

promised my father on his death-bed that I would wed the daughter of his friend. As I have said, Charley, I love her very much; but if you wedded her to-morrow, I should love her all the same, and not be in the least jealous. But then, as I have said, I care not a jot for any other woman; and, doubtless, Clara and I will learn to love one another tenderly by and by.

"No doubt," said O'More, with the air of a sage—he was only twenty-two—"unless a man is a savage, or the woman something worse, husband and wife who have lived in friendship together must love one another dearly at last."

"Then the thing is settled, Charley," said Edward McManus. "We shall be married within a month, and you shall be my best man. Yet my heart strangely misgives me."

"And," replied Sir Charles, "when you are sauntering through France, Switzerland, and Italy, with your lovely bride, you lucky dog, I shall be sailing across the broad Atlantic 'Westward ho!'"

"What do you mean?"

"Why simply this, Ned. I shall be sold out, left without stick or stone of property. That honest Dublin attorney, who has always been our lawyer, assures me, as I have said, of more than two thousand pounds. With that money I propose, accompanied by my good foster-brother Pat and his wife (for it is arranged that he is to take our landlord's pretty niece with him), to emigrate to the Western States of America, and there build up, if Heaven will have it so, a new generation of the O'Mores. At all events, I know the Caseys will flourish."

"My poor Charley!"

"Rubbish! Don't talk that kind of thing, Ned. Just look at me. Six feet clean as I stand, by the Lord Harry, when my boots are off, sound in wind and limb—good for any change of fortune. Why, Ned I'm as strong as a horse, and as long-winded as a mountain pony. For a beggar like me, with my splendid physique—have you a word to say against it?"

"No," said McManus, laughing heartily now. "You know how often it stood me in good stead at Eton and Oxford."

"By Jupiter, yes," cried the other impetuously. "But look you here, Ned. Though you have got the physique almost of a woman, you have got the pluck of a hero. Oh! yes, I remember—you would have strangled that big Englishman at Eton, that day, if I had not released your fingers from his cravat and fought him deceitfully afterward, you bloodthirsty little villain. And now you are going to marry his sister!"

"Yes," McManus replied. "But did ever bride-groom in such fashion woo his bride before?"

"By my oath I can't tell," his friend replied. "All I can see is a gay party: a gentlemanly fellow, dressed to his best, as only a handsome beggar like you (worth six thousand pounds sterling a year) can look; a woman more lovely than anything I have ever seen since those exquisite things that confounded Scotchman, Elgin, carried away from Greece. What do you want you confounded puppy? When you are at Rome or Naples, I shall be higgling, with the help of Pat Casey, at New York or Washington for a section out in the far West."

"But will you go, dear Charley?"

"Ho! ho! shall I go? What under Heaven else can I do? Two thousand pounds and odd would melt in six months if I lived in the old style."

"Yet think what you might do."

"For Jove, yes, Ned, but what?"

"Charles O'More is the handsomest and most *distingue* man in Ireland or England. He is clever, accomplished. In spite of his great big brains, he has all the accomplishments that woman loves so much. He is the nominal proprietor of an estate that to a German Prince would be a kingdom. A magnificently beautiful woman is offered him as a wife, whose fortune alone will nearly relieve all the incumbrances on his fine estate. What more does he want to complete his happiness?"

"The woman Charles O'More marries," was the reply, "must be the woman he loves. No such woman do I know at present."

Ah! Charley, replied his friend, "happiness, after all, depends little on beauty, and I fear for mine. But you, with your handsome person and title, might pick up a rich wife. Why not