

MISS TREMORNE'S ELOPEMENT.

SEVERAL years ago, when I was a rather raw youth of two-and-twenty, just commencing the cultivation of a promising mustache, found myself stationed near Donegal county, Kerry, Ireland, in the capacity of Lieutenant of Revenue. My special business was that of ferreting out illicit distilleries, and contraband liquor. I generally had my hands full, these seizures generally taking place amid the lonely hills of Kerry, where the distilleries were carried on in secret caves or hidden morasses by a set of hardy and desperate Irishmen, always ready to oppose the police, were not unattended with danger; but there was one adventure which befell me, of a more peaceable nature than the rest, which at the time affected me more unpleasantly than any amount of skirmishing or fighting would have done.

It so happened that, among the anonymous "informing" letters that one morning came to hand, was one giving information of two casks of spirits smuggled from the hills on the night previous, by order of Mr. Tremorne, agent of Lord L—, who was the great landed proprietor of this part of Kerry; and which casks were now securely reposing in that gentleman's cellar. Accompanying the note was an order from the superintendent of revenue, commanding the immediate seizure of the liquor in question.

Now it so happened that I was greatly indebted to Mr. Tremorne (an English gentleman) and his family, for various kind and flattering attentions received since my arrival at Donegal. Many a sumptuous dinner had I partaken of at his board, and often I had been invited to a pleasant dance at his house, when his pretty niece, Miss Montague, happened to be staying there—as was now the case. In truth, I had been more impressed by the bright eyes of Clara Montague, than I had courage to show, especially as there was a spice of mischief about her which made me rather shy of her. I had generally, therefore, sheltered my youthful bashfulness beneath the wing of Miss Cassandra Tremorne, sister of my host, whom I found always extremely kind and gracious. To her, some ten or twelve years my senior, I felt no timidity in offering those little attentions which to a younger damsel would have appeared more pointed—such as escorting her to church or promenading the piazza in the moonlight. True, I had observed that she was very sentimental and that of late she frequently sighed, and pressed my arm when leaning upon it, and the last time I had seen her she quoted poetry, and remarked that life was desolate without some one to love. These signs and tokens of sensibility I had in my own mind referred to some early disappointment in love, or other sad recollections of past more youthful days; and I had not thought it amiss to express my sympathy by a gentle pressure in return.

Such was my position in regard to the Tremorne family; and the reader can now understand my embarrassment upon finding this disagreeable business thrust upon me. How could I go upon such an errand to the house where I had been so hospitable entertained? How could I wound, and as it were, insult the feeling of the family by accusing its head—himself a magistrate and a sworn foe to the smugglers—violating the laws which it was his duty to enforce? Mrs. Tremorne in especial, a proud, sensitive, and nervous woman would particularly feel the outrage; besides which, it would almost be impossible to keep the matter a secret from the public, in which case the reputation of Mr. Tremorne would be ruined, and might even risk losing his magistratical office.

In this dilemma, I summoned my sergeant, Floyd, and to him freely explained the affair, knowing he was to be trusted.

"Very unpleasant," was his comment when he heard me through; "and I can see but one way out of it."

"But one way! I confess that I can see none."

"Why you might tip him the wink—give him a hint that you may have to visit the Moor this evening at ten o'clock. He'll know what to do—hey?"

"Capital! But suppose, after all, the informer may be mistaken, and there are no spirits there? He'd never forgive my suspicion and officiousness."

"Then try his wife instead!"

"Mrs. Tremorne! She'd faint at the first word."

"The niece, then?"

"Miss Montague! Good gracious! I—she—"

You mean that in that case you'd do

the fainting? But come, excuse me, lieutenant, and if you object to the young lady, the old one will do—Miss Cassandra, I think she is called."

"Yes, upon consideration, I thought this the best plan. Miss Tremorne was good-natured—less nervous than her sister-in-law, and more capable of acting rationally than her girlish niece. She would know how to arrange matters; and accordingly, the sergeant was instantly dispatched to waylay Miss Cassandra in her regular evening walk in the park, and as privately and delicately as possible to give the required "hint"—nothing coarse, nothing plainly stated, but the merest shawowing forth of the business in hand.

In an hour the sergeant returned. He had been successful in his mission, which he thus related to me:

Concealing himself in the shrubbery as he saw the lady approaching, he stepped forth when she was within a few paces of him, and removing his cap, bowed profoundly by way of assurance that nothing disrespectful was intended. She had started back upon first seeing him, and was evidently prepared for a scream.

"Madame," said the sergeant, hastily, "pray do not be alarmed. I am the bearer of a message to you from Lieutenant Charney."

"Oh, indeed! From Lieutenant Charney?"

"Yes madame. He requested me to see you as privately as possible, and say to you that he will call at the Moor at ten o'clock this evening, and hopes that you will understand his business, and so arrange it that nothing unpleasant shall occur."

Well she turned all sorts of colors, and looked furtively around, as if fearing some one might be in sight or hearing—a sure proof that she knew already about the spirits.

"Good gracious," said she, coloring, "I had not expected this so soon. Will not to-morrow do as well?"

"I fear not, madame. The lieutenant is anxious to have it concluded as soon as possible, and has already engaged for this evening, if you can be ready in time. You can, I suppose, ma'am, find some one to remove the—the—the things, without the knowledge of the family."

"The trunks, you mean?" says she, looking relieved, and clasping her hands nervously.

"Trunks?" exclaimed I, as the sergeant here paused.

"Yes. Don't you see? The agent's a sly one, no doubt, and had the kegs smuggled to the Moor in trunks, like any ordinary baggage."

"Oh, ah, to be sure! Very cute that!"

And we both laughed.

"You think, then, sergeant, that all will be right?" I inquired.

"Dog sure. She understood the business at once, and though she looked nervous and excited, like all womankind, when there's anything to be done, she'll know how to act, depend on't."

At precisely five minutes of ten, accordingly, I, at the head of my little party of six men, was approaching the house at the Moor. The night was still and clear; a new moon faintly illumining the scene, and scarcely a leaf stirring as we walked briskly up the winding avenue.

Lights shone from various windows of the mansion, for the Tremornes kept late hours, and the sound of a piano, and occasional shadows flitting across the curtains, told me that they had visitors.

I resolved, therefore, to wait awhile, until these had left; and accordingly bidding the men remain amid the shrubbery, I advanced a short distance, keeping in the shadow of a mountain laurel, and stood reconnoitering.

Hardly had I occupied my station five minutes when a tall, thin figure, dressed in black, stole out of a side door, and came rapidly and noiselessly toward me.

"Is—is it you?" asked a trembling voice, which I recognized as that of Miss Tremorne.

"Lieutenant Charney," answered I advancing a little into the light.

She clasped her hands upon my arms, and I saw that she was trembling.

"I—I watched for you," she faltered.

"I—I am so nervous—so frightened."

"My dear Miss Tremorne," said I, sympathizingly, "don't agitate yourself. There is no cause for alarm—if—if you have made the necessary arrangements."

"Yes," she whispered, leaning rather heavily upon me. "All is ready; but, oh, this is so sudden, so unexpected—how can I help my feelings overcoming me?"

"Yes," said I, soothingly, "I know, but; but believe me, all shall be done as delicately as possible, so as not to wound the feelings of yourself and family."

"But it will be so public. By to-morrow all the country will know it, and what will the people say?"

"Trust me, that no one will blame you. They will say that you did right; that your affections had led you—"

Here she pressed so closely to me, and squeezed my hand, that I felt a little embarrassed, and paused in my speech.

"I presume," I continued after a pause, "that the company will not remain very long?"

"Not long, and therefore must we hasten before I am missed. I had to be very artful, and pretended to have a headache, by way of excusing my absence from the company this evening," she added, with a playful tender smile.

"And the—the—the goods, you know. Of course they are safe—removed."

"Why, no. I had no one that I could trust, and somehow they seemed to suspect something—at least Clara did—she's so prying and so—"

"Not removed!" exclaimed I, in consternation. "Good heavens! what can we do, with those things still here? It will spoil all."

"I concluded you would bring some one with you to help, and the trunks are now in my own room, if you could only get them out. There is no danger of our being seen, for no one is in that part of the house, and we can enter by a private door."

There was no help for it, and directing the sergeant to accompany me, in order to assist in removing the trunks, I followed Miss Cassandra to a side entrance, and cautiously along a dark passage to a door, before which she paused an instant.

"It is so strange," said she coyly, "to admit a—one of the other sex into my own apartment."

"But circumstances," I observed, almost as bashfully, "will excuse, will justify—"

"Hush!" said she, in a low whisper.

"Did you hear nothing?"

"No. Let us hasten, or it will be too late."

She softly opened the door, and I stepped into the room, faintly lighted by the moon shining through three large windows. Sure enough, there was a large-sized trunk standing near the door, ready strapped, labelled, and presenting a very business-like appearance.

"Is that all?" I asked.

"Except a valise, which I can carry myself."

"A valise?"

"Yes; containing a few light articles—"

"Oh, bottles, I presume."

She looked a little surprised, but made no answer, except to say:

"Be quick with the trunk, or we may be interrupted, and—"

"Hush!"

It was I who now uttered the warning. I fancied—it might have been only a fancy—that I had caught a sound, something like a suppressed giggle, at no great distance from us.

But, as I would have turned to summon the sergeant to aid me in the removal of the trunk, Miss Cassandra again laid her clasped hands upon my arm and leaned against my shoulder.

"Oh, dear!" sighed she, "I feel so dreadfully in taking this step."

"Dear madame, pray do not vex yourself about it. All will be well, I trust."

"If you could appreciate the sacrifice which I am now making!"

"Sacrifice!"

"For the sake of one I love, it is none, certainly."

"Certainly not."

"You will remember," said she, tenderly, "you will remember in our future years all that I have this night undergone for your sake."

"For my sake?"

"For yours only, whom you know I love most on earth."

"Good gracious! Miss Tremorne—I—"

A horrible doubt, a terrible suspicion flashed upon me. I withdrew a little from her embrace, and with a pale face faltered:

"May I ask what—what is contained; whether the whisky is in the trunk?"

"Whisky!" she exclaimed, starting back.

"Yes, ma'am, the spirits which—"

"Oh, I understand; your feelings have overpowered you, as myself. You need some stimulant, of course; but I never carry such things in my trunk. Here, take a little of this."

And she took from a shelf in a closet a small flask, and pouring a portion of its contents into a glass, anxiously presented it to my lips. In the emotions which almost rendered me faint, I took the glass and drained it off without ceremony.

"Do you feel better, dearest?" tenderly inquired my fair companion, passing

her hand caressingly over my forehead, and bending her face alarmingly near my own. "If so, we had better hasten without further delay, or we may be discovered, and our plans of happiness defeated."

At this interesting moment, and before I had time to rise from the trunk upon which I had unconsciously sank in my momentary weakness, a door opposite, by which I had entered, burst suddenly open. There stood Mrs. Tremorne, holding a lamp in her hand, and relieved against a back-ground of half a dozen other faces, among which I only saw the laughing one of Miss Montague, and that of Mr. Tremorne, black and threatening as a thunder cloud.

"Villain!" cried the latter, stepping forward and seizing me by throat. "Villain! What do you want here, in my sister's chamber?"

Cassandra threw herself forward to my rescue.

"Let him go!" she shrieked. "It was I who brought him here!"

"You! and you dare tell me this?"

"Only to—to take away the trunk—We are going away. He is my promised husband!" she screamed, desperately.

"Your husband—that boy. Your grandson, you mean?"

"Brute!"

"Fool! and at that time of life, when you ought to know better. But that I am sure you must have led the boy into this, I would choke him where he stands, and—"

He was cut short by a sudden and strong grasp upon his own throat.

"You would oppose His Majesty's officers in the performance of their duty, would you?" cried Floyd. "Here, men! seize him, arrest him! He's assailed His Majesty's revenue officers while obeying orders!"

The men in obedience to the first word shouted from the window, now rushed for the house. Some of the assembled party fled—others stood still and shrieked, while others again, attracted by the noise, rushed upon the scene.

"What does this mean?" gasped Mr. Tremorne, when the sergeant's relaxed grasp enabled him to speak.

"It means that we have come here to make a seizure—not of your sister, but of two casks of contraband spirits, smuggled into the house last night."

Mr. Tremorne turned pale.

"How do you know?" he faltered.

"Good authority, here's the warrant," and he read it aloud.

"You did not then, Lieutenant Charney," said Mrs. Tremorne, addressing me, "you did not intend an elopement with Cassandra?"

"My dear madame, I assure you that I never had such an idea. I merely wishing to spare your feelings, requested Miss Tremorne to have the spirits removed or rather hinted to her that I would call to-night on a special errand—and she, it seems most unfortunately misunderstood my meaning."

"I see," said Mrs. Tremorne, scornfully; "and served her right."

Here Miss Cassandra fell down in a violent fit of screaming and kicking.

"The wretch!" she shrieked. "He has ruined my good name! He will have to—to marry me—or expose the family to disgrace! I will sue him—for breach of—"

"Take her away," cried the master of the house, to the servants; and my fair *inamorata* was borne kicking and sobbing from the stage.

What need to explain further? My readers can easily imagine all that followed—except my inexpressible shame and mortification, not unmingled with a spice of resentment on witnessing the mischievous delight of Miss Montague, who scarcely attempted to restrain it on the stern remonstrance of her uncle. The last words I heard as I left the house were:

"Oh, dear, was ever anything so rich? Positively as good as a play, to see him sitting there on the trunk as pale as a lily, and trembling, with her arms around his neck."

This night's adventure cured me of my love, as I presume it did Miss Cassandra, whom I never saw again. She went to reside with a sister in England during the remainder of my stay at Donegal.

Some of the sums in the mental arithmetics have about as much sense in, as the following: "If four dogs, with 16 legs can catch 29 rabbits, with 87 legs in 44 minutes, how many legs must the same rabbits have to get away from 8 dogs, with 32 legs, in 17 minutes and a half."

Leisure is sweet to those who have earned it, but burdensome to those who get it for nothing.

SUNDAY READING.

Responsibilities of Parents.

A pious mother, in her prayers with her little son, was accustomed to lay her hand upon his head. She died while he was yet too young to realize the loss he had sustained. He grew up an uncurbed and wayward boy, whom none seemed to understand, and few to love. Yet in his most reckless and passionate paroxysms, something seemed partially to restrain and rule him. He said it was a "hand upon his head, like the mother's hand." Often he yielded at its touch, and wept bitterly. In the flush and fever of youth, he traveled widely over foreign lands. Vice tempted him, and the virtue which should have withstood it, had but a frail rooting. Still, something withheld him. It was the same "hand upon his head,"—a soft, cool hand. He dared not utterly cast off its control.

In his old age he said to some children: "A hand is upon my head,—upon my few hoary locks,—the same hand that used to rest in prayer among the fresh sunny curls of my infancy; and if I am ever saved, it will be by that mother's hand, and my Redeemer's mercy."

Bad Bargains.

Once a Sabbath school teacher remarked that he who buys the truth make a good bargain; and inquired if any scholar recollected an instance in Scripture of a bad bargain.

"I do replied a boy. 'Esau made a bad bargain when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.'"

A second said: "Judah made a bad bargain when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver."

A third boy observed: "Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain who to gain the whole world, loses his own soul."

I have seen a good many boys in my time who have made bad bargains. Some change the Sunday-school for the street and home for wicked company; and the Bible for bad books; and health for tobacco. They always get the worst of it. Boys, look out for these bad bargains.—*Young Reaper.*

Lazy Boys.

An exchange says, a lazy boy will make a lazy man as sure as a crooked sapling will make a crooked tree. Who ever saw a boy grow up in idleness that did not make a shiftless vagabond when he became a man, unless he had a fortune to keep up appearances? The mass of thieves, criminals and paupers have come to what they have, by being brought up in idleness. Those who constitute the business part of the community—who make our great and useful men—were taught in their boy-hood to be industrious. Boy, take pipe out of your mouth and think of this.

What folly is it that with such care about the body which is dying, the world which is perishable before our eyes, time which is perpetually disappearing, we should so little care about that eternal state in which we are to live forever when this dream is over! When we shall have lived ten thousand years in another world where will be all the cares and fears and enjoyment of this? In what light will we then look upon the things which transport us with joy, or overwhelm us with grief?

Man must have occupation, or be miserable. Toil is the price of appetite—of health and enjoyment. The very necessity which overcomes our natural sloth is a blessing.

Since the year 1833, one hundred and five missionaries have died in the foreign field. Of the number 52 were males, and fifty-three were females.

The Roman Catholic Cathedral in Peking, China, has been fired and totally consumed, and a number of the missionaries and converts murdered.

God writes the gospel, not in the Bible alone, but on the trees and flowers, and clouds, and stars.

He who does his best, however little, is always distinguished from him who does nothing.

If the best man's fault, were written on his forehead, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.

There is no real use in riches, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit.