

herself not to do it. She had good sense about everything but the one thing—the notion that the sickness could be cured. This is the only caution, and Mrs. Cronin can swear it, I ever gave her. It looks plainer and easier there in black and white than it has looked all along, in my poor mind; it's a relief to see it there. There's not a loophole there for suspicion or for doubt."

He laid his arms upon the table, and bowed his head down upon them. "How? how? how?" he murmured; and, after a pause, "God grant that I may never know!" Then the silence was unbroken, and he preserved the same attitude unmoved. Heavy steps sounded upon the flagged passage outside, but Dominick Daly did not heed them, until the key grated in the lock of his room door, and he looked up at its sound. The gaoler stood in the doorway; by his side was a woman with her veil down.

"Person to see you; governor's order," or some such words, met the prisoner's ear, as he sprang to his feet in a moment. The next, the prison official had slammed and locked the door, and he and his visitor were alone. Another, and the woman had flung herself upon him, not into his arms—for he did not make any movement—but, with her own clasped tightly round him, had forced him back into the chair from which he had risen, and was kneeling beside him, still holding him in that frantic grasp.

"Dominick! Dominick!"

"Katharine! Great heavens! You here!"

They were almost the same words that he had said to her the last time she had come unexpectedly into his presence; but the voice in which he said them was not like his voice, and his face was like a spectre's. She shifted the clasp of her arms, and raised them to his shoulders; she pressed her face against his rigid breast, and ground her teeth together with a shivering moan.

His arms were free now, but he did not move them; he did not put her from him, or draw her to him; he sat perfectly still, as if the touch of her had turned him to stone. Her face was quite hidden, the brow and eyes were squeezed against his rough coat, and she caught the cloth in her teeth, while she fought with a strong convulsive agony, and put it over her.

"I'm here, I'm here, at last. I wasn't able to come sooner, for my strength played me false, and left me; but it's come back, darling, and I'm here. I'm strong again; I'm strong enough for what I have to do."

Again she shivered, and ground her teeth, and hid her face yet more closely against his rigid breast. And still he did not move, but he shut his eyes fast, and breathed like a tired runner.

"And what's that, Katharine?"

She looked up, strained her head back, saw his face distinctly, loosed her hold of him, and sunk on the floor, gazing awe-stricken at him. Her face was thin and white, her almost colourless eyes were dim, but there looked out of them a terrible despair.

"What's that?" he asks me. To tell you the truth—all the truth—and then to tell it to them, and take you out of this."

He pushed his chair back beyond her reach as she sat huddled on the floor, and spoke, but without looking at her.

"I know the truth, not all of it, but enough—all I want to know. For God's sake, tell me nothing, and go, go!"

"You know! What do you mean?" Her voice almost died away with some terror, with some sickening anguish, stronger than that which had rent her soul when she came into the prison-room. You can't know. Why don't you look at me, Dominick? Why don't you touch me? Why don't you kiss me?" She raised herself to a kneeling attitude, and dragged herself a few inches along the ground towards him; but he stopped her with an out-stretched hand.

"Come no nearer to me," he said; you are my wife's murderess." He spoke in the lowest whisper, and with his gaze upon the door.

"O God! And I did it for your sake!"

After this there is a silence, and the two look in each other's faces, as two lost souls might look. Then the woman begins to speak, low and rapidly; and as she speaks, she sinks back into her former attitude, but tears off her bonnet, and clutches the masses of her thick red hair, which have fallen on her neck, and pulls at them wildly.

"I did it for your sake. I had been thinking about it, about how it could be done, ever since that night when Father John O'Connor spoke to you—the same night that you told me she wanted you to send her a new cure. It was that night you vexed me to the soul; for you pitied her, and would not grudge her the life that was no good to her, and was standing between you and me. And after that you vexed me sorer and sorer; for you sent her cures, and I thought they were like to do with her, for she grew no worse; and the time was creeping on, and the priest was watching you and me. And then came the strong and heavy hand of him upon me, and he said I must go—go away to a strange place, and leave you, after all the pains it cost me to come where you were, and to stay where you were. I must go, and you must stay, and be no nearer to me than in the beginning, when I could have lived without you, Dominick Daly. And when I thought how little good her life was to herself, and how much harm to us, and how easily it might be ended, if only I could get some way of sending her a cure.

"The way of getting the—the stuff came to my mind readily. I had only to get back to Athboyle, for ever so short a time, and Sam Sullivan would not watch what I was doing in the shop so close but that I could get something that would not hurt her much, but would put her out of your way and mine."

He listened, after a fruitless attempt to stop her, with a fascinated eagerness, but with growing horror and avoidance, as the words came more and more coherently from her livid lips.

"I swear—I could swear it if it were the last word I had to speak in this world—I never thought that she would have anything to suffer. I knew nothing about—about poison that tortured. I believed that poison only put people to sleep for ever; and when I got at it, through Dr. Mangan's leaving his keys about, it was laudanum I was looking for; but when I found the powder, I had no other notion but that it would be all the same, only easier to get it sent to her somehow. But I never could think of a way of sending it, and I carried it about in my pocket day after day, until that day I went to see you at Grange's, and you went out to speak to some one, and left me in the room with the letter you had just written to her, and the cure you were sending to her. I read the letter, and I saw the opportunity. Who was to know? She would just take the powder you were sending to her, and some of mine in it, and she would go to sleep for ever; and we would be quit of her, and happy, happy, happy, ever after."

(To be continued.)

CURRENT LITERATURE.

A YOUNG WIFE'S STORY.—A novel by Harriette Boura. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1878. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

If all young wives were as priggish and stupid as this one there would be good reason for the curtain being drawn at the end of the ordinary novel. Brought up in a "seminary for young ladies," she seems never to have shaken off the bread-and-butterishness, and her principal characteristics, as far as we can learn, are a decided aversion to tobacco, an ability to keep accounts, a love of afternoon church, a total ignorance of the ways of ordinary society, and an all pervading orthodoxy of belief of the most approved and respectable kind. We find her leaving the house of a sailor uncle, who is described as a Captain R.N., but whose type is far more common in Melodrama than in the Service, to marry a widower with two children, who wants a wife to please his uncle, on whose will a handsome estate depends. This uncle, one Colonel Demarcay, being a man of the world, a little cynical, something of a sceptic and opposed to Sunday afternoon church, is at first a terrible stumbling block to our young woman of twenty-three. He says the rector is "narrow," he goes out for a walk on Sunday afternoon, and he very wisely disapproves of commencing domestic reform by having the children come down to lunch. His crowning sin is his interference with the faith of his old man-servant, who is at the same time a most forward and a most remarkably philo-

sophic domestic. But the rector and Mrs. Demarcay together manage to put Patrick into a proper frame of mind, and he becomes an edifying example on a very orthodox death-bed before the story ends. The two children provide many opportunities for the display of much nursery morality and the enunciation of sundry precepts, sound no doubt, but hardly interesting to any person except a young wife and mother, and with a rude nurse, who overawes our heroine and spoils the children, furnishes the text for several chapters of literary "pap." Our young wife's husband doesn't appear to care much about her, which is not wonderful, and she thinks a great deal of wife number one, whose mother and sister, more worldly but perhaps and therefore more pleasant than our heroine, meet with much favour from Colonel Demarcay, and provoke jealousy on the part of wife number two, who forms a stern determination to do her duty and take her place as the mistress of the household. As she justly remarks, "no previous knowledge fitted her for this," but that she "possessed observation and keen perception" in place of experience we are afraid no one can admit. Her very extraordinary idea of duty is carried out, and the colonel dies, impenitent still, leaving the estate to her and her heirs instead of to her husband's children, against her excessively conscientious determination, which would have gone to the length of constructive forgery, but was, fortunately, not so severely tested. Exactly how and why her husband changed into a perfect paragon, how the children became angels, and how the nurse was dismissed, we have not had patience enough to find out, but everything comes right in the end, and since the date of the story Victor and his wife "have found much joy and comparatively little care in the family circle," in the retirement of which it would have been much better for our young wife to have remained. The book is a mass of Phariseism disguised as morality, its style tedious, its conceptions stupid in the extreme, and although it will doubtless find favour with those who confound sanctimoniousness with religion and twaddle with fine writing, we should be sorry to see any more of our wives setting out in life with such miserable conceptions of principle and duty as those

THE CHEVELEY NOVELS: A MODERN MINISTER. Volume I. London and Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1878. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

The Cheveley Novels are a new departure, and for that reason alone would deserve mention, in these days of imitation and reproduction. But "A Modern Minister," so far as it goes, is in many respects such an innovation, not only in style but in treatment, as to demand a little closer examination than usually falls to the share of the modern novel—which is generally too soporific to be handled freely. To begin with, the unknown author (we speak in the singular for convenience, as there is evidence which would lead us to believe that more than one writer is at work, and that one at least may be a lady) presents us with a list of characters, arranged in a catalogue *raisonné* or like *dramatis personæ* in the play-bill of a melodrama. This is a sensible idea and very useful, when it is considered that no less than one hundred and does not suffice to put all the characters on the stage, and the action is only in course of development at the point at which we have to wait for another instalment. A clear idea of the design of the book is, at its present stage, impossible to form; it would seem as if the author intends to develop side by side the plots of a series of stories, and in the course of a comprehensive scheme, involving many books, each in a certain measure complete within itself, but all harmonizing in the end, to describe all phases of English life, and to try almost all kinds of literary composition. Such an undertaking requires powers of no ordinary kind, and it is here that the unevenness of treatment which is strikingly visible in the book makes us doubtful as to the success of the bold venture. We should imagine that the task of drawing the numerous characters in such detail and with such superabundance of setting would have been a problem of sufficient magnitude, and enough to counsel, if not to compel, simplicity of plot, which indeed would naturally be much complicated by the crowd of actors. But our author is not content with aiming at success in the delineation of character, and is working out a plot of extraordinary intricacy. Personages are introduced to us, go on the stage, and then are left "waiting in the wings," as it were, till we wonder how they can all come together in the main action at all. The incidents are varied enough and the scenes shift fast and far; nearly all are strongly sensational, not in the sense that has become so opprobrious in connection with novels, but in the daring boldness with which the naturally improbable is treated as if occurring in everyday life, and in the dramatic element and amount of mystery which surrounds them. The Reverend Westley Garland is the "Modern Minister," though why so called is a puzzle, seeing that he is a clergyman of the Church of England, not, as might be thought, a member of the Cabinet. He is a popular preacher in Brighton, clever, full of love for humanity, sad, mysterious. The exact part that he is to play in this kaleidoscopic drama is not very clear, but enough of his nature is sketched to show that he will probably counteract in the end the machinations of one Mr. Noel Barnard, who appears everywhere, under all sorts of guises, and in connection with everybody's affairs, as a perfect Prince of the Powers of Darkness, with all the malignant characteristics of that arch-fiend. There is an anomaly about Mr. Barnard for which we find no satisfactory explanation. It is that he should have such astonishing freedom of movement, for with his peculiar ways and ideas we should have expected a penitentiary to be his permanent abode. And again, his villainy is so successful, on such a gigantic scale, so deliberate and so universal, that the character can hardly be called a natural one even by those who most firmly believe in the personal existence of the Devil. Exactly why this preternatural scoundrel, who possesses money and estates of his own, who is also a gipsy king, and who has a house of his own in London, should be the Private Secretary of a lotos eating baronet, is another thing to be explained. Doubtless our author can do this, for throughout the whole novel there is an almost openly avowed disregard for the tame conditions of ordinary life, and an equally openly avowed intention of making the utmost use of the improbable, and with such aid half of the ordinary novelist's difficulty is overcome. But, as we have said, sensation is aimed at, and sensation we certainly have in almost every chapter. Still, the author manages to present it in such an engaging manner; the incidents, though completely disjointed so far, are so skilfully arranged; the happy touches are so numerous, and the power shown so great, that interest is aroused and incongruities are overlooked. It is impossible to make even a small representative selection; but the sketches of the crazy Sir Dickson Chaffing and his imaginary noble guests, Westley Garland's illness of the little ballet dancer, contain much that is clever both in description and attempted profundity which succeeds only in being heavy: a diversity of style which would lead to the impression that the writer had tried to make it seem that there was as great a number of authors as of characters and subjects treated; and a good deal of mannerism unnecessary details of furnishing, have led to our belief that a lady has something to do with extremes and over-do everything. The casual philosophizing degenerates into smart writing and sympathetic qualities of our author are seldom at fault, and the book contains much that suggests an artist's nature and perception. It is at all events a remarkable one, and we look to the sequel to develop the intention of the bold adventurer or adventurers who have launched such a daring bark with such a curious freight upon the dull stream of modern literature.

No man can safely go abroad that does not love to stay at home; no man can safely speak that does not willingly hold his tongue; no man can safely govern that would not cheerfully become subject; no man can safely command that has not truly learned to obey; and no man can safely rejoice but he that has the testimony of a good conscience.—*Mempis.*

PROCESS OF THOUGHT.—I have asked several men what passes in their minds when they are thinking; and I could never find any man who could think for two minutes together. Everybody has seemed to admit that it was a perpetual deviation from a particular path, a perpetual return to it; which, imperfect as the operation is, is the only method in which we can operate with our minds to carry on any process of thought.—*Sydney Smith.*