

tried to talk very nice and gentlelike to Miss Ernestine; but she looked as haughty as could be, and took no more notice of his remarks than if he was a block of wood.

Next day and the next the snow kept on falling, falling, deeper than I ever saw it afore or since. Your mother took sick the third day of the storm and went to bed. Miss Ernestine sat beside her all day long and held her hand, but I never heard either of them say a word. Just about twilight Miss Ernestine called me, saying: "Stay with mother until my return, Nana. And she kissed me, to my great surprise; for I didn't remember her doing that since she was a baby. Next she went to her mother, who was dozing just then, and kissed her hand many times.

I must have sat there two hours before your mother awoke. She seemed very troubled and said: "O Nana, I have seen the Lavender Lady! Tell me it was a dream—surely it was a dream. Did you see her? She came here to the bottom of the bed and pointed out to the rhododendrons. Nana, what can it mean? I fear some great misfortune—" "Oh, stop, my dear mistress," I cried. "It is a bad dream." Though I did not believe it, I feared as much as she. But I chafed her hands and bathed her head, and raked my brain for any funny story I had ever heard, to get her mind off the ghost.

"Was it really the ghost, then, Nana?" "That I can't tell you, dearie; but that some calamity was upon us I felt in my bones, and so it was.

The snow had ceased about four o'clock, and a clear frost succeeded it. Miss Ernestine did not come to inquire for her mother or to breakfast. I went to her bedroom and found it empty, the bed undisturbed. Then I remembered the ghost of your mother's dream, and my knees trembled so that I could hardly crawl to the library to tell your father. He pook-pooked it, said Miss Ernestine was hiding to scare everyone. "At any rate," I said, "she could not leave the house through all this snow without leaving her footprints in it."

He caught at this eagerly, showing that he had been more harried about it than you would think from his words. The both of us went together past every window and door, but not a footstep anywhere disturbed the smooth sheet of snow, near two feet deep, which lay around the hall. What time had I seen her the night before, he asked. It had been just about sunset when she left us, bidding me stay with her mother until she returned. I told your father of her words, but said nothing about your mother's dream, knowing how impatient he was of "that woman's tomfoolery," as he would have called it.

Well, the longer we looked the more disturbed in his mind he became. We went round the house and in and out of her room a dozen times before we spoke of it to your mother. He opened Miss Ernestine's window to see if she could have let herself down by a rope, but the show on the window-ledge was undisturbed and the window latched. I hunted about, hoping she might have left a note, but never a sign could I find. Your father was nearly frantic with grief, but he showed it only at first and to no one but me. He was too proud to let the servants see his feelings.

The mystery only increased with searching; for nine days they talked of nothing else in the servants' hall. Foster, the cook, and in fact nearly all the servants, firmly believed that the Lavender Lady had spirited her away. I was foolish enough to tell them of Missus' dream, and that only served to make them the more certain of it. Not one of them would dare to go near the picture-gallery or rhododendron bushes after dark for anything.

"Why?" inquired Ethelberta. "What had the rhododendron bushes to do with it, Nana?"

"But that is another story," said the nurse. "Run and dress for dinner, or your father will have his soup cold waiting for you."

Regretfully Ethelberta left the little sewing-room, now quite dark, and directed her steps along the picture-gallery toward her own bedroom at the farther end of it. She was half ashamed of herself to find she had run past the portrait as fast as she could, and tried to persuade herself it was all on account of the soup.

Ethelberta and her father sat down to dinner, as usual, alone. The long, lofty dining-hall seemed to accentuate the solitariness of the repast. The old, white-headed Foster stood behind his master's chair, as he had done any time the last 30 years.

Ethelberta's cheeks were unusually bright from excitement, and she looked a picture of youth and beauty in her simple white dress. Her father touched her arm caressingly before taking his seat, saying playfully:

"And where has my Miranda been dyeing her cheeks to-day? One would think she had been helping Ferdinand chop wood on the enchanted island."

Ethelberta blushed violently, with a half-guilty feeling, though she did not understand her father's words.

"I have been studying, father, the works of art in your picture-gallery."

"Ah!" said her father, glad to find her showing some appreciation of such things. "And what, may I ask, chained your wandering fancy the longest?"

"The portrait of a lady in lavender," she replied. "There you show some discernment, my child. That portrait, though a trifle dingy now, is by Vandyke, and the most valuable in the collection."

"What was her name, father? And what made her look so sad?" asked the young girl.

Her eye now happened to rest on the the usually immovable countenance of Foster. He was standing at the sideboard, with a decanter of port wine in his hand, which trembled perceptibly. His eyes were fixed on his master's face, and he bent forward, in the intensity of his anxiety, to see how he would take this allusion to the forbidden theme.

"Her name," he said, "was Ernestine. Great mystery surrounds her fate; but it was, presumably, a melancholy one."

"Tell me about her, father. What was her history? When did she live?"

"The portrait, I believe, bears the date 1637. It was about ten years later that her flight took place. Her husband was in France with Prince Charles, and she was left alone in the house with her infant son, having no one but the family chaplain and servants to protect her. Catholics at that time were in great danger from Cromwell's army. Terrible tales had reached her of their treatment of different papist families, and of their desecration of Worcester Cathedral—riding rough-shod through the building, mutilating the priceless old carvings.

"One snowy night news came to her that the army was in sight and fast approaching Branscombe Hall. From these soldiers her life would hardly have been in danger, but she did not know this, and was in mortal terror. She had a boat waiting at the river, in case of need, should the army surprise her. It is supposed that the lady, with her child and the *padre*, escaped by that means. She watched at the window for the soldiers, but they came in a different direction from the one from which she expected them. Consequently they were at the hall before she knew it. Her first admonition of their presence was a sound of trampling in the chapel. When she looked toward it she saw the sacred images flung roughly out and shattered in pieces on the gravel walk.

"Panic-stricken, she flew before them. When last seen by one of the servants, she was down in the rhododendron thicket, clasping her child in her arms. The servant followed her as soon as possible, but no trace of her could be found. Whether she sailed away toward France and was lost on the seas; or, as some have affirmed, was caught and killed by the soldiers, remains a mystery to this day. This latter fate, though, would seem highly improbable. At any rate, in her flight she was somehow separated from the chaplain and her child.

"He subsequently rejoined the child's father in France, but that fair lady was never seen again. The impenetrable mystery surrounding her fate is, I suppose, accountable for any silly ghost stories you may have heard. Foolish persons have from time to time imagined they saw her form appearing, where she was last seen in life, in the rhododendron thicket."

"But, O father," exclaimed Ethelberta eagerly, "are you positive there are no such things as ghosts?"

"My dear child," he replied, smiling, "there are few things about which any but the very young people are positive."

(To be concluded in our next issue).

## The Catholic World

### AFRICA.—The Bishop of Uganda.

The current number of *Illustrated Catholic Missions* announces the impending return to Europe of Bishop Hanlon, who will doubtless receive a warm welcome from those who have followed his work in Uganda, that outpost of the Church and the Empire. It is pointed out that the long and toilsome journey of two months and a-half from the coast with a caravan, which he and his companions had to perform in 1895, will be exchanged on his homeward route for the railway trip for the principal part of the way from Uganda to Mombasa.

### ENGLAND.—A Clifton Priest Honored.

By a Brief dated June 11, the Pope has graciously appointed Canon Kennard, of the diocese of Clifton, Domestic Prelate to his Holiness, in special recognition of the service he has rendered to the Catholic students at Oxford.

### A Statue to Blessed John Fisher.

A statue has been erected in St Michael's Church, Chatham, in memory of Blessed John Fisher, of Rochester Cathedral, who was martyred in 1535.

### The Body of St. Edmund.

The body of St. Edmund, the Saxon King and martyr, which has lain for so many centuries in Pontigny (says the *London Monitor*), is to find a final resting place in the new Westminster Cathedral. As, however, the building operations in Ashley Place are not yet sufficiently advanced for the reception of the body, it will be placed for the present in the Duke of Norfolk's private chapel at Arundel Castle. The sacred burden has been brought over *via* Dieppe and Newhaven to Arundel, under the care of the Mgr. Merry Del Val, Archbishop of Nicaea, and was solemnly received at the station by his Eminence Cardinal Vaughan and his Lordship the Bishop of Southwark, who were accompanied by the Duke of Norfolk and a number of clergy and laity.

### Religious Procession in London.

The annual procession in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, took place at the Italian Church, London, on Sunday afternoon, July 21. As usual on this occasion, the streets of the Italian quarter about Hatton Garden were profusely decorated with flags, pictures, paper roses, and other adornments. More particularly Eyre street Hill, with its gorgeous archway opening on the Clerkenwell road, looked like a piece taken bodily out of one of the cities of the South. The brilliant sunshine contributed materially to this effect, and at the same time drew thousands of people to view what is, from some aspects, the most remarkable of the Catholic open-air demonstrations, which have become common of late years. The procession left the Italian Church about 3.30 p.m., traversed the principal thoroughfares of the parish, returning to the church, where Benediction was given by the Rev. Father Fletcher.

### Reception by Cardinal Vaughan.

His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan held a reception at his residence on July 22, to which a special interest attaches, as the first reception held in the new Archbishop's House in Ashley Place. The