

to which he has set himself of making the House angry and obstructing its business is perhaps a redeeming feature ; but it is to be regretted that he does not with equal industry endeavour to impart some of his reputed self-control to his countrymen, whom it might teach to meet occasionally without "a slight disturbance." As a student of history might find himself puzzled to say when it was that Erin did not burn with "great principles" of some kind, or without principles of any kind, to say when it was that her sons were not goaded to anger by themselves or by somebody else, and when their proneness wherever they are, playfully and after their fashion, to develop exuberant and national spirit is remembered, the world should be forgiven for not resolutely shutting its eyes and its ears.

The wrongs of Erin, imaginary or otherwise, are many ; but if her children cannot so much as "struggle for freedom," armed with pike-headed staves ; if they cannot attack platforms when "much fighting" ensues ; if they cannot threaten to "shoot landlords and agents" or hiss at the Queen ; if these things cannot be done without placarding the world all over, it is time to enquire when Irishmen may be expected to have "their rights."

Saxon.

INTERLOPERS.

He that would preach upon interloping might do worse than take for his text the old saying that two are company and three are none ; yet it is as possible for twenty people as for two to have their sociability disturbed by one unwelcome intruder, while there are occasions on which a single person may regard the man who comes between himself and his solitude as an interloper. To know when we are and when we are not wanted is more valuable than the knowledge of the most occult science, and to make a proper use of one's presence and absence is to fulfil nine-tenths of the social law. Of the two offences injudicious absence is usually considered more venial than unwelcome presence ; and, if a murderer is the greatest moral criminal, an interloper is the greatest social offender. But there are voluntary and involuntary interlopers, and manslaughter and murder are scarcely more widely separated than the various forms of intrusion. It often happens that people, though conscious of having committed an unintentional intrusion, have not the tact to withdraw themselves ; they feel the difficulties of graceful retirement, and do not know how to cover their retreat. But whatever excuses may be made for interlopers, no class of offenders are more difficult to pardon.

People commit this crime or indiscretion from various causes. Curiosity impels many to wedge themselves into places where they are not wanted ; conceit is the origin of intrusion in others, and a feverish sociability makes it quite a disease with some people. Stupidity, officiousness, and many other faults or deficiencies, might be enumerated as conducive to interloping, but it may be more interesting to notice some of its effects than to dwell on its causes. A very unfortunate, but very common, effect of interloping is to separate friends. There are jealous busybodies who seem to take a pleasure in breaking attachments, although they themselves may derive no profit from such a proceeding. Interlopers who make it their business thus to be both obtrusive and destructive would, one would imagine, be universally unpopular ; but what are sometimes termed "particular friends" are so odious to a world which makes universal humbug its religion, and hollow politeness its morality, that the person who will act as an interloper between true friends is looked upon as an extremely useful member of society. In our present condition of "culture" and refinement, sincerity is considered an effete vulgarity which should be stamped out at any hazard ; therefore interlopers who will unscrupulously thrust themselves between real friends are regarded as social crusaders. There are, however, less malicious but more familiar forms of interloping which are extremely disagreeable. For instance, when we are telling our best story to an admiring audience, and we have just reached the most thrilling part of the narrative, it is annoying to have one's facts questioned by an uninvited critic. It may be easy to refute his objections ; but the thread of the story is broken, our burst of eloquence has been checked, and we have lost the confidence of our listeners. Little less disagreeable is the interloper who says he has heard the story before. We wish he would have held his tongue. He is welcome to his knowledge, but he might have kept it to himself. Equally offensive is the person who intrudes when we and some other learned people are discussing an important question. We and our opponents are, we fondly imagine, fencing together with consummate skill ; and the clumsy fellow who joins in the fray uninvited spoils very pretty fighting. As hosts, too many of us have had cause to feel ill disposed toward interlopers. We had perhaps persuaded a couple of bishops or a pair of distinguished infidels to dine with us. We had also invited some respectable listeners, and everything had been arranged with tact and skill. The champagne had gone twice round, and the two great men had entered into an interesting conversation upon the reform of Convocation or the atheism of the middle ages, when a guest, who had not so much as written an article for the *Nineteenth Century*, joined in the conversation, with the assurance of a man of the most unimpeachable heterodoxy. He had a stronger voice than either of the bishops, and all their remarks reminded him

of this or led him to suggest that ; he believed even less than the infidels and more than the divines, and whenever the savants took a mouthful of food or a taste of champagne he seized the opportunity to thrust in his "I think so and so," or, "Don't you see the difficulty?" The host, the celebrities, and the swells were quite helpless in his hands ; and the fact of his having completely spoiled the evening seemed to afford him infinite gratification. For the next week he would detail his conversation with the bishops or the professors, recounting what they had said to him and what he had said to them. Lions have a habit of shutting up on very slight provocation ; and the interloper who has wrought the mischief generally mistakes the silence for appreciation of his own eloquence. A character in one of Lord Beaconsfield's novels is made to say that his mission in life is to be a listener ; and hosts have sometimes reason to wish that certain of their guests felt a similar vocation.—*Saturday Review*.

CLEVER WIVES.

Are the estimable people who are disturbing all our preconceived notions of the fitness of things, and insisting on educating our feminine belongings to the same pitch as their brothers, conferring any real benefit upon society ? They begin with the incontrovertible assertion that all women cannot marry, and deduce thence the necessity of educating them to the extent of being able to earn their daily bread as 'certificated' instructors of youth. There might be some reason in this if it could be ascertained beforehand which members of a family were predestined to matrimony and which to single blessedness ; for however contrary it may be to magniloquent and high-sounding theories, the fact remains that this 'thorough' education is by no means conducive to the unalloyed happiness of the married state. The man who, when he rounds a period with a classical quotation, or lays down the law on some disputed point of science, can bear to be corrected or differed from by his wife, must be possessed of a more than usually angelic temper. And yet it is hardly to be expected that a woman, who, though she has passed the highest examinations, nay, even perhaps taken 'honours,' must still have the feelings and the instincts of her sex, will for ever sit tamely by, hiding her light under a bushel, and not showing that she 'knows she is right.'

Even before the education craze assumed its present alarming proportions, before women had even dreamt of University education, a clever wife was but a very doubtful element of happiness to a man's home. In the first place, the cases of true mating being sadly few and far between, he very rarely appreciates her, still more rarely does she conceive that he does so, and she is apt to assume the role of *femme incomprise* on small provocation. Both may be really clever, but they see things too frequently in absolutely different lights, and each has too good an opinion of his or her individual intellect to be willing to yield ; so that if they are wise enough to love peace rather than strife, one topic after another becomes insensibly tabooed. A man likes his dictum on all subjects to be received with implicit faith and avowed admiration by his womankind, but this to the clever wife is naturally impossible ; she sees quite plainly the weak points of his arguments, and cannot always refrain from pointing them out. At the same time, being still a woman, though a clever one, she does not at all like to have her occasional defects in logical reasoning pointed out to her, more especially, it must be confessed, as her triumphant lord can seldom refrain from saying, 'just like a woman,' the which observation is, for some inscrutable reason, the one in the world the most exasperating to the whole female sex.

Cleverness is by no means invariably connected with tact ; indeed, very often the latter, the most precious of all the possessions of social or domestic life, is omitted from the composition of the possessor of the former. This want of tact is a terrible loss to the clever wife ; she fails to see how her husband chafes under the airs of superiority which, if she is clever and he is not, she is too often apt to assume. She does not perceive how galling it must be to him to find the conversation taken out of his hands by his wife, or reflect that, though she undoubtedly understands the subject infinitely better, and expresses herself much more fluently, it might be more amusing to him to go on expounding his own views than to listen to hers, however brilliantly phrased. Or even if she refrain from interrupting him, she can hardly help pointing out to him afterwards that he made a blunder here, misstated a fact there, or argued the whole case contrary to common sense, as she understands it. It is not unnatural that a man should prefer a woman, no matter how frivolous, who will believe in him, look impressed when he talks impressively without understanding a syllable that he says, and, above all things, never prove him in the wrong before others.

But, on the other hand, the clever wife of a husband who is not has her trials likewise, and the greater her tact and her dislike to showing that she sees his blunders, the more acutely she feels them. Feminine sensibilities are exceedingly keen and quick ; and the clever wife detects false reasoning or weak arguments where others, who, not being so interested, are listening less attentively, hear no palpable fault. She notes the variations of some few words in the telling of a story or the reciting of an anecdote, and knows instinctively the false impression that is being given, and the garbled statement that will go forth to the world on his authority. If she has the blessed sixth sense, she