

LADY BLANCHE MURPHY.

DRIVING in North Conway, New Hampshire, says a correspondent of the *Boston Transcript*, one may cross a little bridge and soon come to Echo Lake, Cathedral Rock and Diana's Baths, and after driving again through the pine woods come out by a sudden turn in the road at Humphrey's Ledges, made famous by Lady Blanche Murphy. The view, to my mind, surpasses anything in the whole mountain region. On the right, looking towards the north, are Thorn, Double Head and Carter Mountains, with a view of Carter's Notch, Wild Cat, Madison and Adams Mountains. On the left, Mt. Webster, Willey, Crawford and Giant's Stairs. We have now arrived at the home of Lady Blanche Murphy, a little house just without the shadow of the ledge, with a pretty little garden in front, enclosed by a rustic fence. Everything wears an air of neatness and taste. Back of the house a meadow stretches off at a distance, with the tall grass waving in the wind, and the whole makes one of the most picturesque spots to be seen anywhere. Lady Blanche, as everybody knows, was the daughter of the Earl of Gainsborough, a graceful little figure, with a quick, elastic step, a fresh, rosy face, and golden-brown hair. The family name of the Earl of Gainsborough is Noel. Since 1632 the Noel family have had the title, but it is within a century that it has passed to the present branch. Her mother, who died before she was twenty years of age, was Lady Augusta, eldest daughter of the Earl of Errol. Born in March, 1845, eldest daughter of a noble house, Lady Blanche had every advantage which wealth and rank could provide, and great natural ability gave her the power of improving her opportunities to the utmost. The Earl, who was a Roman Catholic, had a private chapel at Exeton Hall, where divine worship was celebrated daily, and Mr. Murphy, a handsome young Irishman, came to the manor as teacher of music to Lady Blanche, as well as organist at the chapel. Lady Blanche, who possessed a sweet, flexible voice, sang in the choir, and was thus brought in daily contact with the stranger. It came about in the most natural way that after service was over and the rest of the family had left the chapel, she would remain and practice with the young organist, and thus an intimacy grew up between them.

Mr. Murphy is well known as a musical composer, and is a wonderfully fine performer on the piano. While in Conway I had the pleasure of his acquaintance, which resulted in quite a correspondence, which is still kept up. He is sympathetic, cordial and warm-hearted in his manner, besides being well educated, so that to American perception, at least, it is nothing strange that in the hours spent singing together after matins and Vespers in the chapel, the "glad young voices" pouring through the chapel windows, the young and enthusiastic Lady Blanche and the young organist fell in love with each other. The Earl observed nothing. Lady Blanche had no mother, and the young people were left to weave around themselves a net of dreams and tender fancies undisturbed. A relative visiting the family noticed this intimacy and warned the father, pressing proofs upon him, but he became indignant and refused to listen. Lady Blanche knew that her family would never consent to her marrying below her rank, but she was too intellectual to value over-much the oppressive dignities of English high life, or take pleasure in their restraint; so in March, 1870, she eloped with Mr. Murphy, turning from the honours due to the eldest daughter of a great house, and after a short time spent in London, where they were married, they came to America, where all are declared free and equal, to live under a government which Lady Blanche said she always admired and respected. The Earl in his anger disowned and disinherited her, forbidding her ever to return or see his face again.

While in New York the young wife became known as a contributor to the magazines, Father Hecker, editor of the *Catholic World*, having found her out, and through his influence assisting her. Her husband was also helped to a position as organist in New Rochelle. It is hard to conceive of a more discouraging lot, yet Lady Blanche made her way nobly. She contributed to the *Galaxy* a series of essays on English high life and the English nobility, which attracted much attention, and are well remembered by magazine readers. Also to the *Catholic World*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Lippincott's Magazine*. In the latter part of May, 1877, she wrote a series of chapters, "Up the Rhine," but her writings generally were on deeper subjects.

It was in the autumn of 1875 that Mr. Murphy came to North Conway to teach music in Mr. Fred Thompson's military academy, and the couple took board there. No one knew the wife's rank at first, but her history soon became known and people talked much of the romance of her life. She was exceedingly simple and child-like in her manners; the poorest person was at once at ease in her presence, nor thought of rank or title. She was very kind to the poor, the little children—all to whom she could give comfort or pleasure. On a Fourth of July she took the children of the town to Diana's Baths and gave them a dinner cooked by her own hands. Her interest in the dwellers of the mountain valley was just as real as her love of the scenery. She was always very modest in the good she did. After the completion of her tasteful house—which, though new, does not look so—she made many plans for future good work, and "if she had lived, the benefit of her presence would have been deeply felt in years to come." But it was not to be so. She was taken suddenly ill, and in the spring of 1880, after an illness of only three days, Lady Blanche passed away. As soon as it became known, every heart in the village was heavy and every face sad. It will be very long before she is forgotten by the people of North Conway. Lady B., as they described her, had rather a striking figure, the features irregular, the countenance expressive, with a sweet smile of the mouth. Her skin was beautiful, her cheeks of fresh deep pink, and she had a hearty little laugh which, if the stern Earl could sometimes have heard it, would, no doubt, have comforted him in spite of his displeasure with his child. She often spoke of her father whom she seemed to love very tenderly. Her funeral took place in Portland at the Cathedral; and her body was placed in a receiving tomb, and at a suitable time taken home, at her father's request, and buried in the family vault in the chapel. The Earl never recovered from

the shock of his daughter's death, but died in two or three days after her remains were brought home.

On his dying bed he gave consent that the yearly sum he had allowed his daughter (after all his entreaties for her to return home had proved unavailing) should be allowed to go on with the son-in-law. Mr. Murphy still lives in the little house on the farm bought by his wife a few months before her death. He, too, is a great favorite in the country round, living the life of the gentleman of the old country in a modest way, with his half-a-dozen dogs, his books and music. The first winter that he passed here he taught singing in school for the towns round about, but would take no pay for his service. So the people of Kearsage village bought him a horse and country waggon and presented it as a tribute of their appreciation. Genial, companionable, finely educated, musical, he is a universal favorite. He has composed much church music since his residence in Conway, and some pleasing songs, and is reckoned in the neighbourhood one of the finest pianists in New England. His farm, one year, produced thirty-five tons of hay, and has extensive sheep pastures. The place is only about twenty minutes' ride from Sunset Pavilion, in North Conway, on the road passing Echo Lake and Diana's Baths. The little town of Jackson is a short ride, but a very pleasant one, from Mr. Murphy's; the scenery is charming and the drives are delightful.

DECAY OF OLD CATHOLICISM.

OLD Catholicism dies hard, because it still enjoys not merely the countenance, but also the material support of the most powerful Government of the Continent. Let once this support be withdrawn from it, and it will come down like a stick. In the meantime, it is worth noting that the very men who hailed the first appearance of the sect with unbounded joy fourteen years ago, are beginning to feel heartily ashamed of their *protégé*, not so much because they have any particular affection for the Catholic Church, but because having encouraged the secession of a small and contemptible set from the Catholic Church, they now behold a "dissolving view" in their own body which is very much opposed, indeed, to their interests. We are speaking, of course, of the parsons of the Lutheran Church. These people held a conference at Eisenach last week, and passed certain resolutions, in which Old Catholicism is branded as a plague. Let us but quote one of these resolutions, which is rather prospective than retrospective: "When new sects are formed and apply to the Government for the privilege of being treated as corporate religious bodies, we hold that no such privilege should be granted them, except they prove that their formation answers a public requirement, and that they are not likely to create a factitious discord in existing religious bodies."

The Lutheran parsons, or parochial lords (*Pfarrherren*), as they are called in German, are sadly afraid of the consequences of their own acts. They see new sects forming all around them, out of their own flesh as it were, while Old Catholicism, which is accurately described in their resolution, is vanishing away, and will not give the Catholic Church half as much trouble in future as the many little Bethels that are springing up in Germany are giving to those who fondly hoped that Döllinger would smash up the Church of Rome. —*London Universe*.

The north of Italy has been lately the field of strikes among the reapers. They have had scarcely any work during the year. At Grignano, in the province of Ravenna, they captured the Mayor, J. Benuaro. They wanted him to free some of their companions from prison. While they were trying to stab him, and perhaps kill him, his young daughter dashed in despair through the crowd, rescued her father, and brought him home safe. None dared to touch her. They adopted a sort of war cry like the "*Ca ira*," of the French revolution. Their cry is "*La boje*," which means, "It boils." They compel the farmers to stop work, they resist the police, even the regular attacks of regiments of cavalry and infantry. The situation is bad. Much more so as the soldiers, chiefly recruited among the labourers, do not like to be compelled to fight their own fathers and brothers.

A valued correspondent, writing from Buenos Ayres, says:—It may, perhaps, interest some of our foolish people who are so eager to come to America, and who may suppose that the facilities for saving their souls are the same here as in Ireland to learn that here, in this comparatively settled district (Ramallo), we have just had a visit from our priest after an absence of nine months, and that horsemen are now on their way giving notice to the scattered settlers of his advent! He also attends the Falkland islands and a settlement at Magellan's Straits once a year! I was speaking with him to-day, and he told me that since his absence from the latter places several of the settlers had gone to their last long home. Of course, facts like these are not likely to have any effect on the anti-Irish advocates of emigration, but they may, at least, be expected to influence the minds of Irish Catholics. —*Nation*.

It is as well for the Salvationists that they are carrying on their idiotic campaign, with midnight attacks and the rest of it, far from the haunts of civilized men. How long would they be tolerated in any village which could boast a policeman or two, were they to indulge in such wild proceedings as they perpetrated in the defenceless village of Gomri. This, in their own words, is what they did. "The great campaign in Gujarat. All officers present. Midnight attack on Gomri, 50 strong, brass band to the front. Silent march into the village, people all sleeping. At given signal 50 voices set up a loud shout, while two cornets blast forth. People amazed, tremendous crowds, Mighty Holy Ghost power. Big strapping men crying for mercy. Meeting closed after midnight with 11 souls in the Fountain." Fancy any one but the mild Hindoo putting up with outrages of the kind. Why, even a harmless necessary cat cannot indulge in midnight music without attracting to itself a shower of missiles from every window less than a hundred yards off. The *Indian Witness* wants to know what shape this work will take. It will lead to a terrible assault yet upon the Salvation forces by somebody who objects to their way of making night hideous. —*Bombay Catholic Examiner*.