

"It's raining," he orders "em out for a ride. 'That's the life!'" he says when I tell him we'll lose a guinea by the men. "Hang the plagues!" he bawls gettin' light I don't know what to make of it. I suppose we must only do his bidding."

Some drops were just beginning to fall as Mr. O'Leary and his faithful squire set off upon their journey. "Will you bring the umbrella, sir!" inquired Nash, as they were about leaving the hall-door.

"No, that would never do."

"This goin' to rain, sir."

"So much the better."

Nash opened his mouth as if to let his astonishment come forth.

"Wouldn't you take a cloak or a coat itself, master, such a day as this?"

"No, no, 't would never answer."

"The lord betune uz and harm! A' why so, master?"

Wonder, Tom, is the child of ignorance, and experience the fruit of time. Be patient, therefore, and content yourself with doing as you are directed.

They rode on for something more than half a mile, at the termination of which space the rain began to fall in torrents. Mr. O'Leary now quickened his pace, and Nash followed his example, but their speed did not save them from a thorough drenching.

"Dear knows, master," exclaimed Nash, who really feared that the antiquarian was becoming demented, "we'll be drowned this way. Wouldn't it be better turn into some house 'till it gets lighter any way?"

"I hinted to you, Tom, that patience is the sister of content," replied his master continuing his gallop.

"Oh, bother to herself an' her sister," muttered Nash, gathering the collar of his coat up under the seat of his hat so as to prevent the water running down his neck, and fortifying, as well as he could, that side of his person on which the wind beat.

"I never had such a ride in my life. I wonder is he cracked in earnest. Dear knows, if it wasn't that I'm dreading what might happen to him, I'd be apt to let him folly his course alone. This day flogs all I ever hear."

After riding about a quarter of a mile further, Mr. O'Leary suddenly pulled up his horse and said:

"Tom, isn't that the avenue leading to Mr. O'Connor's?"

"Tis, sir."

"I think we might as well turn in and ask for shelter there, until this shower passes, at least."

"The lord be praised, he's comin' again," Nash added to himself, as he alighted and opened the gate. They followed the windings of the path for nearly a quarter of an hour, amid the wildest and barest scenery, at the end of which time they reached a cottage somewhat superior in appearance to the general description of farm houses in the country, with at least a sufficient degree of decoration about the doors and windows, to intimate that the inmates were not compelled to be at all times toiling at the spade or the plough-handle.

As the door, which was on that side of the house on which the wind did not then blow, stood open at the moment, our travellers alighted and entered the porch without ceremony. More they stood but a few moments, when one of the side doors opened and a hale looking man of respectable appearance presented himself before the visitors. Mr. O'Leary apologised for their intrusion, talked of the rain, and mentioned his name at the same time looking out and expressing a hope (which Nash could not help thinking either strangely inconsistent, or very insincere), that it would shortly clear.

"Mr. O'Leary!" exclaimed the host with an expression of great satisfaction, "the very man of all others who should be most welcome to this house. I can assure you you are no stranger here. Many a time your name is spoken of amongst us. Come in, come in, and dine with us—that's the settled—not a word now. Hallo! Pat, take round those horses and see them well taken care of. But you are dripping wet!"

"Oh, 'tis nothing."

"Nothing? Why you couldn't do a worse thing than to sit in wet clothes—that and reading a wet newspaper. My poor father ought to know both, for he lost his eyes by one and his life by the other. The time of the election he was out with such a hurry to learn the state of the poll, and to read the editor's remarks that he never would wait to dry the paper after taking it out of the cover. I used often say to him, 'now, father, mightn't you as well just hold it to the fire for a minute. You'll certainly lose your eyesight.' True for me, he did. Come up stairs and change your clothes. Not a word now. I tell you 'tis madness not to do it. Peg, tell Miss Moriarity that Mr. O'Leary is come to spend the day with us. Step into the kitchen to my good friend, (addressing Nash) and warm yourself."

There was no resisting, so that Mr. O'Leary abandoned himself into the hands of his host, and after the necessary change of attire, was by him conducted to the sitting-room, where he found the antiquarian lady ready to receive him. To his surprise there was nothing at all extraordinary either in her manner or appearance, except that she wore a profusion of very fine hair, which made some amends for a decidedly ordinary set of features. He had not, however, much time to speculate on either, when the blunt and hospitable master of the mansion arose and said in his customary tone:

"Well, now, as I have a little business to do before dinner, and would

be only a blockhead in your company, I will leave you both to talk of all that took place before the flood and after, while I settle an account with one or two of my tenants in another room. Let me see now which of ye will puzzle the other."

One of the parties was already in this predicament. Mr. Tibbot O'Leary at this instant found himself in the condition of those unhappy individuals who rashly place themselves in situations for which they are wholly unfitted by nature, and only discover their want of capacity when it is too late to make a graceful retreat.

Not a word had yet passed between them, he had merely bowed to the lady seven yards off on being introduced, when they were left, as it were, caged together, with the pleasant consciousness that he was expected to entertain her. Had it been with a lioness, Tibbot O'Leary could not have felt a greater confusion of mind. Being totally unused to anything like strange society, he never until this moment became aware of his failing. Miss Moriarity, with a polite movement of the hand, invited him to be seated. He placed himself in a chair with the utmost celerity, then after a few minutes, perceiving that the lady was yet standing, he sprang from his seat with the greatest embarrassment, and bowed repeatedly by way of apology, without the power of uttering a syllable. After a time both obtained chairs, but without seeming to have approached the nearer to anything like a sociable interchange of sentiments. The longer the silence continued, the more difficult Mr. O'Leary found in breaking it, and yet the more embarrassing it became. It was not that he had got nothing to say, the evil was, that a thousand things occurred to him, but all were rejected as unsatisfactory. The lady, whether that she shared his awkwardness, or was resolved to enjoy it, was equally silent. At length when the chimney ornaments were beginning to dance before his eyes and the room to move slowly round, he ventured to stammer forth:

"P-p-p—prayer, ma'am, what is your opi—pinion of the r—round towers?"

"I can hardly say," replied Miss Moriarity, with a degree of ease which somewhat diminished the confusion of her visitor, "that I am satisfied with any of the theories which have been broached upon that most interesting subject. Cambrensis calls them 'ecclesiastical towers,' with some probability. Lynch attributes them to the Danes, as does also Peter Walsh, who are followed by Ladwick and Molyneux, but then, as Harris very properly asks, if so, why are no remains to be found in Denmark? As to Dean Richardson's conjecture that they were used by anchorites, I can hardly admit it, when I know that history furnishes but one instance of a Stylite monk in the Western Christendom, in the celebrated wood of Ardenne. Neither can I say that the ingenious but fanciful author of *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis* has thoroughly convinced me, though I admit his conjecture to be plausible as his evidences are ingenious."

During the delivery of his speech Mr. O'Leary gazed from side by side, opened wide his eyelids in astonishment, and from time to time gradually moved his chair an inch or two nearer to the speaker.

"What a woman!" he exclaimed in his own mind, and then added aloud: "I cannot help thinking ma'am, that one who is so familiar with the theories of others, cannot but have formed some conjecture of her own upon a subject which has deservedly occupied so much of her attention."

"Why I cannot but say I have been thinking of it," said Miss Moriarity, "though I have not yet ventured to mention it to any one, there is such danger of a person's being anticipated. However, for all I have heard of Mr. O'Leary I am sure he would be incapable of taking so unhandsome an advantage."

"Mr. O'Leary acknowledged the exemption in his favour by a low bow, accompanied by a look of horror at the very idea of such baseness."

"My idea, then, is, that they were built for monks of the ends of the world," said Miss Moriarity.

"You are aware that mankind have in all ages been remarkable for a love of the arduous, and that no pursuits have been carried on with greater zeal, expense, and perseverance, than those which held out least hope of ever yielding any profitable result; and the most important practical discoveries in science have often been attained in the pursuit of some visionary and unattainable end. The search after the philosopher's stone led to the discovery of Glauber's salts—the study of judicial astrology produced those elaborate calculations in old times which are of such importance to the astronomer—and the desire to effect a North-West passage conducted the voyages of England to the magnetic pole. Now my theory is, that some philanthropic patron of letters in old time, observing this disposition in his species, had those round towers built with no other view than that they should exercise the research and ingenuity of the learned, in succeeding ages, and, by furnishing an inscrutable subject of inquiry, perpetuate the study of Irish antiquities through all succeeding time."

The astonishment and admiration of Mr. O'Leary had been reaching a climax during the delivery of this ingenious speech, at the conclusion of which he again sprang from his seat, and seemed about to fling himself on his knees in an ecstasy of delight, but recollecting himself in

time, he drew back with a respectful bow and remained in his chair. At the same instant the master of the mansion returned in time to prevent any repetition of such ecstasies, and the conversation became more general and less abstruse. In some time after dinner was announced, and served up with a degree of comfort which made the recollection of his own solitary meals at Chlore Abbey less tolerable in the comparison to Mr. O'Leary's inward eye, than they had hitherto been. The worthy farmer's family was numerous, and did cordial justice to the cheer which was set before them. After the cloth was removed, and grace said, Mr. O'Connor turned to his guest and made the following speech:

"I don't know, Mr. O'Leary, whether you are a patron of those modern fashions which they have begun to introduce, such as not drinking healths after dinner, bowing as if you had not a joint below the shoulder, and such like, out for our parts, we still keep up the good old customs here, and I hope you will have no objection to join us?"

"I can assure you, sir," said Mr. O'Leary, with equal cordiality, "that I am no friend to modern innovations or creations, which very often savour more of self-sufficiency than of politeness. As the poet says:

We think our fathers fools so wise we grow,

Our younger sons no doubt will think us so,

"Ah!" said Mr. O'Connor, shaking his head, "many a palmer those two lines cost me, when I used to write them in my copy book at school."

The glasses were now changed, and the next ten minutes were occupied with a confused babble of "Mrs. O'Connor, your health," "Miss Moriarity, Miss O'Connor," "Mr. O'Connor," "Mrs. O'Leary," "Mr. O'Leary," and a perpetual ducky of about a dozen heads around the table, which would have had a somewhat comical appearance to any person not immediately interested.

During their ride home, and for months after, Tom Nash observed an extraordinary change in the deportment of his master. He became more talkative than usual, began to show more solicitude about his dress, shaved every day, found fault with everything, staid little in his museum, talked much of repairs and alterations about the house, and acted on the whole, as if some strange influence was at work within his mind. At length the secret came out, one morning when Nash was in the act of carrying a bag of seed sets into the back parlour.

"Tom," said Mr. O'Leary, "you must not put oats or potatoes into that parlour any more."

"Why so, master? What hurt is it doing there?"

"No matter. She mightn't like it."

"Is it cold Nelly, sir?"

"No, your mistress."

"My missis!" Nash exclaimed, dropping the bag of oats.

"Yes—didn't I tell you I am going to be married?"

For nearly a quarter of an hour, the master and man remained gazing in each other's countenances, without uttering a syllable. At length, the latter found words to say in a tone of the profoundest sympathy:

"The Lord preserve us, master!"

"Amen, Tom!" sighed Mr. O'Leary, and another sentence was exchanged between them upon the subject, until Mrs. O'Leary, ci-devant Miss Moriarity, was introduced, amid rejoicings that resounded far and near, to the venerable mansion which, it was the owner's will and pleasure, should thenceforth call her mistress.

For a considerable time after his marriage, Nash observed nothing in the demeanour or conversation of his master which could lead him to suspect that he regretted the step which he had taken. Mrs. O'Leary was all that could be wished in every respect, either by master or servant, and indeed it surprised Nash a great deal more than he cared to let Mr. O'Leary understand, how she came to be so easily satisfied. Matters continued in this even course until they received a second visit from Mr. Geoffrey Gunn, now "Counsellor" Gunn, who, on hearing the humorous antiquarian repeat his happiness for the hundredth time exclaimed:

"I can tell you then, that if ladies are curious, they sometimes know how to keep a secret. Did you hear about Captain—his wife?"

"No—what of them?"

"A most extraordinary story, they tell indeed. They had been living together in perfect harmony, it seems for more than twenty years, when she died, and it was for the first time discovered that she had exactly got two faces—one behind and one before."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. O'Leary.

"It may be so," replied his friend.

"I do not answer for the reality of the story."

"I know not how the truth may be, I say the tale, as 'twas said to me."

"If it be true," said Tibbot, "I think the worst part of the affair was the keeping it concealed from her husband."

As he said this, he could not help observing that his wife looked uneasy and confused, and a strange doubt rushed into his mind, which re-awakened his original foible in more than all his former force. The conversation ended; but for a long time after, Tibbot did not retain the untroubled peace of mind which had till now accompanied his steps. The extreme amiability of his helpmate

had won all his confidence, but it made him uneasy to perceive that Mrs. O'Leary did not behave towards him with an equal absence of reserve. There was evidently something preying on her mind, and the more pains he took to remove everything that could in the least degree interfere with her peace and comfort, the more she seemed to feel it.

"I don't know what to do about it, Tom," he said, one day addressing Nash, who was the only person in whom he could repose a confidence. "She scarcely eats a morsel, and instead of going off, as I thought it would, it is only growing worse and worse every day."

"Ah, my dear," said Nash, "don't be vexin' yourself about it. You don't know the women. They'd keep on dyin' that way from the age of fifteen to a hundred. The only way in the world is to let 'em alone an' love 'em to themselves. The more notice that's tuk of 'em, the worse they gets. They don't know their selves what it ails 'em half their time. Take it from me, 'tis never any good to be frettin', more especially if you lets 'em observe it."

Mr. O'Leary adopted Tom's advice, and found his account in doing so. For a considerable time after, he observed that the less he appeared to notice the anxiety which preyed on Mrs. O'Leary's mind, the more visibly it diminished.

Years rolled away, and after a life spent in the most exemplary discharge of all her duties as a wife and mother, Mrs. O'Leary, at her death, left behind her a tranquil mind with an untroubled conscience afforded, to enter on its final passage to a better world, her faithful spouse took notice that something of her long forgotten and mysterious melancholy, would occasionally cast a gloom upon her manner. At length, finding her end approach, she called much to him in the way of consolation and advice, as to the care of the house and children, she added with an appearance of anxiety:

"I have now but one request to add. It is, that my head-dress, such as it is, be not removed after my death; that you will not yourself uncover my head, nor suffer any one else to do so. I have a particular objection to it. Great and good minds, my dear Tibbot, are always superior to the mean vice of curiosity. I am sure I need say no more to you, except to add, that the injury will be your own, if you neglect to comply with this, my last injunction."

In the first access of sorrow, for the loss of so faithful and so amiable a partner, Mr. O'Leary found nothing very arduous in the accomplishment of her dying wishes. After the first day, however, when nature had exhausted herself in fits of mourning, and intervals of quiet reflection would succeed the tumult of the widower's grief, he could not prevent the question repeatedly presenting itself to his mind—why in the world could he be her motive for desiring that her head-dress might not be removed?

In palliation of any negligence, which the worthy antiquarian might have committed in resisting such suggestions, it should be remembered that a great portion of his life had been spent in researches, having chiefly for their end the gratification of that foible, on which his excellent wife in dying had imposed to grievous a burthen. By continually recurring, and meeting at each fresh assault, a fainter resistance, it obtained at length a complete mastery over his mind. It was in vain he thought of Blue Beard, and a thousand other awful warnings of the kind. In the throes of his curiosity, desiring rather to gain an accomplice than a counsellor, he confided his agonies to Nash, and desired his opinion.

"Be dis an' be dat," said Nash, who, in a matter which appeared to him indifferent on the score of morality, considered rather what would be agreeable to his master, that what was most in accordance with the laws of chivalric honour—"dat I may never die in sin, but I'd have a dawning peep."

"But then her last words, Tom—her dying wishes."

"Aye, sure see never'll know it."

"Well," said Mr. O'Leary much shocked, "I am sure you do not consider the meaning of what you say. I wish indeed she had never given me any injunction, for it is probable I never should have thought of a moment about her head-dress. Could I trust you, Tom, with what I suspect to be the true cause of her injunction?"

"Could you thrust me, master?"

"I believe I can. Well then, Tom, I think the true reason is—I'm looked around, and then whispered

"I don't know what to do about it, Tom," he said, one day addressing Nash, who was the only person in whom he could repose a confidence. "She scarcely eats a morsel, and instead of going off, as I thought it would, it is only growing worse and worse every day."

"Ah, my dear," said Nash, "don't be vexin' yourself about it. You don't know the women. They'd keep on dyin' that way from the age of fifteen to a hundred. The only way in the world is to let 'em alone an' love 'em to themselves. The more notice that's tuk of 'em, the worse they gets. They don't know their selves what it ails 'em half their time. Take it from me, 'tis never any good to be frettin', more especially if you lets 'em observe it."

Mr. O'Leary adopted Tom's advice, and found his account in doing so. For a considerable time after, he observed that the less he appeared to notice the anxiety which preyed on Mrs. O'Leary's mind, the more visibly it diminished.

Years rolled away, and after a life spent in the most exemplary discharge of all her duties as a wife and mother, Mrs. O'Leary, at her death, left behind her a tranquil mind with an untroubled conscience afforded, to enter on its final passage to a better world, her faithful spouse took notice that something of her long forgotten and mysterious melancholy, would occasionally cast a gloom upon her manner. At length, finding her end approach, she called much to him in the way of consolation and advice, as to the care of the house and children, she added with an appearance of anxiety:

"I have now but one request to add. It is, that my head-dress, such as it is, be not removed after my death; that you will not yourself uncover my head, nor suffer any one else to do so. I have a particular objection to it. Great and good minds, my dear Tibbot, are always superior to the mean vice of curiosity. I am sure I need say no more to you, except to add, that the injury will be your own, if you neglect to comply with this, my last injunction."

In the first access of sorrow, for the loss of so faithful and so amiable a partner, Mr. O'Leary found nothing very arduous in the accomplishment of her dying wishes. After the first day, however, when nature had exhausted herself in fits of mourning, and intervals of quiet reflection would succeed the tumult of the widower's grief, he could not prevent the question repeatedly presenting itself to his mind—why in the world could he be her motive for desiring that her head-dress might not be removed?

In palliation of any negligence, which the worthy antiquarian might have committed in resisting such suggestions, it should be remembered that a great portion of his life had been spent in researches, having chiefly for their end the gratification of that foible, on which his excellent wife in dying had imposed to grievous a burthen. By continually recurring, and meeting at each fresh assault, a fainter resistance, it obtained at length a complete mastery over his mind. It was in vain he thought of Blue Beard, and a thousand other awful warnings of the kind. In the throes of his curiosity, desiring rather to gain an accomplice than a counsellor, he confided his agonies to Nash, and desired his opinion.

"Be dis an' be dat," said Nash, who, in a matter which appeared to him indifferent on the score of morality, considered rather what would be agreeable to his master, that what was most in accordance with the laws of chivalric honour—"dat I may never die in sin, but I'd have a dawning peep."

"But then her last words, Tom—her dying wishes."

"Aye, sure see never'll know it."

"Well," said Mr. O'Leary much shocked, "I am sure you do not consider the meaning of what you say. I wish indeed she had never given me any injunction, for it is probable I never should have thought of a moment about her head-dress. Could I trust you, Tom, with what I suspect to be the true cause of her injunction?"

"Could you thrust me, master?"

"I believe I can. Well then, Tom, I think the true reason is—I'm looked around, and then whispered

"I don't know what to do about it, Tom," he said, one day addressing Nash, who was the only person in whom he could repose a confidence. "She scarcely eats a morsel, and instead of going off, as I thought it would, it is only growing worse and worse every day."

"Ah, my dear," said Nash, "don't be vexin' yourself about it. You don't know the women. They'd keep on dyin' that way from the age of fifteen to a hundred. The only way in the world is to let 'em alone an' love 'em to themselves. The more notice that's tuk of 'em, the worse they gets. They don't know their selves what it ails 'em half their time. Take it from me, 'tis never any good to be frettin', more especially if you lets 'em observe it."

Mr. O'Leary adopted Tom's advice, and found his account in doing so. For a considerable time after, he observed that the less he appeared to notice the anxiety which preyed on Mrs. O'Leary's mind, the more visibly it diminished.

Years rolled away, and after a life spent in the most exemplary discharge of all her duties as a wife and mother, Mrs. O'Leary, at her death, left behind her a tranquil mind with an untroubled conscience afforded, to enter on its final passage to a better world, her faithful spouse took notice that something of her long forgotten and mysterious melancholy, would occasionally cast a gloom upon her manner. At length, finding her end approach, she called much to him in the way of consolation and advice, as to the care of the house and children, she added with an appearance of anxiety:

"I have now but one request to add. It is, that my head-dress, such as it is, be not removed after my death; that you will not yourself uncover my head, nor suffer any one else to do so. I have a particular objection to it. Great and good minds, my dear Tibbot, are always superior to the mean vice of curiosity. I am sure I need say no more to you, except to add, that the injury will be your own, if you neglect to comply with this, my last injunction."

In the first access of sorrow, for the loss of so faithful and so amiable a partner, Mr. O'Leary found nothing very arduous in the accomplishment of her dying wishes. After the first day, however, when nature had exhausted herself in fits of mourning, and intervals of quiet reflection would succeed the tumult of the widower's grief, he could not prevent the question repeatedly presenting itself to his mind—why in the world could he be her motive for desiring that her head-dress might not be removed?

In palliation of any negligence, which the worthy antiquarian might have committed in resisting such suggestions, it should be remembered that a great portion of his life had been spent in researches, having chiefly for their end the gratification of that foible, on which his excellent wife in dying had imposed to grievous a burthen. By continually recurring, and meeting at each fresh assault, a fainter resistance, it obtained at length a complete mastery over his mind. It was in vain he thought of Blue Beard, and a thousand other awful warnings of the kind. In the throes of his curiosity, desiring rather to gain an accomplice than a counsellor, he confided his agonies to Nash, and desired his opinion.

"Be dis an' be dat," said Nash, who, in a matter which appeared to him indifferent on the score of morality, considered rather what would be agreeable to his master, that what was most in accordance with the laws of chivalric honour—"dat I may never die in sin, but I'd have a dawning peep."

"But then her last words, Tom—her dying wishes."

"Aye, sure see never'll know it."

"Well," said Mr. O'Leary much shocked, "I am sure you do not consider the meaning of what you say. I wish indeed she had never given me any injunction, for it is probable I never should have thought of a moment about her head-dress. Could I trust you, Tom, with what I suspect to be the true cause of her injunction?"

"Could you thrust me, master?"

"I believe I can. Well then, Tom, I think the true reason is—I'm looked around, and then whispered

"I don't know what to do about it, Tom," he said, one day addressing Nash, who was the only person in whom he could repose a confidence. "She scarcely eats a morsel, and instead of going off, as I thought it would, it is only growing worse and worse every day."

"Ah, my dear," said Nash, "don't be vexin' yourself about it. You don't know the women. They'd keep on dyin' that way from the age of fifteen to a hundred. The only way in the world is to let 'em alone an' love 'em to themselves. The more notice that's tuk of 'em, the worse they gets. They don't know their selves what it ails 'em half their time. Take it from me, 'tis never any good to be frettin', more especially if you lets 'em observe it."

Mr. O'Leary adopted Tom's advice, and found his account in doing so. For a considerable time after, he observed that the less he appeared to notice the anxiety which preyed on Mrs. O'Leary's mind, the more visibly it diminished.

Years rolled away, and after a life spent in the most exemplary discharge of all her duties as a wife and mother, Mrs. O'Leary, at her death, left behind her a tranquil mind with an untroubled conscience afforded, to enter on its final passage to a better world, her faithful spouse took notice that something of her long forgotten and mysterious melancholy, would occasionally cast a gloom upon her manner. At length, finding her end approach, she called much to him in the way of consolation and advice, as to the care of the house and children, she added with an appearance of anxiety:

"I have now but one request to add. It is, that my head-dress, such as it is, be not removed after my death; that you will not yourself uncover my head, nor suffer any one else to do so. I have a particular objection to it. Great and good minds, my dear Tibbot, are always superior to the mean vice of curiosity. I am sure I need say no more to you, except to add, that the injury will be your own, if you neglect to comply with this, my last injunction."

In the first access of sorrow, for the loss of so faithful and so amiable a partner, Mr. O'Leary found nothing very arduous in the accomplishment of her dying wishes. After the first day, however, when nature had exhausted herself in fits of mourning, and intervals of quiet reflection would succeed the tumult of the widower's grief, he could not prevent the question repeatedly presenting itself to his mind—why in the world could he be her motive for desiring that her head-dress might not be removed?

In palliation of any negligence, which the worthy antiquarian might have committed in resisting such suggestions, it should be remembered that a great portion of his life had been spent in researches, having chiefly for their end the gratification of that foible, on which his excellent wife in dying had imposed to grievous a burthen. By continually recurring, and meeting at each fresh assault, a fainter resistance, it obtained at length a complete mastery over his mind. It was in vain he thought of Blue Beard, and a thousand other awful warnings of the kind. In the throes of his curiosity, desiring rather to gain an accomplice than a counsellor, he confided his agonies to Nash, and desired his opinion.

"Be dis an' be dat," said Nash, who, in a matter which appeared to him indifferent on the score of morality, considered rather what would be agreeable to his master, that what was most in accordance with the laws of chivalric honour—"dat I may never die in sin, but I'd have a dawning peep."

"But then her last words, Tom—her dying wishes."

"Aye, sure see never'll know it."

"Well," said Mr. O'Leary much shocked, "I am sure you do not consider the meaning of what you say. I wish indeed she had never given me any injunction, for it is probable I never should have thought of a moment about her head-dress. Could I trust you, Tom, with what I suspect to be the true cause of her injunction?"

"Could you thrust me, master?"

"I believe I can. Well then, Tom, I think the true reason is—I'm looked around, and then whispered

"I don't know what to do about it, Tom," he said, one day addressing Nash, who was the only person in whom he could repose a confidence. "She scarcely eats a morsel, and instead of going off, as I thought it would, it is only growing worse and worse every day."

"Ah, my dear," said Nash, "don't be vexin' yourself about it. You don't know the women. They'd keep on dyin' that way from the age of fifteen to a hundred. The only way in the world is to let 'em alone an' love 'em to themselves. The more notice that's tuk of 'em, the worse they gets. They don't know their selves what it ails 'em half their time. Take it from me, 'tis never any good to be frettin', more especially if you lets 'em observe it."

Mr. O'Leary adopted Tom's advice, and found his account in doing so. For a considerable time after, he observed that the less he appeared to notice the anxiety which preyed on Mrs. O'Leary's mind, the more visibly it diminished.

Years rolled away, and after a life spent in the most exemplary discharge of all her duties as a wife and mother, Mrs. O'Leary, at her death, left behind her a tranquil mind with an untroubled conscience afforded, to enter on its final passage to a better world, her faithful spouse took notice that something of her long forgotten and mysterious melancholy, would occasionally cast a gloom upon her manner. At length, finding her end approach, she called much to him in the way of consolation and advice, as to the care of the house and children, she added with an appearance of anxiety:

"I have now but one request to add. It is, that my head-dress, such as it is, be not removed after my death; that you will not yourself uncover my head, nor suffer any one else to do so. I have a particular objection to it. Great and good minds, my dear Tibbot, are always superior to the mean vice of curiosity. I am sure I need say no more to you, except to add, that the injury will be your own, if you neglect to comply with this, my last injunction."

In the