

children while he was here, an' 'tis little they thought 'twas a near cousin of their own was paintin' 'em. There is the three of 'em beyond—fine young women now," said Mrs. Hayes, pointing to the ladies who so annoyed the over-sensitive student a few minutes before. "But the pictures are all there still, an' if ever you are at the Castle 'twould be worth your while to look at 'em—you'd think they wor alive. But he was always practisin'. That an' playin' the flute was all that troubled him."

"So, 'twas while he was at the castle he saw Miss Cleary?"

"Yes, sir; but he was shipwrecked, an' a'most dhroned, an' Father Ned took him to the house where he lodged, an' Miss Annie nursed him; for 'twas thought he'd never get over it. An', afther that, he went about paintin' at the great houses. An' that's the way it came about. Poor Miss Annie was an orphan, you know, sir, an' lived wid her uncle ever since she came from the convent where she was educated. I'm told they had nothin' to live on but what he was able to earn, an' his brother an' all his family turned against him. 'Tis said now that Sir Thomas is near his end, an', as he never got married, Miss Annie's husband, I suppose, will come in for the property."

"And the title," added Father Carroll. "By the way, I trust it may turn out well for our friends at Ballinacash."

"Why, what difference can it make to them?" Edmund asked.

"Oh, 'tis a matter of no little anxiety to a farmer to know what sort his new landlord will be. But any change is likely to be for the better in this case; for the present man is a rack-renter."

"I never heard Mr. Kearney say anything against him," returned Edmund. "Though he is by no means sparing of censure," he added, laughing. "'Tis a treat to listen to his comments sometimes."

"Yes, but he has a lease," replied Father Carroll. "But numbers of his tenants have been smashed trying to pay impossible rents. I should not wonder if his agent, old Pender, is urging him on in this course. But I'm inclined to think his brother will be a kind landlord, unless he is led astray; and it is said, too, Sir Thomas will leave the property greatly incumbered."

"Why, Arthur," exclaimer Edmund, "as your cousin's black eyes made so deep an impression on your boyish heart, I can't help thinking, if her daughter be at all like her, you had better keep out of her way, or she will spoil your vocation."

"I am not likely to come in contact with her," returned Arthur. "Though, for her mother's sake, I should like to know her."

"Of course, if he succeeds to the property, he will return to Ireland."

"I think not," Arthur replied. "It is said he is a complete Frenchman in his tastes and habits, and I suspect he will always live on the Continent. But where are we going to go?"

"To Tramore," Edmund answered.

"Nonsense," returned Arthur. "Let us go somewhere where there will be no crowds. I detest the class of people you meet at these bathing places."

"Oh, yes," rejoined Edmund, laughing. "I remember your notions in that respect. You used to say you could imagine yourself marrying a peasant girl or a high-born lady; but that you could not abide the *bourgeoisie*."

"That is my idea still," replied the student. "They are a compound of ridiculous pride and vulgarity. But a peasant girl is seldom vulgar to my mind."

"Well, I have seen something of all classes," Father Carroll observed, "and I must say I have met some women of the class you condemn, who certainly were neither ignorant nor vulgar."

"He's a humbug," said Edmund Kiely, as if his friend's remark had nettled him a little. "'Tis sour grapes with him, because a certain lady had the bad taste to prefer me to himself, once upon a time. You know we were always sure to be smitten by the same divinity, and though I gave him every fair play, he was never able to win a single smile

the moment I entered the lists against him. And that's why he detests the sort of people one meets at the seaside. But what do you say to Tramore?"

"I vote for it," Father Carroll replied. "I suppose old associations have something to do with it, but I can enjoy a stroll along the 'Great Strand,' more than I can the grandest cliffs and finest scenery we have. And then we'll be sure to meet some old friends there."

"Hear, hear," Edmund exclaimed. "We start to-morrow. I'll introduce you," he continued, turning to Arthur, "to the brightest and most fascinating little being that ever turned a wise man's head. And an heiress, too, for she is an only child, and her father is as rich as a Jew."

"I don't want to be introduced to her," was the reply. "The less I see of such people the better I like it."

"I suppose it is Miss Delany?" said Father Carroll. "I heard something about her. She has got an immense deal of polishing at all events."

"And it has not been thrown away—nor has it spoiled her in the least," returned Edmund. "But, by the way, I'm told Mary Kearney has turned out a downright beauty. My little sister Grace says I must marry her. She is twenty times handsomer, Grace says, than Minnie Delany. But I always thought her sister Anne would be a finer girl."

"I have not seen them for a long time," said Father Carroll. "I'm in the black books with their mother, it is so long since I paid her a visit. Father Hannigan told me she was saying to him that the world was gone when one's own flesh and blood will forget you and pass by your door without inquiring whether you are dead or alive. In fact, I got what Barney Brodherick calls 'Ballyhooly' from her. 'After getting him the best servant in the three counties,' said she, 'never as much as to say "Thank you!"' I am quite afraid to show my face to her. I suppose you have met Richard in Dublin?"

"Yes, we had some pleasant evenings at his uncle's. He will soon be a full-blown surgeon. I am promising myself a few days' shooting with Hugh shortly, and, if you could manage to come while I am there, I'll make your peace with Mrs. Kearney, as I am a great favorite of hers."

"Do you know any of them, Arthur?" Father Carroll asked.

"No, I never met any of them," he replied. "But I often heard of them."

"Come," said Edmund, pushing away his plate, "let us go out and look about us. Do you ever venture into Major French's grounds? I'd like to get a nearer view of those nymphs I caught a glimpse of as I was coming in. Unless it be that 'distance lends enchantment to the view,' they are worth looking at."

"Yes, we can cross the river by the weir," returned Father Carroll. "There is a place there in a grove of large fir-trees called the Priest's Walk. Poor Father Cleary was accustomed to read his Office there for more than forty years; and it is even whispered that he may be met there still on a moonlight night. It was there his niece and her husband always walked, too, Mrs. Hayes tells me. But, according to Tom Doherty, there are other associations of not quite so innocent a character connected with the Priest's Walk; particularly one in which a French governess figures."

"Oh, let us go to the place at once," exclaimed Edmund, tossing his white hat carelessly on his brown curls, "and you can tell the story of the governess; and who knows but we may catch a glimpse of the old priest and his beautiful niece? I wish I could believe in such things."

"Just wait till I tell Tom Doherty that we are to start early in the morning. But what do you say to a glass of punch before going out?"

"Oh, wait till we come back, and sitting in that old chair I'll drink the health of all true lovers, and sympathising uncles, who, like kind old Father Ned, will let them be happy."

(To be continued.)

A Reverend Father was recently under treatment in a Wellington dental surgery, and was greatly impressed with the soothing effect of Q-tol, which the dentist rubbed into his inflamed gums.

**The Crown Studios**

266 QUEEN STREET (opp. Strand Theatre) and SYMONDS STREET (opp. St. Benedict's), AUCKLAND. Queen St. Tel ephone 1422; Symonds St. Telephone 2386  
Photographs by Day or Night. Wedding Groups a Specialty.