

Henry Merivale, Maggie's brother, and I became excellent friends, but I noticed that there was a constrained courtesy between him and Charley, from which I judged that he did not approve of the match. His name was frequently on my lips, and I observed that Charley seemed displeased thereat. One night when somewhat under the influence of liquor, his temper boiled over completely and he cried,

"Why are you everlastingly dunning my ears with that fellow's name? D—— him! I feel like shooting him, and I will if you don't drop him!"

Then seeing my horrified look he suddenly got quieter and said

"I beg your pardon, Dave, but I'm infernally cranky to-night, I drank too much of that confounded ale, and it has unsettled my nerves. Of course I didn't mean what I said just now."

He lit his pipe and picking up a yellow-covered volume began to read. The title page caught my eye; it was one of Ouida's. Another straw to show the direction of the wind! Carbery used to abhor this sort of literature.

I went over to him and laid my hand on his arm.

"Old fellow," I said, "do you think your nerves will be soothed by reading that book?"

"Why what do you know about it?" he inquired, with the first sneer I have ever seen on his face.

"I happen to have read it," I answered "and I know it is one of the kind that leaves a bad taste in the mouth. Pitch it away."

He laughed cynically. "Why it's only real life, what you meet every day in the world."

I looked him squarely in the face. "Are you trying to be a feeble imitation of Chandos yourself, Charley?"

My hand was resting on his shoulder, and I felt him tremble beneath it. He threw the novel aside without a word, pulled down a volume of Macaulay's Essays and buried himself in it for the rest of the evening.

About a week after this, he remarked as we sat together after supper.

"I think I'll go to the play to-night. Maggie wants to go."

"What's on?" I enquired.

"Mrs. Langtry. Do you know, Dave, I don't believe that