

"Her mother!" cried the astonished Archie.

"Why, yes. Surely, you don't mean to say you have not heard of the strange events that have lately taken place at St. Mark's?"

"Even so; I am in a state of most lamentable ignorance. I pray you, enlighten me."

"What! have you not even heard that your uncle Dr. Wiseman—and Miss Hagar were dead?"

"Dead!" said Archie, starting, and looking at Gipsy, whose face was now hidden by her veil.

"Yes; but I see you know nothing about it. Come home with us, and you shall hear all."

"Yes, do," urged Celeste; "Louis and I will be delighted to have you join us."

"Louis and I," repeated Archie, rather mischievously; "then I perceive I have the honor of addressing Mrs. Oranmore."

Of course, Celeste laughed and blushed, according to the rule in such cases. But the scene they had just witnessed had saddened the whole party; and the journey back was performed in silence. Gipsy was the gravest of all; and, leaning back in the gondola, with her veil over her face, she never condescended to open her lips, save when directly addressed; and then her answers were much shorter than sweet.

But when they went home, to their hotel, and everything was explained, and he had learned how Gipsy had been forced into a marriage she abhorred, and the terrible retribution that befell the murderer, matters began to assume a different appearance. Mr. Rivers had long been of the opinion that "it is not good for man to be alone," and firmly believed in the scriptural injunction of becoming a husband of one wife; and concluded, by proposing in due form to Gipsy—who, after some pressing, consented to make him happy.