

the proper decree to make would be that any tenant bringing into court the amount of the interest, the decision of the case should stand over until it was known whether the agreement would be carried out. The order he made was that the decree which the County Court Judge had given for the rent ought to be reduced to the amount of interest on the purchase money. This interest the Lord Chief Baron made payable at the rate of 3½ per cent. The decision is important in maintaining that upon the signing of the agreements of sale the relation of landlord and tenants ceased.

The quarterly return of births, marriages, and deaths, embracing the statistics for the first three months of the year, has been issued by the Registrar-General. In that period 28,986 births and 27,253 deaths were registered, and as 8,376 persons emigrated, the net result is that the population of the country has been reduced by 6,642, and now stands, as estimated to the middle of the year, at 4,790,614. The Irish birth-rate is 24.2 per 1000 persons living, the English is 31.4; the Irish death-rate is 22.8, and the English 21. These figures forcibly illustrate the terrible contrast between the condition of the masses in England and that of the bulk of the population in Ireland. Speaking of the health of the people, Dr. Grimshaw remarks that the death-rate for the first three months of this year is above the average for the March quarter, and is higher than the rate for any quarter since the first three months of the year 1883. This result, he adds, is due in part to the prevalence of measles over an extensive area, and in part to the heavy mortality from diseases of the respiratory system caused by the inclement weather which prevailed for the greater portion of the period. Old people, in particular, seem to have suffered, the number of centenarians whose deaths are recorded being exceptionally large. In some districts half the deaths were of persons over sixty years of age. The weekly issue of health statistics shows that the average annual death-rate represented by the registration in the sixteen principal town districts was 22.9 per thousand of the population, as against 17.6 in twenty-eight large English towns. It varied considerably, as the following figures show: Armagh, 25.8; Belfast, 25.0; Cork, 24.7; Drogheda, 21.1; Dublin, 22.4; Dundalk, 0.0; Galway, 23.5; Kilkenny, 12.7; Limerick, 21.26; Lisburn, 38.7; Londonderry, 16.0; Lurgan, 5.1; Newry, 28.1; Sligo, 19.2; Waterford, 18.5; Wexford, 38.5. In the Dublin Registration District the births registered during the week amounted to 192—106 boys and 86 girls; and the deaths to 156—79 males and 77 females. Nineteen deaths from zymotic disease were registered, being four over the number for the preceding week and 10 under the average of the 19th week of the last ten years.

## A LITTLE ROMANCE.

(From the *Chicago Herald*.)

It was a cruel moment when Miss Grace Courtney, after her change of fortune, first met her former rival, the rich and naughty Miss Marilton. They had been leading belles two years before, in society, and rumor had said were competitors for the hand of young Stuyvesant Mortimer, the sole heir of the banker of that name. But Grace's father had failed and then died, leaving his family destitute. She was glad, in this emergency, to accept a situation as nursery governess in the pretty village of Seaverge, on the shore of Long Island Sound. To go out in this half-melancholy condition to New York, where so many knew her, she felt to be impossible; but here, in this quiet and secluded place, she was not likely to meet former acquaintances, she thought. "In time I shall forget," she said to herself, "as I shall be forgotten."

But, the very summer after she went to Seaverge, an enterprising innkeeper put up a spacious hotel, directly by the water, and laid out around it some 15 acres of ornamental ground. Immediately Seaverge became not only a fashionable resort, but an aristocratic one as well, for the two are not always the same. And here, one morning, when out on an errand, Grace came suddenly on her old rival, who was driving along one of the country roads, in a phaeton, behind a pair of handsome ponies, and with a footman, in livery and cockade, in the rumber.

"I wonder if she will speak to me!" thought Grace, her first impulse being to turn away. But she had a brave soul; and so, after a moment's hesitation, she looked full at Miss Marilton.

The latter saw Grace, and evidently recognised her, for her face flushed, even through its abundant coat of powder; but she did not bow; on the contrary, she stared as if the two had never met before.

"I might have known it," said Grace, bitterly; "our worlds now are different. But what an insolent stare! I am sure if she had been the poor governess and I the heiress I could not have treated her so."

She had known always that Miss Marilton hated her. Nor was the reason far to seek. The latter had come out a year earlier than Grace, and young Mortimer, during the first winter, had been quite attentive. But when Grace took society by storm a twelvemonth after, Miss Marilton lost her half-won conquest.

"She is having her revenge now," thought Grace, with renewed bitterness. "I don't suppose he ever thinks of me. Ah, well, why should he? I am only a poor governess, and, since his father is dead, he is one of the richest young men they say in America." She ended with a sigh, that broke a moment after into a half-contemptuous laugh.

"What do you think I heard?" said Mrs. Leigh to her husband the next day at luncheon. "It is that young Stuyvesant Mortimer is to marry Miss Marilton."

"What! the daughter of the great railway operator?" replied Mr. Leigh. "Well, it's a great catch, even for her. Railroad shares, you know, my dear, have a queer habit often of becoming next door to worthless; but the Mortimer fortune made in railroads, has been transferred to Government bonds and other first-class securities, and as safe as gold itself."

"They say," returned his wife, "that this young Mortimer is one of the handsomest of men and a great swell."

"Ah!" replied her husband. "Well, I don't know him, even in business. In fact, socially, the Mortimers have always moved in a higher sphere than the Leighs. He's been in Europe you know for a year and more, hand and glove, I'm told, with the best people there."

Grace heard this conversation with a beating heart, for she always lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Leigh; their lunch was, in fact, her dinner. She had not heard before of her old lover's absence in Europe, and only knew of his father's death from a paragraph in the newspapers. Naturally, she could not help being moved at this news. But her lip curled with contempt as she recalled the fact that he had deserted her the moment she became poor.

She slept but little that night, naturally. The children were especially trying next day, for the prolonged heat was telling on their tempers. So after lessons were over, Grace started for a walk, following the little brook, on its shady side, as it wound to the sea. It was a pretty streamlet, widening at places to quite a small river, and in others full of water-lilies. Turning a corner, Grace came suddenly on Miss Marilton, sitting in a boat, pretending to fish, but looking up every moment, as if she expected some one.

A pet dog was in the front of the boat. Hearing Grace's step, the pampered play thing sprang up and began to bark furiously at her. At the same instant Miss Marilton detected our heroine, and, opening her large, lazy eyes, stared again, this time even more superciliously than the day before. Grace hurried on as fast as she could, her cheeks hot with mortification. But her haste was not sufficient to carry her out of sight and hearing before she saw a manly form—which she knew only too well—and heard a voice that made every pulse of her body thrill. It was Stuyvesant Mortimer, who had suddenly appeared from a grove on the other side of the stream, and to whom Miss Marilton called to come and row her home, turning her boat, as she spoke, toward him.

How Grace got back to the house that afternoon, she never knew. She must almost have flown, for she was out of breath when she arrived. She was glad when night enabled her to escape from the children again. She spent long hours fighting down her misery. "Yes, there was no doubt," she said to herself. Only the closest intimacy, only an approaching marriage, could explain her tone and manner; it was that of ownership; and his was that of only too willing service." And again she said to herself: "Oh, how I despise him!" And then: "How I despise myself for being affected by it at all!"

The next day broke more sultry than ever. Mrs. Leigh, who was a kindhearted woman in her way, noticed Grace's exhausted air, and attributing it to the heat and the confined schoolroom, suggested that the children should take a holiday.

"They looked a little piqued, poor things, themselves," she said. "I have been promising them a picnic all summer down on Briery Beach. Suppose you all bundle off together in the donkey cart and spend the day there. I will have a nice lunch put up for you. The road for most part of the way lies through shady lanes. You will be better for it, my dear, yourself."

They had gone about a mile, and were slowly climbing a sandy hill, Grace driving, and the two little girls and their brother chattering away in the highest spirits, when suddenly a pedestrian came out from the woods on the right, and, springing nimbly down the bank, was going in the opposite direction, when little May called aloud:

"Don't you know me, Mr.—Mr. Stranger? I'm the little girl who lost her penny yesterday, in the village, and you were the kind gentleman to find it for me."

Grace would have given the world if the child had not spoken for she had recognised again, only too well, that tall, lithe, form, and that free, swinging step. She said to herself: "He saw me; he was hurrying away, and now this vexatious child has called him back; he will think I whispered to her to do it, and he and his bride will jeer at me all the more."

Stuyvesant Mortimer turned at May's call, and coming up to the cart with quick impulsiveness, cried, holding out his hand to the child:

"Why, so it is, absolutely my little fairy, but now disconsolate no longer. We are going on quite an expedition, too, aren't we? A picnic, or something like it?"

Grace's whole body was a quiver of nerves. She sat with her eyes downcast and her face half averted, apparently absorbed in studying her right hand, which held the reins.

"Oh, yes," answered May, "on a picnic. And we're going to have such a jolly time. Don't you wish you were coming, too?"

"Of course I do," with a hearty sympathetic laugh. "Jolly times are not so frequent with me, I assure you, that I can afford to miss a chance of one. But will Miss—Miss—I beg pardon for not knowing her name—allow me—Good God! it is Grace herself!"

Up to this moment he had been so engrossed with the child that he had only a vague idea that there was a governess sitting next to her; but who the governess was, or even if she were pretty, he had no thought. But now, as he looked up, rather expecting to see some sour visaged, middle-aged spinster, he beheld the sweet, downcast profile of the only woman who had ever touched his heart, and who was looking all the more lovely because of her half-mourning dress and the traces of sorrow and suffering on her face. Hence the broken ejaculations with which he checked the request he had been about half sportively to prefer.

His hat, too, was off in a moment. He looked so eager, so astonished, so glad, so rapturous, all in succession, that Grace, who had turned to him coldly at first, was herself astonished, and—shall we say it?—stirred also to her inmost heart. For what could it mean? Was it possible there had been some terrible mistake? Surely that look, the passionate emotion of the voice, were not counterfeit! Her head swam, and she thought she would faint.

"Miss Courtenay," said Mortimer, observing her agitation, mastering her own emotion with a great effort, "I have been seeking you for months—ever since my return from Europe, indeed, May I—" and the pleading tones of his voice were eloquence itself—"do in earnest what I proposed just now in jest? May I join your little