LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

ADVENTURES OF MYLES O'REGAN.

MR. EDITOR:—If you have ever heard or read of a career, or experience, more remarkable than mine, you will confer a favor upon me by making it known. But before I proceed any further a few words of explanation may not be unnecessary. My last letter to THE POST, if you will jog your memory, dated from the planet Uranus, to which I had been transplanted after my death at the hands of those British blood drinking Boers. I then stated that it was only the privileged few who were sent there after death, that I was of those few and Benjamin D'Israeli another, that while I slept D'Israeli stole the ears which I had thrown over my eyes. Now observe what followed. I slept several months, all the time dreaming I was living on an iceberg, sleeping between blankets of ice, which perspired freely and rolled in cold streams down my vertebral column; that I ate ice and drank ice water, and, in fact, lived—or rather died—a nice kind of life—or rather death—all the time. This kind of thing was beyond the endurance of even a disembodied spirit, and I awoke to find that Dizzy was sleeping as comfortable as a man who, during his life, had done nothing but perform just actions. I was so *fearfully angry that* I almost sympathized with the tenants in Ireland, who had been treated in pretty nearly the same fashion by their landlords for so many years. But, then, they deserved it, and I did not. I was between two minds whether to pummel D'Israeli or leave him to his conscience, when I remembered that he never had a conscience, and so decided to pitch in. I raised my ear to give the old semitic humbug a punch, but as I was about to strike I was caught from behind, and on turning was astonished to see the being who had brought me first to Uranus.

"My good friend, said he, violence is not permitted in this sphere; this is the second time, I've caught you quarrelling with that innocent old man, you will now be removed to another place."

"And where, pray.?"

"I have not quite decided, but it must be to the wickedist spot in the whole universe."

"Oh, in that case there should be no difficulty, please put me down in London."

"Where is your body?"

"In Soudan, in the confines of the Desert of Sahara, don't you remember you took me from there, and I sincerely wish you had let me be."

In less time than it would take to say "Jack Robinson," or count over the wages of a newspaper editor, I was transferred to the Desert of Sahara, where singular to say we found my body lying just where it had fallen save where a vulture had eaten away the crockedness from my nose and left it a regular beauty to be seen. After my immortal soul was rehabilitated I was transferred to London with the rapidity of thought.

"Now, said the being," "that you are alive once more, be honest if you can, but if not, try and appear so, *au revoir*," and off he went, leaving me to the mercy of the children of men.

What was I to do? The only money I had about me were a few pounds in silver, I had taken from the pockets of a dead Boer in the Transvaal. But why should I not take up my position at the head of the Back Stairs? I was never dismissed. "Hold on," I thought, I shall go and see my friend, Prince Teck," and off I started for Buckingham Palace. I was in luck, His Serene Highness had just returned from Ireland. I sent in my card, and, after a short delay in an ante-chamber, a flunkey, in black and tan livery, ushered me *into* the presence. I rushed forward, and, falling on my knees, cried: "Justice, puissant Prince; justice, your Majestic Majesty!"

"Come my friend, I should know your face. Ha! by the gods you are the boycotted O'Regan, sit down man and tell your story, although please to recollect when addressing me that I am not yet King."

"But your Royal Nibbs will be, Teck the One has a splendid sound."

"I then recapitulated to him my astounding adventures, Mr. Editor, and he wept like a child."

"Come," said he, "cheer up man, it is true that Radical ruffian Gladstone is in power, but he is not so bad as we thought. He is a staunch Tory in his dealings with Ireland. Apropos of that cursed land, I suppose you are aware that I have been there lately and had several narrow escapes from assassination No Well Gladstone hinted to Her Majesty that my appearance at the Social Science Congress would have a pacifying effect on the country and I went across; my presence in Dublin had an electric effect; it thrilled half the people and it awed the other half into silence. Three hundred Parnellites surrounded me one night with bombs and hand grenades, but when I drew myself up to my full height, and my sword to its full length, with the famous war cry of my family breaking the stillness of the night the effect was magical. A Teck! a Teck! cried I, and the conspirators dissolved into space, but not before I had slain thirteen of their number. See the blood is yet on my sword."

I examined the excalibur and sure enough saw blood and hair attached, but I think the latter belonged to a kitten.

When the Prince saw the admiration and astonishment manifested on my ingenious countenance, he was much gratified. "Go," he said, "hasten to Leeds; Gladstone is there; give him this note, and he will doubtless reinstate you in your old office or give you another as good."

After thanking the Duke I took the train for the North, and arrived in Leeds that night just as Gladstone was addressing eight or ten thousand ragamuffins. The light fell upon their upturned faces. They resembled nothing so much as a congregation of jackals listening to the braying of a jackass arrayed in the garb of a lion. Alas! Beaconsfield was a gentleman in comparison with this man, but, then, what can a fellow expect from the son of a slave dealer? Heavens how they did grind out the sentences, and how the audience did yell and howl when he made points against Parnell and Ireland. I, having been absent for a considerable time, and having never seen a newspaper, asked a gentlemanly looking individual on the outskirts of the crowd what the row was about? "Vy don't you know, they ave rested them robbing Communists in Ireland, and our Villiam is a hexplaining matters, and saying as ow he will 'rest more on em if they don't keep quiet. Vy, the bloody Hirish is a murdering every one; they hasshasinbated three hundred landlords yesterday, and there 's a report this morning that they won't pay their rents. Instead of amusing themselves beating their wives, them there Hirish go about killing foxes and bailiffs and other game which is displeasing to our Villiam and the rest of us, and so we are going to suspen the abeas corpus act, and hexterminate the robbers."

I saw this swell later on picking pockets in the crowd, but that did no prevent me thinking he was really actuated by virtuous indignation when detailing the doings of the wild Irish.

Yours truly,
MYLES O'REGAN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A DIFFERENCE.

To the Editor of THE POST *and* TRUE WITNESS

DEAR SIR,—How is it that in Canada the years spent in a Catholic College count nothing. A young man spends six long and tedious years of labor and toil, struggling with many obstacles, wasting away happy days in those secluded walls. After he graduates from those walls and desires to enter the legal or medical professions his pupilage in a Catholic College counts *nothing*. This seems hardly fair. By chance I noticed a Medical School Calendar, and in it I noticed "Graduates in Arts, or students having matriculated in arts in any University in Her Majesty's Dominions are not required to pass the matriculation examination." "In the case of Graduates in Arts, or those who have spent a year's pupilage in the office of a medical practitioner before attending lectures, a period of three years only will be required." Those not falling under these rules must spend four years. Why confine themselves to this rule. How many Catholic young men have graduated from the halls of Ottawa and St. Michael's Colleges are competent to graduate in medicine at the expiration of three years, as those who have graduated in Protestant Colleges. The Medical Council of Ontario are too sensible and upright a body of men to be branded as prejudiced and partial; hence, want of consideration on their part made this rule. I know young men who completed their courses in Ottawa and St. Michael's Colleges to have spent four years in the medical study, whilst those who completed their studies in Queen's College were allowed to pass out after three years. What chagrin fills the bosom of the Catholic youth, possessed of as good teachers and as good education as the Queen's College graduate, when he sees his Protestant contemporary pass out one year ahead of him, simply because he graduated from a Protestant College. This rule ought to be amended, and if this letter falls 'neath the eyes of the Medical Faculty I am full sure they will remedy the evil. And for those who have graduated from Catholic Colleges the same privilege granted as to those graduating from Protestant Colleges, viz, no matriculation, and only three years' course.

The rule as it is at present is too noxious to encourage young Catholic men to enter Catholic Colleges. Every Catholic youth who enters a Catholic College does not do so for the purpose of becoming a Priest. With the change in fortune's wheel, changes the youth's mind. And if, after he has spent his six long years of labor and toil, he graduates from the college and desires to pursue a different course in life's drama, his long years in the Catholic College should be considered, either in medicine or law. If these long years are not to be regarded, then there is no use for the Catholic youth entering this college. He should spend these six years in a Protestant College and receive a reward in the end for his labors. I am sure the Medical Council will treat both alike, and this letter of mine will in the future open a road of encouragement for Catholics. At the present it will have its desired effect. I may observe that lately St. Michael's College has been affiliated to Toronto University. If, therefore, it is a recognized University, a Catholic, who has a certificate that he graduated from there, should receive the same favor as one graduating from Queen's College. Hoping this letter shall fall into the hands of some of the Medical Faculty and produce the desired effect.

Sincerely yours,
CATHOLICUS.

Ontario, October 24, 1881.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

The following article, remarkable for its thorough-going honesty and its spirit of fair play towards Ireland and the Land League, is from the pen of Professor Beesly, of the London University. It appears in a London journal, the *Labour Standard*, of last Saturday:—

The possession of Ireland by England has been and is an almost unmixed disadvantage to the latter country—almost as great as it is to the former. Nature meant them to be inhabited by independent nations, and so they will be, sooner or later, unless we can persuade the Irish to be satisfied with some scheme of federation. No doubt the Crown and aristocracy, and governing classes generally, gain considerable advantage out of every conquest England has made; and if Ireland were separated from England to-morrow a good many Englishmen of the upper and middle class would be pecuniary losers. But I defy anyone to show me how the great mass of our people would be a penny the worse for it. On the contrary, it is easy to show that they would be great gainers. Parliament and the Government would have a much simpler task before them, and there would be some chance of getting our own business better attended to; at all events, the British elector, when he calls his representative to account for delay of promised reform, could not be put off with the excuse that Irish affairs have occupied all the time of Parliament, and that the Obstructives prevent all progress. English Liberal and Radical associations would be spared the ignominy of instructing their representatives to support Coercion Bills only fit for the meridian of St. Petersburg; and reforms of the conspiracy law, supposed to have been established here, would not be rendered nugatory by state speculation in Dublin and the rulings of Irish judges. Thirty thousand English soldiers would not be withdrawn from their only legitimate duty, the defence of this island, and employed in the hateful and degrading work of collecting rents for Irish landlords. English constituencies would not have all their calculations disturbed by the sudden oscillations of the Irish voters, according as they get their orders from their priest or Mr. Parnell. Every Irishman in an English town would have to renounce his Irish nationality, and obtain a certificate of naturalization, or else forfeit his vote. But we should not be deluged with Irish laborers if they were masters of their own country. They would have more inducement to stay at home. We would send them back to Ireland whenever they were reduced to apply for poor-law relief. What a load would be removed from many a struggling trade, foiled in its efforts to raise wages by the competition of the Irish immigrant. I said above that the possession of Ireland by England is an *almost* unmixed disadvantage to us. There is a certain compensation. I believe it is the only one, and it has only told within the last two generations. Irish pressure has compelled our governing classes to submit to reforms in that island which are the pattern and precedent for similar reforms here, which otherwise we should be much longer conquering. Everyone knows that disestablishment has been brought within measurable distance by the Irish legislation of 1869. If we were rid of the press of Irish business and all the troubles connected with it, we should set to work at once to spoliate and liberate the Anglican Church. We have only to look to the Farmers' Alliances in England and Scotland to see what the new Irish Land Law has already done for us. How distant was the prospect of tenant right and other land reforms on this island only 24 months ago—and now they are knocking at the door. The House of Commons, much against its will—for an assembly of plutocrats it is and always will be—has been made to accept certain *principles*; and all the protests that these principles could not possibly be applicable to England are so much idle breath. The long divorce between the English land and the English people is going to terminate. Let not English farmers and labourers forget to whom they owe this near prospect of juster laws and a happier future. They might have waited another century for it if the Irish Land League had not been founded by honest and courageous patriots like Mr. Parnell and Mr. Davitt. The Land Act would probably even now be spoilt by judicial decisions if the Land League were not there to watch its administration. That is why the landlords and their advocates in our press are again clamouring for the imprisonment of Mr. Parnell. The *Times* is bold enough to assert that the English working classes "are becoming disgusted with the way in which the Land Act has been received; their sense of fair play is outraged, and they are beginning to see the Parnellite agitation in its true light." Where the *Times* has seen signs of this feeling among English workmen I do not know. English workmen know that the Land League is neither more nor less than a trades' union, and therefore that its managers would be grossly failing in their duty to the members if they went to sleep because this or that law has been passed. Their business is to watch over its execution, to push it to its furthest limits, and to keep their organization in full efficiency. This is what English trades' unionists do. Besides, we in England cannot dispense with Mr. Parnell's help just yet. It will not do to have him locked up till we have got our Land Act.

THE IRISH LAND WAR.

PARNELL AND DILLON AND THE FREEDOM OF DUBLIN CITY—THE CASTLE HACKS GLOATING OVER THE RESULT—FATHER SHEEHY ON THE SITUATION.

LONDON, Oct. 25.—The proposal to confer the freedom of the city of Dublin upon Parnell and Dillon was defeated to-day in spite of the most strenuous efforts on the part of the Home Rule members, led by Messrs. Gray and Dawson, two of Parnell's Parliamentary followers. The debate was hot and protracted, and the supporters of the proposal certainly had the best of the speaking. Forty-six members of the corporation out of the 60 attended. The Lord Mayor presided. The voting was equal, 23 for, 23 against. The Lord Mayor gave the casting vote against the motion. In the majority against the proposal were 10 Conservatives and 13 Liberals, and of these 8 were Roman Catholics and several Deputy Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace. Unqualified delight was expressed among the officials at Dublin Castle, when the result was conveyed to them. As a precautionary measure against any popular demonstration, the Mansion House is to-night guarded by a strong force of police.

PARIS, Oct. 25.—At the present moment, when so much may depend on the attitude taken by the Catholic clergy of Ireland, the following summary of a statement made to the New York *Herald* correspondent in Paris, yesterday, by Father Sheehy, may be of interest: Father Sheehy advocates the no rent movement from national rather than social considerations, and approves of the League's appeal to the farmers. *Self-interest and* selfishness, he says, are quite as good things to appeal to as sentiment. In striking at the landlords Mr. Parnell struck at the real enemy, the men who, more truly than Messrs. Gladstone and Forster, are the gaolers of the Irish patriots. Despite Archbishop Croke's repudiation, and though he knows his re-arrest is certain, Father Sheehy will continue to take an active part in the agitation. He firmly believes that an immense majority of his fellow-priests will, like himself, adhere to the manifesto of the League unless absolutely coerced into neutrality by Rome. He refuses, however, to contemplate the eventuality of Papal interference. He does not believe that the Vatican will move in the matter and knows positively that so recently as three weeks ago, when he saw his Bishop, no instructions from Rome had been received.

BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS!

By THE DUCHESS.

CHAPTER XIII.

VAL. "Love is your master, for he masters you;
And she, that is so yoked by a fool
Methinks should not be chronicled for wise.

And why not death, rather than living torment?
To die is to be banished from myself;
And Silvia is myself; banished from her
Is self from self—a deadly banishment!"
—*Two Gentlemen Of Verona.*

When Gretchen tells her father of her determination to wed with Dugdale and no other, she fills him with consternation and a sorrow that amounts almost to indignation. That she, his pride, the child of his heart, should elect for herself a life so replete with trouble, so wanting in joy or even barest content, grieved him beyond expression.

"I shall never give my consent—never!" he says, with a wave of the hand, meant to declare that in this instance entreaty will be of no avail. But Gretchen lingers. Not yet—not ever—will she abandon hope. "Perpetual dropping wears a stone." So she tells herself; and George Tremaine's heart is of any but the adamantine order. She will trust to time to conquer for her. She lays her arms upon the table, and regards him with melancholy eyes, and asks him in a dismal monotone, if he, who has professed such affection for her is to be her undoing. Mr. Tremaine feels the power brought to bear, but steels his heart against it and goes on with admirable firmness.

"I am acting for the best; I am your truest friend," he says, emphasizing each word vigorously. "I distinctly say, I will not hear of it."

"Papa, how can you speak so sternly to me? It is not like you. When you were in love with mamma, what would you have thought of your father if he had forbidden you, to marry her? Would you not have called him a——"

"You can be as undutiful as you like, Gretchen. That will not help to alter my mind.

"I am not undutiful. How could you think it? But is it not true? Would you not have called him just that?"

"You would have to spend your time nursing a sick man. At your age! It is unheard of."

"It is my choice."

"Which only proves you are too young to make a choice."

"I am very little younger than Kitty, and you said nothing about her inability to choose," returns she, reproachfully.

At this moment the door opens, and Mrs. Tremaine—followed by Flora and Brandrum—appears on the threshold.

"Go away for awhile," says Mr. Tremaine, in a distressed tone, beckoning to them.

"No; let them come in. It must be told sooner or later," says Gretchen quickly, *though with a face pale as the drifting snow.* And then the news is told, and nobody says anything and Mrs. Tremaine, with an inexplicable look upon her face, seats herself in an arm-chair and lays one hand upon the other thoughtfully, silently.

Brandrum clears his throat and glances at Gretchen, who meets his gaze appealingly. *Flora, with an ominous cough, slinks into a* low seat near the window, and is evidently preparing a mental brief for the coming trial.

"The very idea is courageous," says Mr. Tremaine, warmly, vexed that as yet, he has received no open support from the new comers.

"But let us discuss it quietly, my dear George," *suggests Mrs. Tremaine,* calmly.

Her calmness, however, which seems to him, something like submission to the enemy, only irritates him still further.

"Quietly!" repeats he, with indignation. "You don't see it in my light, Arabella. Women always take such a wrong view of everything. You, as her mother, ought to forbid her even thinking of such a thing, whereas by your silence you seem almost to give consent. I must say it is most ill-judged. What! make a Miss Nightingale of herself at nineteen! Why, she would tire of it in a month."

"I should not," says Gretchen, faintly but bravely. "I cannot account for it, papa, but I know I love him. I shall never again love any one so well. I would rather spend my life in solitude—in sorrow—with him than in the gayest capital in Europe with another."

"You are a romantic fool," declares Mr. Tremaine losing his temper.

"My dear, my dear! you forget yourself," expostulates his wife.

"And you are encouraging her," goes on he, still further forgetting himself.

"Dearest," says Gretchen, with a smile (when papa's temper goes so does his resolution) "you forget indeed. Only yesterday you told me I was the cleverest of the whole family, and now you have called me—oh, fie! what an ugly word it is! See here; I will not marry him if it so distresses you; but then I shall never marry any one else as long as I live. And old maids are so unpleasant. I should not risk having one always at home if I were you."

"Are you going against me in this matter, Gretchen?" asks poor Mr. Tremaine, at his wits' end. "Why is it? Have I not always been a good father to you."

"You have, darling papa—the best, the dearest." Her arms are round his neck now. Great tears are in her eyes. Few men are proof against the tears of those they love. Mr. Tremaine's features relax. There are visible signs of a speedy surrender, or at least of a compromise.

"Don't be cruel, darling papa," she whispers, piteously. "You will never forgive yourself if you spoil my life."

"Never," replies he with deep earnestness, caressing her sunny head. "That is just why I cannot give my consent to this marriage." It is too great a sacrifice."

Here Flora, having arranged her line of action, breaks *boldly into the conversation.* People always listen to Flora, for the simple reason that no one has ever yet been found able to talk her down.

"I don't think it at all a sacrifice," she says, ignoring the consequences of this rash speech. She looks up from her low seat, and lays down the book with which she has been trying to cheat some light from the swiftly parting hours. "Not in the least. And why is it you all think it so? He is sick, poor Kenneth, and is it not a privilege to be able to comfort those we care for? Gretchen loves him. Therefore she would wish to watch over him and make him happy. And I think it is very sweet and lovely of her to want to do it. It is just the very thing I should like to do myself."

At this outburst they all smile involuntarily—all, that is, except Gretchen and the young speaker herself, who gaze at each other fondly, with eyes filled with tears. Love and gratitude are awake, and a little chord of sympathy, spreading from heart to heart, makes affection grow warmer and stronger within their breasts.

Then some one else makes some remark, and argument again grows brisk, under cover of which Brandrum—who is still amused, and sees a splendid opening for one of those discussions dear to him—says to Flora, with affected geniality—

"Your sentiments are mine. Love at any cost. When you are a little older Flo. I shall look you out a thoroughly battered young man and present him to you as a spouse."

"Thanks you are really too good. But I shan't trouble you. I shall prefer making my own choice when my time comes," says Flora, disagreeably.

"That is a very ungrateful speech, and one utterly undeserved, not to speak of the folly of it. One should never refuse a good offer. Nevertheless, being thoroughly amiable, and entirely devoid of malice, I shall insist on helping you in this matter. By the bye, this affair in Zululand has happened most fortunately for you. I shouldn't wonder if it produced the desired article. I shall at once set about finding some one suitable."

"Better advertise," says Flora, with grim sarcasm.

"The very thing. Thanks for the suggestion. 'Wanted, a young man, carefully mutilated. One without arms and legs and such superfluous luxuries as ears and nose preferred. Must be hopelessly invalided. Of a cheerful and lively disposition, and, above all things, strictly moral. Warranted not to bite. Salary, three ha'pence a year, paid quarterly. Please address Miss Flora Tremaine, etc. Will that do?"

"I suppose you think you are funny," says Flora, witheringly; but Brandy can soar above sarcasm, and is evidently unimpressed.

"I think that paragraph about the biting very neat," he says, mildly. "A man must give vent to his feelings in some way; and if he could neither kick you nor beat you he might want to bite you. At all events, it is well to be on the safe side. You see how careful I am of your interests."

Flora, disdaining reply, rises and crosses over to where Gretchen is standing near her father, who is still arguing, though fruitlessly. Gretchen is evidently gaining the day.

"Then you give your consent, papa?"

"I suppose I must. Though, remember, I do so unwillingly."

"And you will speak to Kenneth—you will say you are very pleased?"

"My dear, I shall certainly speak to him. But there is a limit to human forbearance; I cannot go so far as to say I am pleased."

"You will not be unkind to him, dear papa?" says Gretchen, a little tremulously, laying her hand pleadingly upon his chest. "Remember how one little cold word will hurt and wound him."

"I shan't be brutal, if you mean that," says her father, with a faint smile. "Poor fellow! he has enough to bear, without incivility from me. You shall have it all your own way, Gretchen, but in the after years, if you fail to find happiness, do not blame me."

"I shall blame nobody. And my happiness will not fail me," replies she, slowly. Her lips are white, but a light soft and beautiful gleams within her azure eyes.

Brandy, coming up behind her, lays both his hands lightly on her shoulders.

"After all," he says, addressing his father, "why shall not Gretchen be happy in her own way? If she wishes to marry Dugdale, if her heart is set on it, who shall forbid her? And something tells me our 'bonny Meg' will never come to much grief."

"No, because Kenneth loves her, and she loves him, and their love will last forever," says Flora—foolishly, perhaps, but fervently—adding, "And whom do we know nicer and handsomer than Kenneth?"

"I shall say no more until I have seen Dugdale," says Mr. Tremaine. Then, with some reluctance, "You say you love him, Gretchen. Have you never thought, child, that your very love will be your misery? His live is ever in the balance; and when death comes to rob you——"

"Oh, no, no,! Not that!" cries Gretchen, sharply, throwing out her hands as though to ward off some evil thing. Anything but that! He will live, with care, with time."

"I am quite sure of it," says Flora, with solemn conviction! "I feel it. And when he is able to stand again, and move about, and ride, and shoot and all that, see how proud we shall be of him. Don't cry, Gretchen. He must—he will get strong."

"There is the dressing-bell!" *exclaims* Mrs. Tremaine, hurriedly. She has been singularly silent during the whole discussion, and now seems—for her—thoroughly unnerved. "We shall be late if we don't hurry. Brandrum, remember how you kept us all waiting yesterday."

Brandy, having bestowed a loving, though perhaps slightly too energetic, pat upon Gretchen's shoulder, leaves the room, his father following. Mrs. Tremaine, going up to her daughter, smoothes back the soft brown hair from the girl's flushed cheeks with excessive tenderness.

"Darling, think—think well," she says, earnestly; but that is all the discouragement, she offers. As the door closes on her Gretchen turn to the constant Flora, and throwing her arms around her, presses her lips to hers with grateful warmth.

"You are the first to take my part Flo," she says, "and—and you spoke so nicely of him. I shall never forget that."

"Well, I said to myself, it was a time when you would want Kitty, and I was determined you shouldn't miss her, if I could do you any good," says Flora, heartily.

"Though indeed," says the youngest Miss Tremaine, doubtfully, when she finds herself alone, "I do hope I have not adopted a wrong course and encouraged my dear sweet sister in abject folly. My conscience smites me; yet when I love I shall marry my sweetheart, even if he hasn't a nose on his face. No, whatever comes of my advice, I have at least acted up to my principles. As that miserable boy said, 'Love at any cost.' I think the whole thing downright charming and romantic. Just like the beautiful story, 'The Children of the Abbey,' and—and—all the rest of them."

. . . . . .

"What can she be marrying him for?" demands Mr. Tremaine, desperately, many hours later, addressing his wife from the hearth-rug in her bed-room, while she slowly removes her trinkets from her person one by one, "unless for his money? And I didn't think her mercenary."

"She is the truest and purest and best girl in all the world," says Gretchen's mother, indignantly. Perhaps just a touch of remorse and fear makes the indignation in her tone warmer. There is unwonted moisture in her eyes. "She is marrying him simply because she loves him."

"It is unnatural," says Mr. Tremaine, fuming. "And people will say all sorts of unpleasant things. I suppose you are prepared for that? It is no use arguing. I never saw any one so determined."

"Like all gentle women, when occasion arises, she can be firmer than most. I am sure, were he a penniless student instead of being Dugdale of Laxton, she would marry him all the same."

"Then I suppose we ought to be grateful for small mercies, and thank our stars he is not a penniless student," says Mr. Tremaine, with a sigh. "I shall, however, make one more effort in her behalf. I shall appeal to Dugdale."

"Will you dear? Of course you always know best. I always say you have the clearest judgment of any man I ever met. But will it do any good, do you think? I am afraid it has rather got out of your hands—gone beyond us, in fact." (Poke the fire, dearest; it is intensely cold to-night.) "I fear interference will do no good. But you can try. You are very clever at that sort of thing. Only don't be too severe with him, poor boy. Remember, how delicate he is, he cannot live very long, I am afraid. And, after all, Sleeke and Steele say that only half the property is entailed; and at his death, of course, Gretchen——"

"Oh! hang the property!" interrupts Mr. Tremaine, impatiently. "That won't console her, if she cares for him. I know I shall see that child yet with her cheeks white and her eyes full of silent grief; and when that day comes I shall feel as if it was all my fault; I know I shall," says Mr. Tremaine, irritably.

"Don't think about it any more to-night, dear," says his wife, soothingly. "Things always looks blackest at night fall. To-morrow we can discuss it more fully.

"I shall certainly appeal to Dugdale," says Mr. Tremaine, again, still irritable still with a determination that amounts to courage.

But as

'The silent hours steal on,
And flaky darkness breaks within the east,"

and morning dawns, his courage somewhat *ebbs*, and, as Bob Acres's might, oozes out through his finger-tips. Indeed, when, some hours later on, he draws near Dugdale's presence, this cowardice increases, until presently he is possessed with an uncomfortable conviction that he is the unwelcome suitor and Dugdale the stern parent before whom he must plead his cause.

As he enters the library and meets Kenneth's anxious eyes he feels, if possible, more like a culprit than before, and sinks heavily into a seat as though oppressed with hidden crime.

"You have come to speak to me about Gretchen?" says Dugdale, nervously, plunging into the subject head foremost.

"Yes. I have come to speak to you. Of course I have come, my dear Dugdale," replies Mr. Tremaine, greatly embarrassed. He takes up a paper-knife and examines it slowly and with elaborate care, as though to gain time. "Somebody should speak, you know," he concludes, lamely.

A woman in Dugdale's place would at this juncture—because of Tremaine's palpable inability to proceed—have broken into hysterical and inextinguishable laughter. Dugdale, on the contrary says, with studied calmness—

"Somebody should, of course."

"Gretchen has told me all about this—this—arrangement between you, and——It is difficult to say anything, but you know my dear fellow, that—that——"

"I know everything—all you would say," says Dugdale calmly, his own nervousness decreasing as he sees his host's increasing. "No man could expect you to give your consent. It is quite impossible for you to give it. I shall say nothing more. But she said she thought she could be happy with me in spite of everything; and sometimes I try to cheat myself into the belief that she could. At least I had not courage to fling away this only chance of having her always near me. It seems absurd, does it not, my talking of love? But I do love her; she is my entire happiness. Lend her to me for a few years. Perhaps I shall release you from your bargain even before that time has expired."

"If," says Mr. Tremaine, "there was even a chance that in two or three years you might recover——"

"I shall not recover,"—*quietly*—"but I shall die; that will do almost as well, will it not?"

"My dear boy, don't,"—uneasily. "It is very depressing, and must be uncommonly bad for you, you know, encouraging such dismal reflections. Death is a sort of thing we none of us like to dwell on."

"You do not, perhaps; why should you? But I think of it constantly, more than ever of late, as is natural. Gretchen is so young, She will be only a girl still when"—with a smile—"I am gathered to my fathers. I have thought it all over. It is at least in my power to leave her rich; there is no reason why she should not marry again then and be happy later on. Though I would not have her quite forget me—not quite. I think she will never quite forget me,"—with a faint sigh,

"I hope she will never get the chance," says Mr. Tremaine (utterly forgetful of his purpose), blowing his nose sonorously. Getting up, he walks to the window, and for a few minutes "silence reigns supreme."

"What will the world say?" he goes on, presently. "I have heard women called mercenary for less,"

"Gretchen is not one to be distressed by the adverse opinion of society."

"Dugdale, let me say something for your own sake, as much as for hers. The child is young—only nineteen; she has been nowhere, has seen very few; she hardly realizes what life means. Suppose she should weary of attending a sick man; suppose—I am only supposing, my dear fellow—but should she see any one to prefer to you, what then?"

"That is my risk," says Dugdale, sadly. "Do you think I am fool enough not to have thought of that? But I accept it. *Besides,*"—turning his eyes on Tremaine—"*think me* over-sanguine if you will, but *something tells* me that will never happen,"

"'She is a woman,' quotes her father, "'and therefore may be won,' and she is, in my opinion, the handsomest of the lot. The odds are heavily against you, my dear fellow. I know her too well to distrust her in any way or to believe her mind capable of a wrong thought, but if things turn out as I fear she will be miserable, the day will come, perhaps, when she will reproach you."

"What is all this about reproach? Don't mind papa; he is a raven, always croaking; he is only trying to frighten you," says Gretchen's clear voice, breaking in most opportunely upon the discussion. Coming forward, she leans lightly upon the head of Dugdale's couch and pats his cheek gayly, "I won't have you say nasty things to Ken, papa; he is my property now, and I shall do battle for him."

Her father laughs, and so does she. Kenneth, drawing down her hand to his lips, kisses it fondly.

. . . . . .

"I never heard of such a love-affair in my life," says Mr. Tremaine afterwards, with a groan. "If he was the finest fellow in the United Kingdom she couldn't appear prouder of him. And as for him—well, of course, you know, he would be silly about her, that is not to be wondered at."

CHAPTER XIV.

"I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu."
—*Hamlet's Letter.*

It is New Year's Day. The Old Year—perhaps glad of its release—is safely buried 'neath a frozen shroud—gone—forgotten. The young king has arrived in state with chill and piercing majesty, his throne an iceberg, his cradle snow. As far as the eye can see, it rests upon a world all robed in white, on which a wintry sun looks sadly down, glinting its breast with myriad rays, until all the land seems to scintillate and sparkle with countless diamonds.

The great strong branches of the fir-trees