

She held back the cry of alarm that she felt would only add to the shadow on the old house, and to its master's embarrassments. The ruddy light from the leaping fire emboldened her to pause and reason. The sudden draught must come from some opening, a door or window which she had overlooked. She re-lit the candle with steady hand, and, holding it high above her head, began her search.

The two windows were closed, the door bolted and locked securely, the oak-panelled walls seemingly intact. But the shadow of the high-curtained bed fell heavily in one corner, and as the girl neared it the ghostly draught swept icily upon her, heavy with earthy damp.

Tap, tap, tap came the chilling sound, and the flaring light of the candle fell upon a figure—the dim, shadowy figure of an old, white haired man leaning on a cane. In a sudden madness of terror, she flung the silver candlestick she held at the grisly presence. There was a crash, a shock of blinding pain, and all was blank.

'Nell, Nell, oh, Nell darling,' little Mrs. Winter's voice was the first sound that reached her guest. 'Oh, thank God; she is opening her eyes at last! Do you know me, Nell?'

'Bess, dear, yes; what—what has happened?' Miss Lawrence lifted a hand that seemed strangely heavy to her bandaged brow.

'Oh, don't—don't talk, dear, please. The doctor said you must keep very quiet,' said the little lady hysterically. 'You're safe again, quite safe, Nell. Oh, we've all been wild about you for the last six hours. To think of my putting you in that dreadful room. Oh, don't, don't think about it, dear.'

'The room!' repeated the sick girl, her eyes widening with remembered horror; 'the dreadful room—the draught—the tap—oh, Bess, what—what was it? Are, there indeed ghosts—that—that cannot rest?'

'Oh, no, dear, no! Don't look like that, Nell, there was no ghost at all, dear; there never has been. It was only the picture of old Martin Rokeby that fell on you, Nell, when you were bravely looking around, I suppose, for the strange sound. It seems that there was a door behind it of which no one knew. A door whose rusty fastenings had given way, and that sometimes blew open a little, swinging to and fro against the picture, making the strange tap, tap, like an old man's cane. The door opened into the old chapel, and oh, such things as we found hidden there; gold and jewels and family plate—all old Martin Rokeby's vanished wealth. We sent for Jack at once, but the poor fellow has not given a thought to his treasures, he has been so distracted about you. Gave himself dead away before everybody. He is madly in love, as we all can see. Now you must go to sleep—or I'll be simply torn to pieces for talking so much to you, Nell. Your face is flushing up with fever now—do shut your eyes and go to sleep, please.'

And though the little hostess' methods would doubtless have been criticised by a scientific nurse, they proved eminently successful. In suite of the talking, Miss Lawrence began to improve with astonishing rapidity from that moment. Within a week she was downstairs, with her soft hair rippling on the bruise on her temple, and the gentle languor of convalescence only adding to her charms.

Mrs. Winter's other guests had discreetly vanished—only the master of Rokeby remained to watch the red flush deepening on Miss Lawrence's cheek, the starry light brightening in her beautiful eyes. Seated in the carved arm chair before the great log fire in the Manor Hall, she seemed like some fair spirit sent to redeem the fallen fortunes of the race, for the hidden treasure her courage and daring had revealed brought the Rokebys independence, if not affluence, once more.

'It was a strange freak of my great-grandfather,' said the young heir of the house this evening as he sat at her side. 'We always understood that the old gentleman grew very eccentric at the close of his life. The break with his son preyed upon his mind. After his death my grandfather never cared for the place; he spent most of his life abroad, and the grounds were worked by tenant farmers. The house has been little but a burden for years—a burden we could ill afford.'

'But now surely the old roof-tree calls to you?' Miss Lawrence said gently. 'Surely you will come back?'

'That is for you to say,' was the eager, impassioned answer. 'Helen, beloved, I dare speak at last. Your touch has unsealed my lips. My home, my life, my heart are yours. Will you kindle the fireside flame, the altar light, or leave them dark and desolate forever?'

And in the starry beam of the beautiful eyes uplifted to his he read his answer.

So it happened that there was a Christmas wedding in the old Rokeby chapel, for the fair bride thus willed. The sturdy walls had withstood the years bravely; mould and dust were soon cleared away—altar and sanctuary revealed again in all their beauty.

The portrait of old Martin Rokeby, lifted again to a place of honor on the walls, seemed to smile in pale triumph as, amid lights and flowers and bursts of glad music, the solemn voice of the old Mother arose once more within the hallowed walls, blessing the children and the children's children of the young pair whose love had unsealed the closed sanctuary and banished the Rokeby ghost forever.—'Benziger's Magazine.'

The Catholic World

CANADA—The Senior Metropolitan

Owing to the recent death of Archbishop O'Brien, of Halifax, Most Rev. Joseph Thomas Duhamel, D.D., Archbishop of Ottawa, has become the senior Metropolitan of the Church in Canada. He was mitred on October 28, 1874, but his See was not raised to the archiepiscopal dignity until June 8, 1886.

ENGLAND—Presentation to the Duke of Norfolk

The monstrosity which it was found would be the most acceptable marriage gift to his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, and which, after much unavoidable delay, was recently completed, was presented to him at Norfolk House, St. James's Square, on April 27. The Marquis of Ripon read the presentation address, and the Duke suitably replied. In the course of his remarks he made a very complimentary reference to an Irish priest, the Rev. Dr. Loughnan, of the diocese of Armagh.

School Accommodation

The latest returns issued by the Board of Education show (says an English exchange) that there are in England and Wales at present 11,817 Church of England schools, 6145 Council schools, 1063 Catholic schools, and 1189 Nonconformist schools. In the last mentioned are included the schools of the Wesleyans and other denominations making up the whole conglomeration of Free Churchmen, and yet their schools are little more numerous than those of the despised 'Romanists.' Of course their religious requirements are 'provided' for them in the Council schools. The children educated in these various schools are—Church of England, 2,350,176; Council schools, 2,946,511; Catholic schools, 337,868; Nonconformist schools, 551,461. In 1902 previous to the passing of the Education Act, the last year during which returns are supplied as to voluntary subscriptions for maintenance, Anglicans contributed £670,324, Catholics £87,520, and Dissenters £118,303. So we see that Catholics, numbering one-twentieth of the population, supplied one-tenth of the voluntary subscriptions for educational purposes.

Objections to the Education Bill

In the course of an article in the 'Nineteenth Century' for May on the Education Question, the Archbishop of Westminster says: The Government must be well aware that the Bill which was read for the first time on April 9 is not a solution of the Education difficulty. It may, indeed, be passed by the large majority pledged to support Ministerial projects, but in this event it will most certainly not prove to be a settlement of the question, and will give rise to fierce local contests all over the country, leading eventually to a fresh appeal to Parliament. His Grace goes on to point out that while the Protestant conscience is to be 'satisfied at the public expense, the non-Protestant conscience is to receive no such satisfaction unless its possessors are willing to pay for it. 'This,' says the Archbishop, 'is the essential injustice of the Bill in that it sets up two standards of appreciation, and makes men suffer, in their purse at least, for their conscientious religious convictions. Mr. Birrell's speech was eloquent, earnest, and lucid, but there was one sentence which must have jarred upon the ears of many who heard it. "All minorities must suffer: it is the badge of their tribe." His proposals will place upon the consciences of many one of those perfectly avoidable hardships which he declares it to be the special province of an enlightened Liberalism to remove. The Protestant conscience and the conscience which cannot accept Protestantism ought to be treated alike, and no burden placed on the latter of which the former has been relieved.' His Grace then sets forth four of the Catholic objections to the Bill—(1) Why should Catholic children in districts of less than 5000 inhabitants be deprived of a distinctively Catholic school? (2) How can a non-Catholic local