

ing in the slow, hesitating tone of her childhood.

"Hooray! there's a sensible answer for you. Now I propose that the wedding takes place forthwith. Where's the good of losing time? 'Never delay till to-morrow what you can do to-day,' as Solomon says. What's your opinion, good folks?"

"Mine's decidedly the same as yours, sir," said Louis, promptly.

"Then suppose the affair comes off to-morrow," said the squire, in a business-like tone.

"Oh! no, no!" said Celeste, with such a look of alarm, that the others laughed outright; "a month—two months—"

"Nonsense," said the squire, gruffly, "two months indeed—no, nor two weeks, either. Next Thursday, at the furthest. You can have all your trumpery ready by that time."

"You will have to yield, Celeste," said Gipsy. "Just see how imploringly Louis looks!"

"That's too soon," said Celeste, still pleading for a reprieve. "I never could be ready——"

"Yes, you could," put in Gipsy. "I'll engage to have everything prepared; and, like Marshal Ney, when I enter the field, the battle is won. Now, not another word. Louis, can't you make her hold her tongue? My dear mother, you must try your eloquence."

"You will have to yield, my dear," said Madame, smiling; "there is no use attempting to resist this impetuous daughter of mine."

"Of course there's not, said Gipsy—"everybody does as I tell them. Now, Louis, take the future Mrs. Oranmore out of this. Aunty Gower and I have got to lay our heads together (figuratively speaking); for on our shoulders, I suppose, must devolve all the bother and bustle of preparation."