I was convinced it was an optical delusion. And so it is with all your miracles—the action of a disordered stomach upon the optic nerve.'

"'And your mother and sister?' I said.

"'They were more impressionable,' he replied. 'But it is all evaporated in the swing and swhirl of life.'

"I had quite forgotten the incident," continued Father Elton, "and even the name, until it all came back as you were speaking, Mrs. Wenham. I think —but I am not quite positive—that the gentleman's name was Menteith."

All through the little narrative Mrs. Wenham's large eyes were fixed on the speaker, wondering, speculating, angry, frightened. When Father Elton had finished, she looked modestly at her folded hands, and said meekly:

"That is also my name. And your acquaintance was my brother. I remember the circumstance well."

"Oh! indeed," said Father Elton, "how curiously I have stumbled on such an interesting circumstance. And now, Mrs. Wenham, did the experience of your excellent brother really impress you?"

Mrs. Wenham looked as innocent as a Child of Mary on the day of her profession.

"I have never failure to say the Rosary of the Virgin every day since then," she said.

Father Elton looked long and steadily at her. She calmly returned the gaze. Then Father Elton turned aside to the nearest Monsignor; and he must have heard some excellent stories during the next twenty minutes, for he laughed and laughed until the tears ran from his eyes.

There was a silence of embarrassment for the next few minutes, broken only by a gallant attempt on the part of the Canon to collect the scattered forces.

"Might I ask—ha—" he said, ad dressing the preacher, "do you—ha—use the same heraldic crest and motto as the Duke of—?"

"No!" came uncompromisingly from the great preacher.

"How very interesting!" said the Canon.

"We have no time to think of such things in England," said the preacher.

"Dear me!" said the Canon. "I thonght you had no responsibilities—ha—except an occasional sermon."

"The sermon is only a recreation, particularly when I have had to preach to such an intelligent audience and to meet such interesting company as I have been favored with this evening," said the preacher.

"Then we—ha—hope to have the honor of a repetition of your visit?" said the Canon.

The preacher shrugged his shoulders.

As the ladies filed out, Father Elton held the door open. Circe was last.

"It was not a matter to be spoken of at a public dinner table," she whispered; "but you must really take me up, and bring a poor lost sheep into the true fold."

"With great pleasure," he replied.

Ah, Circe! Circe! A great enchantress you may be with budding Apollos and young Adonises, who have not yet put on the calm of the eternal gods; but "your sweet eyes, your low replies" will never turn these steeled and passionless priests into porkers, Circe!

She tried her wiles on more yielding material, and ascertained in twenty minutes from Barbara, (1) that her father was really anxious for a title; (2) that her brother had left Dublin rather unexpectedly, why and wherefore Barbara did not know; (3) that Barbara was thoroughly ashamed of this evening dress she was wearing, and had striven successfully to cover it with all kinds of webs and woofs of lace; (4) that she had a great dread of Father Elton, who was so clever, and a great love for the purple, and a great love for certain uncouth, barefooted mediævalists down there in a street that was generally festooned with all manner of human integuments, and that was only held together by the Caryatides, who, with arms akimbo, sustained from morning to night its creaking and rotten postels and architraves; (5) that Barbara's little soul had no other ambition or craving for pleasure except a quiet hour after a hard day's work, down there in the dimly lighted church, where the great lamp swung to and fro, and there was silence, but for the rattle of old Norry's beads.

And the woman of the world, calling up her own history, and the many secret histories that were locked up and sealed in the cabinets of memory, looked this young girl all over, and looked through her eyes and the lines of her mouth, and satisfied herself that there were no secret corridors and avenues there. Then the woman of the world, wondering at this curiosity, put a few other leading questions, which glanced harmlessly off the armor of a pure ingenuous soul. Then the woman of the world fell into a deep reverie, and woke up to hear herself whispering: "The days of miracles are not passed. It is a child; and a miracle."

Later on, when the gentlemen had entered the drawing-room, it was noticed that Mrs. Wenham was rather silent and thoughtful.

"A clever woman, playing a clever part!" thought Father Elton.

"A little bored by the Scythians," thought the preacher, "as, indeed, I confess myself to be."

"Jezebel is repenting," said Dr. Wilson. "Has she a foreshadowing of the dogs?"

Not at all, for the prophets were all dead in Israel. She took an early leave. Barbara would accompany her to her carriage. Dr. Wilson said a frigid good-night. Barbara whispered:—

"You may be able to do something for papa, Mrs. Wenham."

"You may be assured I will, for your sweet sake," said Mrs. Wenham.

"And—and—if ever—that is, you may meet Louis in London, will you—won't you—oh! dear Mrs. Wenham!—"

"There, go in from the night-air, you little saint, decolletee," said the woman of the world, as she said "good-bye!"

"There are a few innocents still left in the world," she said to the mute who accompanied her. "'Tis a pity; for Rachel will yet have to shed tears. And there should be no tears! none!" she cried almost viciously. "But steeled nerves and stony hearts and minds that won't turn back on the inevitable. What dreadful fate is before that child? For she cannot be spared. The soldiers of Herod are abroad, and the air is full of the sound of weeping. I should like to see her God, though. Let me see—ten—'tis early, is it not?"

She pulled the cord and gave a direction to her coachman. He said nothing, but turned the horses' heads, though he went near falling off his perch.

Then the woman of the world found herself in the dark porch of a church, whither she had picked her way, but with dreadful misgivings as to the condition of her silks and shoes. Dark figures fitted by her in the dim light, dipped their hands somewhere, muttered their charms, and disappeared. She entered, but saw nothing but a few yellow jets that darkened the gloom. She moved up the centre aisle, and saw the red lamp swinging. She watched it eagerly. It had some curious fascination about it. She had seen similar lamps burning before *eikons* in Russia once, when her husband was military attaché to the Court; and she had often seen the same lamps at the corners of the Italian streets before images of the Madonna. But they weren't like this altogether. What was it? Then she discerned slowly that she was not alone, but that the church was crowded. For faces paled from out the darkness, and whispers and a cough broke on her startled senses. She saw long rows of men and women, mute as statues in the halls of the dead. What were they doing? And that red lamp? She was seized with a sudden panic and fled.

"May the sweet Mother of God protect you, and may God give you a happy death and a favorable judgment," said a voice from the darkness of the porch.

"It was a plunge in the *Inferno*," she said. "What madness came over me?"

Death — Judgment! Death — Judgment! Death — Judgment! Death—Judgment! So sang the merry wheels, as "low on the sands, loud on the stones" her carriage whirled away.

CHAPTER XII.

CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY.

"You really surprise me, Father Elton," said Dr. Calthrop, when the gentlemen had sat down with an air of unspeakable freedom and lighted with cigars, "and you interest me, because I really must admit that we are disposed sometimes to suffer from swelled heads in our generation. But now," he said coaxingly, "do you not really dread us? We have pushed you back behind the ramparts, and are just forming *en echelon* for the last attack."

"To vary the simile," said Father Elton, smiling, "tell me, did you, a city man, ever chance to see the rooks following the sower in a ploughed field?"

"Yes, yes, to be sure," said the doctor.

"Well, you know, we are the rooks. Every French *gamin* is taught to say: *Quoi! quoi!* after us in the streets. But, as you are well aware, the careful and thrifty rooks follow the track of the sower to pick up the seeds he has dropped, and assimilate them. They are not afraid of the sower. And they laugh, actually laugh, at the hat on the pole and the streaming rags, which are supposed to frighten them."

"I cannot well follow you," said the slow doctor.

"Well, my dear sir," said Father Elton, "we are the rooks. You are the sowers. Every fact you drop from the bag of science, we assimilate it for our own use. You may label it 'Poison' if you like. We laugh and pick it up. Your scarecrow — the end and final judgment on all religion and revelation,—we look at it boldly, cackle at it contemptuously, and fly away.

"I see," said the doctor, laughing. "But some day the sower will get mad and string up one or two of you."

"That would be unscientific," said the priest. "And above all other things, the rooks have faith in the philosophy and imperturbability of the seed sower. To string up one or two of us would be a retrograde proceeding; and science is essentially progressive."

"But the whole tone of you gentlemen in matters of controversy appears to me to be distinctly apologetic. There is a rubbing of the hands and an action of deprecation observable in all your literature that seems to say: 'For God's sake, don't annihilate us altogether!'"

"I cannot speak of Irish controversies," said the preacher, breaking in suddenly, "but for us in England let me say that we hold our heads as high as any philosophers or unbelievers. Perhaps, Doctor, you mistake courtesy for want of courage."

"Well, no," said the Doctor, in his slow, heavy way: "but I confess you solicit aggressiveness on our part by your delightful humility, and your rather pronounced and deferential obsequiousness to men of science. Things weren't so, you know; and your new attitude makes us suspicious."

"We *are* 'umble, very 'umble Doctor," said Father Elton, who now put on his war-paint over his drawing-room manner. "You are quite right. We are most literal in our Christianity. We turn the one cheek when the other is smitten; and when you take our coats, we fling our cloaks after you. We are dreadfully deferential and apologetic. In fact, the science of apologetics is our only science at present. Amongst our learned brethren, a new discovery in science, or a pretended one, is hailed as if a new star had swum into our horizon; and when you discover a new germ, or find out something new about cells, they take off their hats and genuflect, and say: *Venite, adoremus!*"

"Now, now, Father Elton, really now, this is an exaggeration," said the preacher.

"If I—ha—understand the reverend gentleman aright," said the Canon, grandly, "he — ha — means an act of worship to the Creator, for the — ha — unexpected development in the — ha — what you-call-'ems."

"Canon," said Father Elton, bitterly, "I mean nothing of the kind. I mean that a certain class of our co-religionists are so infatuated by their enthusiasm, or paralyzed by their fear, that they worship every new development of physical science; and that, in the worship of the animalcula, they forget what is due to the Creator and His authority on earth, instead of saying: "Go on, go on, ye delvers in darkness. Every jet of flame you cast on the secrets of Nature lights a lamp for us before the shrine of the Eternal. And the whole thing is ludicrous. As that excellent lady said, a few minutes ago, it is but the systole and diastole in all human inquiry. The ghost of Democritus has appeared in the nineteenth century; and he rattles his chains, like every decent ghost — 'atoms,' 'germs,' 'cells,' we hear it all *da capo*, only Weismann differs from Eimer, and Siciliant differs from Binet. And now, at last, whilst they have been delving away in the subterranean vaults of Nature, the very soul of Nature has flown upwards, and escaped the vision of the dwellers in darkness. But at the mouth of the pit, lo, the watchers behold it, and shout down to the blackened pitmen, with their tallow candles and smoking lamps: 'Come up! come up! there are colossal potentialities in the phychic capacities of matter. It is easier to explain the soul than the phenomena of inheritance, and the psychic capacities are developing themselves. Come up, come up quickly, or you may stumble upon God!'"

"I admit there's a defect somewhere," said Dr. Calthrop.

"There is," said Father Elton, who intended to silence the enemy's guns forever, "there is. And that is, you men of science have been a little premature in discounting the science of metaphysics. We, Catholics pursue the two together. You have abandoned the mind-science forever. Hence, you see Nature through a telescope; we through a binocular. And we get the better view. And we are satisfied not to see too far or too much. 'I am all that has been, that shall be; and none, amongst mortals, has hitherto lifted my veil.' Or, as one of your few thoughtful poets has put it:—

"'Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes?
Or any searcher know by mortal mind?
Veil after veil must lift—but there must be
Veil after veil behind

The star—the cell—the soul—these be impenetrable enigmas."

"Well, of course, we make all allowance for you Irishmen," said the preacher; "but you are not placed in our difficult position, and, therefore, you cannot understand our mode of action. We are dealing with a powerful and prejudiced antagonism, which, with singular disingenuousness and want of candor, is forever repeating the cat calls of past prejudices against us. You know, of course, that there is a congenital belief in the Protestant mind that we are opposed to the natural sciences, and that we dread them."

"Yes, and you encourage that belief by your artificial enthusiasm. 'You do protest too much, gentlemen.' What you want is a Christian Pascal, just as we want another Swift, to heap scorn upon all anti-Christian philosophy in every shape and form."

"But we shall be called 'aggressive.'"

"And why not? After nineteen centuries of a career, marked in every cycle and century by miracle, surely our time has come to hold up to the eyes of the thoughtful the ragged vesture and the pasteboard idols of the idols of the world. 'These be thy gods, O Israel!' Believe me, my dear Father, that our want of aggresssion and determination is the main cause of our want of larger success. Give back blow for blow, and scorn for scorn. Vinegar cut through the Alps for Hannibal; milk and honey would not have done it."

"Tertullian was not canonized," said the preacher.

"No; and he was justly refused canonization. But will any man contend that Tertullian did not do more, by his fierce invective, to undermine the strength of Pagan and Imperial Rome, than any of his meeker brother apologists?"

"Well, but you must admit, Father Elton, that our Church enjoys far larger liberties under the English flag than under any foreign power, even though nominally Catholic."

"Certainly. But what then?"

"Well, then, it behooves us to be patient and circumspect."

"Yes. Obey the higher powers. That is our teaching. But I am not speaking of the higher powers. I am speaking of the lower, infernal powers, who, through science, literature, and a vulgar and venal press, use every opportunity to defame us and hold us and our teachings up to ridicule, and who are the secret conspirators that hold the string of Governments, and move their puppets at their will. Look at your literature, how defiled it is with anti Catholic scurrility! Did you ever hear of a Catholic writer who held up an Anglican parson or Nonconformist minister to scorn? Never. But your whole literature reeks with infamous calumnies on our priesthood. Why, half your novels deal with Jesuits and the Inquistion. And your 'seer and prophet,' when he is not shrieking 'Oh! heavens,' or '*Ah de mi*,' is ridiculing the 'simulacrum' of a Pope, or screaming about an imaginary 'dirty, muddy-minded, semi-felonious, proselytizing Irish priest,' who is supposed to have disturbed the by no means normal equanimity of 'his goody.' What is the result? Voters become smitten with the virus and madness of bigotry; then statesmen are influenced, and Acts of Parliament passed, and the whole thing is liberty and progress. Why, witness all Catholic France today passing meekly under the yoke, at the dictation of a few dirty Jewish rags! But the pitiful thing is that we sit down and tamely submit to all this. If we want a clear proof of the continuity of our Church with that of the Catacombs, it is found in our serfdom. The Angel of the Apocalypse may mark our foreheads with the mystical sign of *Tau*; but, by Joe, the Angel of Destiny has branded the *Sigma* of slavery on our backs."

"I am afraid, Father Elton," said the preacher, "your desire to emphasize your contentions has led into the national tendnncy toward exaggeration. I assure you we get on very well over there in 'darkest England,' and that we are not sensible of persecution, perhaps because not so sensitive about trifles, as you imagine. Besides, our people are really not so much influenced by literature as you seem to imagine. It would surprise you to find how little my countrymen care about their prophets. They think more of their purveyors and their bread and ale."

"We had but one 'man' in our century," said Father Elton, pursuing his own train of thought, "and that was he who armed his Irish subjects in New York, and then told its mayor that the first contingent of savage bigots that made its appearance in the city would find that city in flames!"

"I am—ha—afraid, gentlemen," said the Canon, who was very much disturbed, "that we are approaching—ha—rather questionable and—ha—dangerous subjects, that may—ha—introduce in their train some—ha—slight acerbity that would mar the harmony of this pleasant meeting. Suppose we adjourn to the—ha—more equable and—ha—temperate atmosphere of the drawing-room."

Father Elton and the preacher walked out together. "The good Canon," said the latter, "did not quite seem to understand his uncomplimentary allusion. He implies that we have been indulging a little freely."

Father Elton laughed, but looked annoyed.

There was a family conclave late that evening.

"Why don't they do something for that Father Elton?" said Mrs. Wilson.

"Why don't they make him a Monsignor or somethihg? Why, he's not even a Doctor of Laws!"

"Why do you make boobies of baronets, and judges of jugglers? Why are they always putting round men into square holes, and *vice versa*?" said her husband.

"I am—ha—more convinced than ever of the—ha—wisdom of the Church," said the Canon, "in not having advanced to—a—ha—position of respectability and honor one who holds such extreme views. That clergyman is—ha positively revolutionary, and—even—ha—anarchical in his ideas."

"Are there many like him in Ireland?" asked Dr. Calthrop.

"Most happily, no!" said the Canon. "The vast number of our clergy are amiable, industrious, respectable members of society; strictly observant of the laws of their—ha—Church; and obedient and—ha—respectful to constituted forms of Government."

"Because if you had a few thousands, or even hundreds, of that species with his intelligence and vivacity, you need not have been whining for your Catholic University so long," said the doctor.

"I can't see for the life of me what these clergymen dabble in science for? It is bad enough to have 'priests in politics,' but 'priests in science,' monopolizing our every department, and possibly anticipatihg our discoveries, would be intolerable," said Dr. Wilson. "That man, now, seems to have been reading up all our scientific authorities. Did he quote Shaler and Eimer, Calthrop?"

"Ay, and seemed to know them well. After all, it touches their own department; and I must say that I brought that unpleasant discussion on myself. But I confess your good clergyman is to me a greater surprise than anythiug I have seen on this memorable visit. How lttle we know of each other!"

"Mrs. Wenham thinks very highly of him," put in Mrs. Wilson, diffidently. "I heard her say to Barbara: 'That is a man to hold souls in leash.'"

"That's woman's way," said her husband. "They like a master. They are ambitious to rule; but they loved being ruled. No woman can be an autocrat. She must have a higher power to worship."

"Did you say, Bessie," asked the Canon, "that that — ha — excellent clergyman visits at the— ha — Viceregal Lodge and lunches at the Castle?"

"There is no doubt about it, Canon," she replied. "He is even a favourite with Lady C——, who consults him on many points."

"Then I presume he suppresses — ha —his rather advanced and— ha — subversive principles; and probably presents the teachings of the Church in an—ha—attractive guise."

"Depend upon it, he does nothing of the kind," said Dr. Calthrop; "he is not a man to water down his principles, and if he did, he would lose all his piquancy."

"But the recognized authorities, si-