FICKLE FRAUDS.

Umbrella, novelette and shawl,
He carried one and carried all,
And gave the lady his free hand
To help her down upon the sand.

The huge umbrella lent its shade
To grateful man and gracious maid;
With all the world quite close at hand
They felt alone upon the sand.

Some flimsiest web that fiction weaves
She read; he idly turned the leaves;
And so it happened that their hands
Touched now and then upon the sands.

Her shawl was fluttered by the breeze,
And both ess yed the folds to seize,
And so it happened that their hands
Met once again upon the sands.

She did not mean it should be so,
But he forgot to let hers go;
And she forgot to claim her hand,
And thus they sat upon the sand.

The book was closed, the shawl blew wide,
And as they sat there, side by side,
They both agree l to fast lock hands
And walk together o'er life's sands.

Some weeks passed by, and both again
Were seated by the sighing main;
Alas! he held another's hands,
Another hers, upon the sands.
—[Nancy V. Culbertson.

HEIRESS OF GLENMAHOWLEY.

"Bob," said I, "this won't do; something must be done."

"It must," echoed Bob, as he puffed away from his pipe in a muddly little sitting-room in the Shamrock Arms, at Glenmahowley.

Glenmahowley attained any importance which it possessed by being the center of an enormous area of peat cuttings and bog land which stretched away with exasperating monotony to the horizon, unbroken by the slightest irregularity. In one place only, along the Monatsimon road, there was a single belt of thick woods, whose luxuriance only served to aggravate the hopeless waste around them. The village itself consisted of a long straggling line of thatched cottages, each with an open door, through which entered bare-legged children, gaunt pigs, cocks and hens, ragged-looking, short-piped men and slatternly women. Bob Elliott seemed rather to admire the aborigines. No doubt it tickled his vanity to hear admiring exclamations as he went down the street; such as "Look at him now; look at the illigant fut on him!" or, "Oh, then, an' isn't he a beautiful gintleman entoirely!" But I don't care for these things. Besides, though far more handsome than Bob, my beauty is of an intellectual type, and is lost upon these savages. My nose is pronounced, my complexion pallid, and my head denotes considerable brain power. "There's no harm in the crayter!" was the least offensive of the opinions which these idiots expressed of me.

We had been located in this barbarous place about a week. Bob and I were second cousins, and a distant mutual relation whom neither of us had seen had bequeathed us each a small property in the West. The clearing-up of business attendant on this, and the necessity of consulting with the old lady's pragmatical country attorney, had kept us for a week in the Shamrock Arms, and promised to keep us for at least another one in that unenviable retreat if we could survive the tedium of our existence so long.

"What can we do?" groaned Bob again.

"Where's Pendleton? Let's get Pendleton up and take a rise out of him," I suggested with a flickering attempt at vivacity. Pendleton was our fellow-lodger at the inn—a quiet young fellow of artistic proclivities, with a weakness for solitary rambles and seclusion. All our attempts to pump him had failed as yet to elicit any explanation of the object and aims which had led him to Glenmahowley, unless it were that its bleak morasses harmonized with his misanthropic turn of mind.

"It's no use," said my companion. "He's as dismal as a tombstone and as shy as a girl. I never saw such a fellow. I wanted him to come with me this morning when you were writing your letter and to aid and abet me in a little mild chaff with the two girls at the draper's—you need help against these Irish girls, you know—but he flushed up quite red and wouldn't hear of such a thing."

"No, he is hardly cut out for a lady-killer," I remarked, adjusting my necktie before the fly-blown mirror and practicing a certain expression which I have found extremely effective with the weaker sex—a sort of Lara-like piratical cock of the eye which gives the impression of hidden griefs and a soul which spurns the commonplaces of existence. "Perhaps he will come in, though, and play dummy whist."

"No, he never touches cards."

"Milksop!" I ejaculated. "We'll send for the landlord, Bob, and ask him if there is nothing we can see or do."

This was recognized to be the most rational proceeding under the circumstances, and a messenger was dispatched in hot haste to summon Dennis O'Keefe, the worthy host. Let me remark, while he is shuffling up stairs in his slipshod carpet slippers, that I am the mortal known as John Vereker, barrister-at-law, popularly supposed to be a rising man, though the exact distance that I have risen during the four years that I have been in practice is not calculated to turn my brain. Several nice little actions have, however, during that time been taken against me in County Courts and otherwise, so that I have put the machinery of the law into motion, though my personal profit in the matter must be acknowledged to have been somewhat remote.

O'Keefe was a fine specimen of the aboriginal Celt — freckle-faced and rough-haired, with shrewd gray eyes and a deep rich Milesian voice. "Good-morrow to ye, gintlemen," he began as he entered, his large flat feet and uncouth gait giving him a sort of plantigrade appearance. "What would your honors be afther today?"

"The very thing we wanted to ask you, O'Keefe," said Bob. "What in the world are we to do? Can't you suggest anything?"

"There's the church," remarked O'Keefe, scratching his red hair in perplexity. "'Tis a foine building. There was a gintleman came here the year before last just for to look at it. Maybe your honors"—

"Hang the church!" roared Bob, with as much vehemence as a Radical advocate for Disestablishment; "we were there five times last week—in fact every day except Sunday. Try again, old Pict and Scot."

Our host, who was serenely indifferent to the many unintelligible epithets applied to him by Bob's exuberant fancy, pondered once more over the problem. "There's the hole in the bog," he suggested with diffidence. "The same where the boys threw Mr. Lyons, of Glenmorris—bad scran to him!—afther they shot him. Maybe you'd loike to see where they found him wid his head in the mud an' his feet stickin' up. Ah, it was a glad soight, sorrs, for the pisantry that had worked and slaved—the craturs—and then for him to step in wid a dirty foive and twinty per cint. reduction in the rint and serve notices on them as wouldn't pay. Sure you could take your food—or a gossoon would carry it—and picnic by the hole."

"The prospect is alluring," I remarked, "but there seems to me to be too much chance of the inoffensive tillers of the soil taking a fancy to plant a couple more Saxons upside down in the bog-hole. I negative that suggestion."

"What are those trees to the eastward?" asked Bob. "Surely there is something to be seen down there."

"It's proivate. It's the Clairmont family's ground, an' you'd be shot as loike as not if you so much as put your nose over the wall."

"Pleasant land this, Jack," remarked my companion ruefully. "I almost wish old O'Quibble would unearth a codicil leaving the place to somebody else."

"Ah, sure you can't judge of the counthry now while it's quoiet," said our host. "Wait till the throubles come round agin—next year maybe, or the year afther. It's a loively land when the bhoys is out—sorra a taste of scenery would you think about; and being landlords yourselves by that toime you'd see the cream of the divarsion."

"How about these Clairmonts?" I asked at a venture. "Do they live upon their own land?"

"Begorra—you've got it there!" cried O'Keefe. "They do nothing but live on their own land. They've niver stirred off it for more'n fifteen years."

"Never stirred off of it!"

"Sorra a fut beyond the park gates and the great brick wall. No man's oi has ever rested upon Miss Clairmont's face bar ould Dennis the lodgekeeper—the black-mouthed spalpeen—more be token they say she's grown into the purtiest girl in the county, forbye having foive and twinty thousand in her own right."

"What!" we both roared.

"Foive and twinty thousand pounds," repeated O'Keefe solemnly; "and when her ould cat of a mother dies she'll come in for the whole family estate."

"What is she?" "Where is she?" "Who is she?" "What in the devil is the matter with her?" shouted Bob and I, forming a sort of strophe and antistrophe to the landlord's chorus.

O'Keefe's account of the past history of the Clairmont family was a remarkable one, and, when curtailed of his many Hibernian digressions and meanderings, amounted to this: A certain Major Clairmont had come into the county some sixteen years before, bearing with him a large sum in hard cash, a showy-looking wife of rather foreign appearance, and a pretty little daughter about two years old. Having expended a portion of the first item upon the purchase of a considerable estate near Glenmahowley, he had taken up his residence there and awaited some recognition from the county families. This came soon enough in the case of the Major, who, as an old Guardsman, possessed a recognized social position, which was secured by his own many admirable qualities. It was different with madame. The men might drink the old claret of the soldier, or take a day's shooting in his pheasant preserves, but their wives made no sign. Strange rumors were in circulation as to the antecedents of Mrs. C. Some said that she had been upon the stage before her marriage; some that her career had been more equivocal still. There were individuals who ventured to doubt that she possessed even now the little blue slip of paper which civilization demands. It was this rumor which some busybody brought to the ears of the Major, coupling with it the name of a neighboring landed proprietor. The Major was a bull-necked, choleric man. He chose out his heaviest hunting cob and galloped furiously down the avenue to interview the traducer of his wife's character. The lodgekeeper was surprised to see the veteran horseman reel in his saddle as he shot through the gates, and then fall backward with a dull thud on to the dusty road. The local practitioner pronounced it to be apoplexy, while the family physician favored heart disease—but whatever the cause the Major's spirit had drifted far away from Glenmahowley. It was then that that fiery foreign strain which showed itself on his wife's face asserted itself in her character. She would live on the estates still because he had been fond of them, but her life should be spent in mourning her loss and in educating her daughter in her own way. Above all, never should she again exchange word or look with any living being belonging to the county which had insulted her and indirectly caused her husband's death. The great gates were walled up, and only small slits left through which provisions and other necessaries ordered by Dennis, the lodgekeeper, were handed. A formidable row of spikes was planted on the brick wall which had always surrounded the estate. In this extraordinary seclusion, cut off from the whole world, Mrs. Clairmont and her daughter had now passed fifteen years of their lives unseen by human eyes, save those few of the English domestics who remained with them, and perhaps of an occasional daring urchin who might penetrate into the wood which surrounded the great house. It was these irregular scouts no doubt who had brought word of the exceeding beauty of the young lady, though no adult male had ever yet had the privilege of being able to form an opinion upon it. She was at present close upon her eighteenth birthday.

Thus far O'Keefe; while Bob and I sat, with elbows upon the table and chins upon our hands, drinking in every word. Neither of us broke the silence for some little time after he had concluded. Bob Elliott puffed furiously at his pipe, while I looked dreamily out of the window at the thatched roofs of the cottages and the long, monotonous stretch of bog land in the distance.

"She is beautiful?" asked Bob at last.

"She is that!"

"And rich?" I queried.

"Divil a doubt of it."

We relapsed into another silence, in the midst of which our worthy landlord, evidently thinking us the worst of company, stole out of the room, walking for some unknown reason upon the tips of his toes as if he were afraid of waking us.

Left to ourselves, we became even more meditative than before. Bob strolled restlessly up and down in front of the door; I whistled and continued to stare out of the window. We were both lost in our own thoughts.

"Fancy a girl who has never even seen a male fellow-creature!" ejaculated Bob at last.

"Who is unfettered by the conventionalities of civilization!" said I.

"How artless she must be and how simple!" remarked my companion, twisting his mustache.

"What a depth of pent-up affection there must be in that heart!" I exclaimed, with my corsair-like look of slumbrous passion.

"How charmingly childlike and romantic!" said Bob, smoothing his hair in the glass.

"How easy for a dashing young fellow to win!" I returned, smiling at my own reflection over Bob's shoulder.

It is a curious fact that for the remainder of the day, though nothing in the shape of a distraction turned up, neither of us complained of the ennui of a residence in Glenmahowley. We both seemed suddenly reconciled to a contemplative existence, and even became tolerant of Pendleton, whose contentment under existing circumstances had struck us hitherto as nothing less than an insult. He came in about supper-time with his sketch-book and his mud-bespattered boots, apparently as happy as if he were among the most artistic scenery in the world. If it were not for his shyness and reserve he would be rather a pleasant fellow—that is, in gentlemen's society, for his diffidence would ruin him among women. He is tall, slim and fair-haired, rather good-looking young man—decidedly more so than Bob.

I did not sleep very well that night; neither did my companion. He showed his tousled head round the corner of my door somewhere about 2 o'clock in the morning.

"Hello, Jack," he said, "are you asleep?"

"No."

"What was the figure again?"

"Twenty-five," I growled.

"I thought it was twenty! Thanks! Good night!"

"Good night!" and the head disappeared like the apparition in "Macbeth." It was evident that our thoughts were running in very much the save groove. As for me, my plans were matured, and I could afford to smile at Bob's cogitations. While he hankered aimlessly for the prize I should swoop down and carry it off. The Verekers were always noted for their iron determination. I chuckled to myself while I dropped to sleep as I thought of the march which I should steal upon him on the morrow.

The day broke without a cloud on the sky. Both Elliott and Pendleton were somewhat silent at breakfast, and as I was engaged in planning the details of the enterprise to which I had determined to commit myself, I did not attempt to enter into conversation with them. After the meal Pendleton remarked that he would take a short stroll in search of effects, and Bob almost immediately afterward sallied out for a mouthful of fresh air. This was a most unexpected piece of luck. I had ransacked my brain for some excuse which would enable me to get rid of my companion, and here he had solved the problem of his own accord. Giving him half an hour's grace to take him well out of the way, I slipped out through the back door of the Shamrock Arms and made my way rapidly down the Morristown road in the direction of the Clairmont estate.

My sole doubt and anxiety was as to how I was to succeed in obtaining an interview with the young lady. Should fortune befriend me in that matter the rest appeared simple enough. I pictured to myself her mental condition, the sense of desolation which must oppress her young soul. Cooped up away from the world, her heart must yearn for some manly bosom upon which to rest her head, some strong arm to break her fetters. Besides, I was a man with exceptional personal advantages. Without being conceited, I have a just appreciation of my own merits. To eyes accustomed to nothing but an occasional glance of Dennis, the lodgekeeper, I should appear an Adonis. By the way, how about Dennis? Might he not resent my intrusion? Pooh! he was an old man. I remember the landlord saying so. What would I not risk for the girl whom I was prepared to adore! Perhaps he would have a gun, though. These Irishmen are hot-headed and blood-thirsty. I grew thoughtful and slackened my pace.

By this time I had come to the place where a high brick wall, with a conical coping bristling with spikes and pieces of broken bottles, ran along by the side of the road. This I recognized, from Keefe's description, as being the boundary line of the Clairmont estate. At the other side of the wall there was as far as I could see a thick forest. Should I do it or should I not? I thought of the five and twenty thousand pounds. Besides, what would a gatekeeper be doing with a gun? What a sell for Bob Elliott—and for Pendleton, the shy Pendleton! Would not they curse their want of energy when they saw the prize which had slipped through their fingers? How the fellows would talk in London, too, even if I failed? It would make my name as a Don Juan! I could imagine Clinker or Waterhouse or some of the old set coming into the Temple wine bar and beginning: "I say, you chaps, have you heard of Vereker's latest? Very devil among women, is Vereker. He was in Ireland a few weeks ago"—and so on, and so on. "By Jove!" I cried, as I approached the wall in a paroxysm of recklessness, "I'll do it if I have to skin my knee!"

I did skin my knee; in fact, I skinned them both. I also removed portions of integument from my scalp, shoulder, elbow, hand and ankle, besides splitting my coat and losing my hat. I was recompensed for all this, however, as I sat astride upon the top of the wall and looked down into the forbidden land beyond. I could have laughed at the thought of the march I was stealing on my two companions. I would have done so had it not been for a spike which was running into the calf of my leg.

The drop on the other side did not look very deep. I held on to the largest projection I could see, and lowered myself until my feet were not more than a yard or so from the ground. Then I let go, but only to find that I hung suspended by a hook which had passed through my waistband. This impediment, however, gave way, and I fell with a crash for about nine feet into a sort of trench, which had been dug apparently all round the inner side of the wall, and was so artistically covered with grass and sticks that it was impossible to detect it from the top. All this I discovered after I crawled out of it, for during the few minutes that I lay at the bottom every idea was shaken out of my head beyond a general impression that I had been struck by lightning.

The trees grew so thickly together that it was impossible to see for any distance into the wood, and the brushwood was so dense that it was no easy matter to move in any direction. After emerging from the ditch I hesitated for a moment as to my next step, and then was about to keep to what appeared to be some sort of path on the left when my eye was attracted by a small placard attached to the trunk of a tree. I made my way toward it eagerly, pushing aside the intervening briers and brambles. It might contain some directions which would enable me to find my way, or—romantic thought—it might be that the lonely Beatrice I was in search of had inscribed her pinings and longings where they might meet the eye of an adventurous stranger. As I stood before the inscription and road it I felt a kind of cold flush, if the expression be permissible, pass along my spine and up to the roots of my hair, while my knees, or what was left of them, knocked together like castanets. Scrawled upon the paper in a rough, bold hand were the three words: "Bloodhounds—spring-guns—mantraps;" unpleasant words at any time, but most particularly so amid the gloom of a forest with a ten-foot wall in one's rear. The announcement was a concise one, and yet I felt as I re-perused it that it contained more food for reflection than any volume which I had ever read. Was I to abandon my enterprise now that the first difficulty had been successfully overcome? Possibly the notice was a mere empty threat. Surely no one would allow such things to remain in their shrubberies. The combination of ideas was so dreadful. Suppose that I was caught in a man trap, whatever that might be, and was then attacked by a bloodhound! The mere supposition made me shudder. But then if these frightful dogs were really roaming about over the forest, how was it that none of them were shot by the spring-guns or caught in the traps? This construction revived my drooping spirits, and I pushed on through the thick underwood.

As I advanced it opened up somewhat, so that I made better progress. A few half-overgrown paths meandered here and there, but I avoided these and kept under the concealment of the trees. Never shall I forget that dreadful walk! Every time a twig snapped I sprang into the air under the impression that I was shot. No hero of romance ever underwent such an ordeal for his lady, and indeed no lady was ever worth it. Five and twenty thousand pounds, however, are enough to steal the heart of the most timorous, but even they would hardly recompense me for the frights which were in store for me.

I had got to one of the deepest and one of the most secluded parts of the woods, when I stopped suddenly and crouched down, trembling in every limb. Was it the sounds of footsteps which had been wafted toward me on the breeze? I listened intently, and then with a long sigh of relief was about to rise, convinced that I had been mistaken, when the same sound came to my ears, but much louder than before. There could be no question that it was approaching me. I lay down upon my face among the prickly brambles, hoping to escape observation. The footsteps continued to come nearer and nearer. They were those of a man—but put down stealthily and softly as if he were also shunning observation. Could it be that some ruffian had observed me and was hunting me down as one stalks a deer? He was coming nearer and nearer. I could hear the rustle of the leaves as he brushed past them. It seemed to me that I could even distinguish the sound of his breathing. Nearer he came and nearer still—he was close to me, and the next moment the brambles in front of me parted and a man stepped out almost upon the top of me, and staggered back with a shout as I sprang to my feet. The voice seemed familiar—so did the figure. Could it be! Yes; there was no mistaking the identity of Robert Elliott, of Lincoln's Inn.

Sed quantum mutatus ab illo! The stylish coat was torn and covered with mud. The aristocratic face was stained with dust and perspiration, and interlaced with scratches where the brambles had left their marks. His hat had been knocked in and was a hopeless wreck. His watch-guard and the studs in his shirt seemed to stand out as oases of respectability in a great desert of desolation.

"Bob!" I ejaculated.

It was a few moments before any sign of recognition came over his face. Then gradually the ghost of a smile appeared in his astonished eyes, which deepened and deepened until he burst into a uproarous fit of laughter.

"Vereker, by Jove!" he yelled. "Whatever have you been doing to yourself?"

I looked down at my own costume and was forced to acknowledge that there was very little to choose between us. What with the wall and the ditch and the underwood and the briars, there was hardly an article of clothing which was fit to be worn again. The two of us looked more like a couple of scarecrows on tramp and in search of employment, than two prominent members of the Junior Bar.

"What are you doing here, Elliott?" I asked.

"Exploring," he answered, evasively; "what are you?"

"Explor—. No, hang it, why can't we be frank to one another, Bob? You know very well you came after that girl."

My companion looked sheepish. "Well, I suppose you did the same?" he said.

"Of course I did. What fools we were to try and bamboozle each other. If we had stuck together we might never have got into such a plight."

"I'm very sure I should never have tumbled into that infernal ditch if I had seen you go in," said Bob, ruefully.

"Oh, you've been in the ditch, too, have you?" I remarked, with the first approach to satisfaction I had felt since I left O'Keefe's hospital roof.

"Yes," groaned Bob. "I think I have been through the whole performance. Did you see any notices on the trees?"

"I did."

"Has old Dennis been round to you yet?"

"No; have you seen him?"

"Yes, he passed within ten yards of me a short time ago. At least I suppose it was him—a big gaunt fellow with a great stick."

"Heaven save us!" I ejaculated.

"However, he has passed now, and the question is what are we to do?"

"Persevere," I responded manfully. "It would be more dangerous to go back than to go on since that truculent gatekeeper is behind us."

"Right you are," said Elliott, with a melancholy attempt at cheerfulness. "You lead on and I'll follow."

"No, you go first," I answered, not, I am bound to say, from any innate courtesy or feeling of politeness, but with an idea that dangers from the abominations mentioned on the placard would be lessened thereby.

We threaded our way through the forest in Indian file, and after advancing for about half a mile were evidently close to the edge of it. The trees were smaller and the unplanted spaces larger. Suddenly Bob pulled up and pointed in front of him.

"There's the house," he said.

There it was sure enough, a stern-looking edifice of gray stone with a large number of small, glimmering windows. There was a lawn in front of it, very tastefully laid out, which somewhat relieved the gloomy and prison-like appearance of the building. No one was to be seen either outside or at the windows. We held a council of war as to what our next step should be.

"We can't walk right up to the house under some excuse or other, can we?" said Bob.

"It would be too dangerous," I remarked. "There is no saying what they might do to us. They seem to be very savage people."

"Besides it would be the very last way to have any chance of saying a few words to the young lady," added my companion.

"The whole thing makes a deuced romantic situation," I observed.

"I wonder what Pendleton would think of us if he saw us?"

"Poor shy Pendleton! I think he would put us both down as madmen."

"It's a pity he is so retiring," said Bob. "But I say, Jack, what do you intend to say to the young lady when you see her?"

"Why, I propose to tell her of my love straight of, and ask her to fly with me. It must all be done to-day. I'm not coming in here again on any consideration. Besides, I think it will not be difficult to carry a romantic girl of that sort by a kind of *coup de main*."

"But that's exactly my plan," said Bob, plaintively.

"The deuce it is!" I ejaculated. "By George! There she is!"

The last exclamation was drawn from me by the appearance upon the steps of the house of an elegantly dressed young lady. Her features were invisible, owing to the distance, but her erect carriage and the long, graceful curves of her figure showed that report had not exaggerated her charms. She turned as she came out, to address an elder woman, her mother probably, who followed her. The latter seemed, as far as we could make out, to be weeping, for she raised her handkerchief to her eyes several times, while the girl passed her arm round her neck as if to console her. In this she appeared to succeed, for the elder went back into the house, and the younger sprang down the three steps at a single bound and hurried away, with long, elastic steps, down the path which led into the shrubbery.

"We must follow her!" I cried.

"Take your time," said Bob. "We must come to some agreement before we start. It would be too ridiculous for the two of us to plunge at her together and begin pouring out two confessions of love."

"It might startle her," I remarked, "especially as she has never seen either of us before."

"Who is to have the preference, then?"

"I am the elder," I observed.

"But then I left the inn first," objected Elliott.

"Well, suppose we toss for it."

"I suppose we must," said Bob gloomily, producing a penny and spinning it up in the air. "Heads, so it is. Just my luck. Of course, if after your proposal the young lady thinks fit to refuse you I am at liberty to do whatever I choose. Is that agreed?"

"Certainly," I answered, and we both pushed on rapidly through the shrubbery, gaining confidence as we saw some prospect of attaining our object.

"There she is," whispered Bob, as we saw the flutter of a pink dress among the trees in front of us.

"There's a man talking to her!"

"Impossible!"

"There is."

If there was he must have disappeared very rapidly on hearing our approach, for when we got near enough to her to see her whole figure she was alone. She turned with a start of surprise, and seemed inclined for a moment to run away from us, but then recovering herself, she came toward us. As she advanced I saw that she was one of the most lovely girls that I had ever seen in my life—not at all the doll-like sort of beauty that I had imagine from what I knew of her training, but a splendid, well-developed young woman with a firmly set lower jaw and delicately moulded chin which would have been almost masculine in their force had they not been relieved by a pair of pensive blue eyes and a sweetly sensitive mouth. Somehow, as I found her steady gaze directed at me, all the well-turned speeches which I had rehearsed in my mind seemed to fade entirely from my memory and leave nothing but an utter blank behind. The amorous gallop with which we bore down upon her subsided into a ridiculous trot, and when eventually I pulled up a few yards in front of her I could no more have uttered a word of explanation than I could have recovered my lost hat or concealed the gaps in my clothing.

"I fancy you must have mistaken your way," she said in a low, sweet voice without the slight appearance of being affected by this apparition of young men.

I felt Bob nudge me from behind and whisper something about "going ahead" and "making the running,' but my only inclination under the gaze of those calm, tranquil eyes was to make the running in the opposite direction at the top of my speed.

"The house is over there," she observed, pointing through the trees. "I suppose that you are the bailiffs."

"Bailiffs!" I gasped.

"Excuse me if I do not give you your proper title," she continued with a melancholy smile. "It is the first time that we have ever been brought in contact with the officers of the law, and I hardly know how to address them. We have expected you for two days."

Bob and I could only stare at her in silent bewilderment.

"There is one thing I should like to ask you," she went on, drawing nearer to us, with her hands clasped and a beautiful pleading expression upon her face. "Though my mother and I are almost beggars now, remember that she is a lady, delicately reared and sensitive. Above all, remember that she has no one to protect her or to take her part. Be gentle with her, therefore, and do your duty without wounding her feelings more than you can help."

"Bob," I whispered, drawing my companion aside, though he still continued to stare idiotically over my shoulder at the young lady, "do you realize it? They expect the bailiffs. There is no money in the concern. What are we to do?"

"She's an angel!" was all Bob could evolve.

"So she is, but she's got no money."

"Then you give her up?"

"I do," said I, with a sentimental twinge at my heart. Sentimentalism has always been my weak point.

"You won't propose?" asked Bob excitedly.

"No, marriage is an expensive luxury. Besides——"

"Besides what?"

"I am convinced she would not have me?"

"Then, by Jove, I'll do it," said Bob, facing round with a look of determination upon his dirty face.

Miss Clairmont had been standing looking considerably surprised and a little frightened during our hurried conclave. She drew back a few feet as Bob took a step toward her with his two arms thrown out in eloquent entreaty, like an animated semaphore.

"Young lady," he began, "I am not a bailiff. I belong to another and a higher branch of the legal profession. I am a Londoner and a gentleman."

Bob paused for a moment to allow this statement to sink into his listener's mind. Miss Clairmont looked more amazed than impressed, though it was evident from her shrinking figure that she was considerably startled.

"In a foreign land," cried Bob, warming to his work—"a land beyond the seas—I allude to England—I heard of your charms and of your solitary existence, and I swore—that is to say, we both did, only I lost the toss—to save you and bring you out into the great world which you are so fitted to adorn. We crossed the deep—which made us both exceedingly unwell—and flew to your rescue. We have scaled this inhospitable wall of yours; if you doubt my statement you will find a large portion of the sleeve of my coat upon one of the spikes which adorn it. We also ran the gantlet of the many unpleasant things which your amiable parent seems to have littered about for the benefit of the casual stranger. Dear girl," continued Bob, advancing with an imbecile grin upon his countenance, which he imagined no doubt to be a seductive smile, "fly with me! Be mine! Share with me the wild free life of a barrister! Say that you return the love which fills my heart—oh, say it!" Here Bob put his hand over a hole in his waistcoat and struck a dramatic attitude.

During this extraordinary address the young lady had been gradually edging away from us, and at its conclusion she burst into a merry peal of laughter.

"Edward?" she cried—"Ned! Do come out! It's really too ridiculous, but I don't know what to say to them."

At this summons a man emerged from behind a tree where he had concealed himself and flew to her side. Imagine our petrifying and all-absorbing astonishment when we recognized in him Pendleton, our retiring companion of the inn.

"Don't be frightened, darling," he said, passing his arm around her slender waist, to Bob's intense and audible disgust. "I can understand, gentlemen," he went on, "the romantic motives which have led you here, but you will see how futile they are when I tell you that this lady is my wife."

"Your what?" roared Bob and I in chorus.

"My wedded wife. You are the first that have heard our secret, though Mrs. Clairmont must learn it to-day. It does not matter to you how we met or how we married—suffice it that it is so. To-day the ruin which I had long foreseen has come upon the household; Mrs. Pendleton thinks it may have softened the hard heart of her mother, and we are going up now to see her together, to confess what we have done, and to offer her a home for the rest of her life at my place in Devon. You will see, gentlemen," he continued, "that a delicate matter of this sort must be done without interruption and at once; you will therefore excuse us from showing you off the grounds. I may say, however, that if you will keep to that path on the left you will soon find yourselves at the boundary—and now, gentlemen, my wife and myself must wish you a very good morning," with which he offered the young lady his arm and the two strolled off together in the direction of the house.

How long Bob and I stood there gazing after them and at each other neither of us could ever determine. Then we plodded sullenly down the path pointed out, without exchanging a word, and after sundry gymnastic exercises found ourselves in the road once more.

Bob was inclined to be sentimental all day, and perhaps I was hardly myself either. When night fell, however, and a steaming jug of hot water was brought up, flanked with a lemon on one side and the sugar on the other, while the whisky bottle towered in the rear, we began to get over our troubles, and I doubt if O'Keefe, when he joined us, could have given a guess at the stirring events which had occurred since he told us the story of the Clairmont family the night before. Certainly by next morning there were no traces left of our short matrimonial campaign.

Another week found us in our chambers in town, settling down comfortably into the old routine. I do not know where our next holiday will be spent, but I confidently predict that it will not be at Glenmahowley. I have heard nothing since of the Pendletons beyond the fact that he is the owner of a large estate on the borders of Dartmoor. Bob talks of visiting those parts in the spring, but I think for his own peace of mind he had better steer clear of those blue eyes and sweet features which are our only recollection of the land of bogs.—[Temple Bar.

Husbands! Take the hint. Your wife or your children are liable to take colds from drafts that will make them ill. Always keep on hand Allen's Lung Balsam, the best and purest remedy for coughs and colds. It contains no opium, and is harmless to the most delicate.

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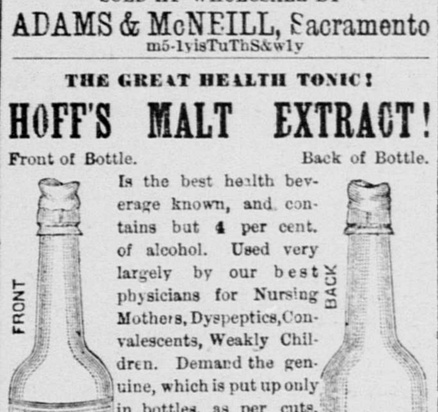

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"While in the country last winter my little boy, three years old, was taken ill with croup; it seemed as if he would die from strangulation. One of the family suggested the use of AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL, a bottle of which was always kept in the house. This was tried in small and frequent doses, and to our delight in less than half an hour the little patient was breathing easily. The doctor said that the CHERRY PECTORAL had saved my darling's life. Can you wonder at our gratitude? Sincerely yours,
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