

## LORD KILGOBBIN.

By CHARLES LEVER.

Author of "Harry Lorrequer," "Jack Hinton the Guardsman," "Charles O'Malley the Irish Dragoon," etc., etc.

## CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

"Ten o'clock nearly half-past ten!" said Lockwood, rising from his chair. "I must go and have some breakfast. I meant to have been down in time to-day, and breakfasted with the old fellow and his daughter; for coming late brings me to a *tele-a-tele* with the Greek damsel, and it isn't jolly, I assure you."

"Don't you speak?"  
"Never a word. She's generally reading a newspaper when I go in. She lays it down; but after remarking that she fears I'll find the coffee cold, she goes on with her breakfast, kisses her Maltese terrier, asks him a few questions about his health, and whether he would like to be in a warmer climate, and then sails away."

"And how she walks!"  
"Is she bored here?"  
"She says not."  
"She can scarcely like these people: she has ever been used to."

"She tells me she likes them; they certainly like her."  
"Well," said Lockwood, with a sigh, "she's the most beautiful woman, certainly, I've ever seen; and at this moment I'd rather eat a crust with a glass of beer under a hedge, than I'd go down and sit at breakfast with her."

"Pli be shot if I don't tell her that speech the first day I'm down again."  
"So you may, for by that time I shall have seen her for the last time." And with this he strolled out of the room and down the stairs toward the breakfast parlor.

As he stood at the door he heard the sound of voices laughing and talking pleasantly. He entered, and Nina arose as he came forward, and said: "Let me present my cousin—Mr. Richard Kearney, Major Lockwood; his friend, Mr. Atlee."

The two young men stood up—Kearney stiff and haughty, and Atlee with a sort of easy assurance that seemed to suit his good-looking but certainly snobbish style. As for Lockwood, he was too much a gentleman to have more than one manner, and he received these two men as he would have received any other two of any rank anywhere.

"These gentlemen have been showing me some strange versions of our little incident here in the Dublin papers," said Nina to Lockwood. "I scarcely thought we should become so famous."

"I suppose they don't stickle much for truth," said Lockwood, as he broke his egg in leisurely fashion.

"They were scarcely able to provide a special correspondent for the event," said Atlee; "but I take it they give the main facts pretty accurately and fairly."

"Indeed!" said Lockwood, more struck by the manner than by the words of the speaker. "They mention, then, that my friend received a bad fracture of the forearm?"

"No, I don't think they do; at least, so far as I have seen. They speak of a night attack on Kilgobbin Castle, made by an armed party of six or seven men with faces blackened, and their complete repulse through the heroic conduct of a young lady."

"The main facts, then, include no mention of poor Walpole and his misfortune?"

"I don't think that we mere Irish attach any great importance to a broken arm, whether it come of a cricket-ball or a gun; but we do interest ourselves deeply when an Irish girl displays feats of heroism and courage that men find it hard to rival."

"It was very fine," said Lockwood, gravely.

"Fine! I should think it was fine!" burst out Atlee. "It was so fine that had the deed been done on the other side of this narrow sea, the nation would not have been satisfied till your Poet Laureate had commemorated it in verse."

"Have they discovered any traces of the fellows?" said Lockwood, who declined to follow the discussion into this channel.

"My father has gone over to Moate to-day," said Kearney, now speaking for the first time, "to hear the examination of two fellows who have been taken up on suspicion."

"You have plenty of this sort of thing in your country," said Atlee to Nina.

"What do you mean, when you say my country?"

"I mean Greece."

"But I have not seen Greece since I was a child, so high; I have lived always in Italy."

"Well, Italy has Calabria and the Terre del Lavoro."

"And how much do we in Rome know about either?"

"About as much," said Lockwood, "as Belgravia does of the Bog of Allen."

"You'll return to your friends in civilized life with almost the fame of an African traveller, Major Lockwood," said Atlee, pertly.

"If Africa can boast such hospitality, I certainly rather envy than compassionate Dr. Livingstone," said he, politely.

"Somebody," said Kearney, dryly, "calls hospitality the breeding of the savage."

"But I deny that we are savage," cried Atlee. "I contend for it that all our civilization is higher, and that, class for class, we are in a more advanced culture than the English; that your chaw-bacon is not as intelligent as our bog-tratter; that your petty shop-keeper is inferior to ours; that throughout our middle classes there is not only a higher morality but a higher refinement than with you."

"I read in one of the most accredited journals of England the other day that Ireland had never produced a poet, could not even show a second-rate humorist," said Kearney.

"Swift and Sterne were third-rate, or, perhaps, English," said Atlee.

"These are themes I'll not attempt to discuss," said Lockwood; "but I know one thing: it takes three times as much military force to govern the smaller island."

"That is to say, govern the country after your fashion; but leave it to ourselves. Pack your portmanteaus and go away, and then see if we'll need this parade of horse, foot, and dragons; these batteries of guns and these brigades of peelers."

"You'd be the first to beg us to come back again."

"Doubtless, as the Greeks are begging the Turks. Eh, mademoiselle, can you fancy throwing yourself at the feet of a pasha and asking leave to be his slave?"

"The only Greek slave I ever heard of," said Lockwood, "was in marble and made by an American."

"Come into the drawing-room and I'll sing you something," said Nina, rising.

"Which will be far nicer and pleasanter than all this discussion," said Joe.

"And if you'll permit me," said Lockwood, "we'll leave the drawing-room door open and let poor Walpole hear the music."

"Would it not be better first to see if he's asleep?" said Nina.

"That's true. I'll step up and see."

Lockwood hurried away, and Joe Atlee, leaning back in his chair, said: "Well, we gave the Saxon a canter, I think. As you know, Dick, that fellow is no end of a swell."

"You know nothing about him," said the other gruffly.

"Only so much as newspapers could tell me. He's master of the horse in the viceroy's household, and the other fellow is private secretary, and some connection besides. I say, Dick, it's all King James's times back again. There has not been so much grandeur here for six or eight generations."

"There has not been a more absurd speech made than that, within the time."

"And he is really a somebody?" said Nina to Atlee.

"A *gran signore davvero*," said he pompously. "If you don't sing your very best for him, I'll swear you are a republican."

"Come, take my arm, Nina. I may call you Nina, may I not?" whispered Kearney.

"Certainly, if I may call you Joe."

"You may, if you like," said he, roughly, "but my name is Dick."

"I am Beppo, and very much at your orders," said Atlee, stepping forward and leading her away.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## AT DINNER.

They were assembled in the drawing room before dinner, when Lord Kilgobbin arrived, heated, dusty, and tired, after his twelve-mile drive. "I say, girls," said he, putting his head inside the door, "is it true that our distin-

guished guest is not coming down to dinner? for, if so, I'll not wait to dress."

"No, papa; he said he'd stay with Mr. Walpole. They have been receiving and despatching telegrams all day, and seem to have the whole world on their hands," said Kate.

"Well, sir, what did you do at the sessions?"

"Yes, my lord," broke in Nina, eager to show her more mindful regard to his rank than Atlee displayed; "tell us your news."

"I suspect we have got two of them, and are on the traces of the others. They are Louth men, and were sent special here to give me a lesson, as they call it. That's what our blessed newspapers have brought us to. Some idle vagabond, at his wife's end for an article, fastens on some unlucky country gentleman, neither much better nor worse than his neighbors, holds him up to public reprobation, perfectly sure that within a week's time some rascal who owes him a grudge—the fellow he has evicted for non-payment of rent, the blackguard he prosecuted for perjury, or some other of the like stamp—will write a piteous letter to the editor, relating his wrongs. The next act of the drama is a notice on the hall door, with a coffin at the top; and the piece closes with a charge of slugs in your body, as you are on your road to mass. Now, if I had the making of the laws, the first fellow I'd lay my hands on would be the newspaper writer. Eh, Master Atlee, am I right?"

"I go with you to the farthest extent, my lord."

"I vote we hang Joe, then," cried Dick. "He is the only member of the fraternity I have any acquaintance with."

"What! do you tell me that you write for the papers?" asked my lord, slyly.

"He's quizzing, sir; he knows right well I have no gifts of that sort."

"Here's dinner, papa. Will you give Nina your arm? Mr. Atlee, you are to take me."

"You'll not agree with me, Nina, my dear," said the old man, as he led her along; "but I'm heartily glad we have not that great swell who dined with us yesterday."

"I do agree with you, uncle—I dislike him."

"Perhaps I'm unjust to him; but I thought he treated us all with a sort of bland pity that I found very offensive."

"Yes; I thought that too. His manner seemed to say: 'I am very sorry for you, but what can be done?'"

"Is the other fellow—the wounded one—as bad?"

She pursed up her lips, slightly shrugged her shoulders, and then said: "There's not a great deal to choose between them; but I think I like him better."

"How do you like Dick, eh?" said he, in a whisper.

"Oh, so much!" said she, with one of her half-downcast looks, but which never prevented her seeing what passed in her neighbor's face.

"Well, don't let him fall in love with you," said he, with a smile, "for it would be bad for you both."

"But why should he?" said she with an air of innocence.

"Just because I don't see how he is to escape it. What's Master Atlee saying to you, Kitty?"

"He's giving me some hints about horse-breaking," she said, quietly.

"Is he? by George! Well, I'd like to see him follow you over that fallen timber in the back lawn. We'll have you out, Master Joe, and give you a field-day to-morrow," said the old man.

"I vote we do," cried Dick; "unless, better still, we could persuade Miss Betty to bring the dogs over and give us a cub-hunt."

"I want to see a cub-hunt," broke in Nina.

"Do you mean that you ride to hounds, Cousin Nina?" asked Dick.

"I should think that any one who has taken the ox-fences on the Roman Campagna, as I have, might venture to face your small stone wall here."

"That's plucky, anyhow; and I hope, Joe, it will put you on your mettle to show yourself worthy of your companionship. What is old Matthew looking so serious about? What do you want?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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