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Molly's Fortunes.

By "M. E. FRANCIS"—Author of "In a North Country Village," etc.

Synopsis of Installments I to V.—Molly O'Neil, a girl of unusual beauty, is working as a daily governess in Dublin in support of her aunt (a decayed gentlewoman) and herself. Her existence becomes known to Miss O'Neill—the last representative of the O'Neills—the possessor of a large estate and handsome revenue, who is in search of a direct heir; and Molly is straightway summoned to Castle O'Neill, where she meets her dreaded relative, and makes a favorable impression. Miss O'Neill is immensely proud of her ancestry, and is devoted to the duties of her high position. Molly accompanies her on her daily inspection of kitchens, gardens and village, and notes the autocratic supervision to which every household on the estate is subjected. She becomes a general favorite in the district. Mrs. Mackenzie is invited to the castle for Christmas, and endeavors to learn her hostess' plans concerning Molly, but only succeeds in grievously misrepresenting her niece. Molly undoes the michief, however, by her straightforwardness. She goes back with her aunt, but is summoned to the castle on the occasion of Miss O'Neill's serious illness, and is the means of cheering her relative's last hours. Mr. Burke had previously made Miss O'Neill's will, all being left to Molly—with certain provisions against which the old lawyer in vain protested.

CHAPTER X.

WOMAN DISPOSES.

Six months had elapsed since Miss O'Neill had been laid in her last resting place; the turf grew green and smooth above her grave, which was always strewed with fresh flowers; and at the castle every one was becoming accustomed to the new order of things. I say the new order of things, but in truth the old regime was adhered to as strictly as possible, and the management of all within and without the house carried out as nearly as might be on the same lines as formerly. No person indeed could adequately fill Miss O'Neill's place, but Molly and Mr. Burke between them did their best to perpetuate her "system," while their subordinates were only too anxious to respect the wishes of their beloved "lady." Sorely was she missed, and very lonely did the castle seem without the bright, active old figure flitting about it. The sad interval of helplessness and mental depression appeared to be forgotten, and it was the vigorous, masterful personality, familiar for so many years, whose absence made so great a void.

Molly had settled down sadly and seriously enough to her new duties, in no way exultant over the brilliant prospects which, in spite of the strange terms of her benefactress' will, appeared to lie before her.

Mr. Burke had scrupulously carried out the latter's injunctions, and two or three "claimants" had daily asserted their right to the estate, but had proved on investigation to be rank impostors. As time passed, therefore, he was convinced that Molly would remain in undisturbed possession, and that his alarm at the final clause in the old lady's will was groundless, after all. The girl herself, who had stoutly announced her determination to incur any penalty rather than submit to such a marriage as therein set forth, had begun to feel reassured, and to look at such a contingency as hypothetical. Mrs. McKenzie had let her own small house, and was installed at Castle O'Neill, appearing after a time to take very kindly to her new position; and Molly, as the weeks passed, though she mourned her kinswoman sincerely and entered into her new life solemnly, began to regain her former spirits. The elasticity of youth was hers, and, moreover, she possessed an essentially bright and contented nature. She instinctively looked at the best side of things and was more prone to smiles than to tears. The memory of her friend was enshrined deep in her heart, but the sun shone above it even as it shone above the quiet grave—and the flowers had begun to bloom.

It was the very Molly of old who sat one summer's afternoon in the little morning room, sipping her tea and chatting to her aunt, a laughing Molly, with blithe, unshadowed face, that looked as if it had never known a care; simple and impulsive as ever in her manner, and evidently unspoiled and untrammeled by the dignities and responsibilities of heiress-ship.

"Aunt," said Molly, "Mr. Burke says we ought to see the world. When shall we begin? Shall we go abroad next month?"

"Dear child, please—please let me down gradually," returned the elder lady, plaintively. "Remember what a new life this is for me, and let me have time to breathe. Don't give me too much to do in one year. Next year, if you like, I'll—I'll climb up Mong Blong with you, but I don't feel equal to it yet. Don't you think it would be nice if you took a house for the season in Merrion square, and were presented at the first drawing-room?"

"Oh, dear no!" returned Molly, with affected scorn. "Dublin would never do for me, and I couldn't stoop to a trumpery affair like a castle drawing room. No, no, auntie, we'll go in for real royalty, if you please, we'll make our curtsies to her most gracious majesty in person. You shall have three ostrich feathers, sticking straight up in your dear old head, and a train yards long."

"I know what will be the end of all this," said Mrs. Mackenzie desperately; "you will develop into a regular worldly young lady. I may as well make up my mind to it, Molly, for I see it coming. You will live in a perfect whirl, I suppose, and after dragging me about from one fashionable assembly to another, till I am worn out"—the mixture of complacency and consternation with which this was spoken was comical in the extreme—"you will leave me in the lurch and get married to a lord."

"Get married to a lord!" repeated Molly, with genuine horror. "Auntie, if you love me, don't talk like that. It sounds like a phrase from the Family Herald."

"Should I have said an earl?" queried the other, with grave concern.

"An earl! Worse and worse! Don't you remember Kate's song—'I'm goin' to get married to a markiss or a earl?' Well, Auntie, if you like, I will promise to have nothing to say to the aristocracy—the mushroom aristocracy—of these times, that poor Miss O'Neill used to talk about." Here Molly's face saddened for a moment, and she sighed.

"All very well, my dear, and very nice, but we mustn't be too high-flown. I don't want you to turn out another Miss O'Neill. You must be married, and well married, and to find a husband you must go about to see people."

"Who is worldly now?" cried Molly. "I'm surprised at you; don't you know marriages are made in heaven? I am not going to look for a husband, I can tell you. I shall wait till a husband comes to look for me."

"Very fine," said her aunt, with a knowing air; "but these theories don't hold good nowadays. You must do as every other girl in your position would do, and if Dublin is not good enough for you, we can go to London."

She drew herself up, manifestly proud of her own common sense, and also betraying a certain lurking desire to enter straightway on the duties of chaperon. Molly, in spite of her resolution, was tempted to make another excursion to the realms of fancy.

"No, auntie. So many wonderful things have happened to me already, that I could not finish up in a commonplace way. I am sure there is something romantic in store for me. If I go on living here like an enchanted princess in a fairy-tale, the prince may come to look for me, you know. Or, better still, some day a weary wayfarer shall pass by. He will be worn, and weary, and travel-stained—I don't exactly know what travel-stained means; do you?"

"I should say grimy," responded Mrs. Mackenzie, who had been listening with wide-eyed, open-mouthed attention, "grimy, and probably very hot."

"Ugh!" with a shudder. "Then I don't think we'll have him travel-stained, auntie; he can be worn and weary—that will be quite enough. He must lose his way somehow or another, and find himself on the terrace—no, outside the garden gate. He will look in, and see the roses and the fountains, and everything so pretty and quaint, and the birds will be singing and the sun shining and he will long, and long, to get in. Then I shall come to the gate—I think I must have a very killing shepherdess get-up ready for the occasion—and when the wayfarer catches sight of me, he will stare, and rub his eyes, and say, 'Is this Arcadia? And I shall answer: 'Yes, please walk in.'"

"Molly, you are too silly"—her aunt was beginning, but the girl went on talking loud and fast.

"And then—and then, dear auntie, he will fall in love with me, and I with him, and we shall be married, and live happily ever after."

"Really," cried Mrs. Mackenzie, letting the word fall as a sort of bombshell of concentrated exasperation, "I don't know how a girl of your age can talk such rubbish, and display such barefaced vanity. Sitting deliberately down to make up day-dreams, and all about yourself—and not a bit ashamed."

"People always make day-dreams about themselves," responded Molly, who was quite unabashed; "only they are not candid enough to admit it. Why you dear old thing, did you never indulge in day-dreams?"

"Never!" said Mrs. Mackenzie, energetically.

"What! not when you were young and—and pretty?"—this somewhat doubtfully. "Are you sure, auntie? Come, I think you must have, sometimes. When Uncle James first began to pay his addresses to you, for instance—now didn't you?"

Decidedly, Molly was in a mischievous mood today. Poor, good uncle James! he had been the last person in the world suggest the faintest particle of romance.

"I did nothing of the sort," returned his relict, with a certain solemn triumph. "As soon as I saw what your uncle's intentions were, I said to myself: 'This seems a sensible, steady young man; I think I'll have him.' You don't call that indulging in day-dreams, I suppose."

"No," ackowledged Molly, and then she began to laugh. "And did he, on his part, think you a sensible steady young woman?"

"I should hope he did," Mrs. Mackenzie was beginning, when the conversation was suddenly put to an end by the enterance of a footman with the evening's post.

"Such a big fat letter from Mr. Burke!" exclaimed Molly. "What can he have to say? I heard from him at the beginning of the week, and he is coming, as usual, tomorrow to pay the wages and look round. Oh!" Her face changed, becoming suddenly grave, and crimsoning up to the very temples. "What do you think? An heir has turned up at last!"

"Nonsense!" cried her aunt, making a dive at the letter in her excitement. Molly held it fast, however, and read out its contents steadily, notwithstanding Mrs. Mackenzie's frequent expressions of dismay.

"My dearest Molly," wrote Mr. Burke, "I intend to run down and see you, as usual tomorrow, but, I am sorry to say, not alone. I cannot expect you, moreover, to offer a warm welcome to my companion, who is, I regret to announce it, your rival in claiming the O'Neill estates. He is your cousin, being a descendant of Hugh O'Neill, the great-uncle of yours, who emigrated to America early in this century——"

"Well, if so, he can't claim anything," interrupted the elder lady eagerly. "How silly of Mr. Burke to frighten us like that! Of course, he can't claim anything. Only an O'Neill of the elder line can dispossess you, you know. That was distinctly stated in the will."

"Hush—wait a bit. Listen: 'Your great-uncle, who emigrated to America early in this century, and who married Margaret O'Neill, the only scion of an Irish-American family, descended (as can be shown) from the elder branch of the O'Neills, of Castle O'Neill. The papers which the present representative of the name has submitted to me prove the above statement beyond a doubt. The fact of the double connection verifies his claim the more easily, that your great-uncle had been at some pains to trace the genealogy of his wife, and had carefully collected and preserved all documents relative thereto. This was, however, probably from mere traditional pride of birth, and without any ulterior motive, the rupture between his family and Miss O'Neill's being complete; besides, the latter's father was at that time alive, and there was then no likelihood of the estates going a-begging. Mr. Hugh O'Neill first wrote to me some weeks ago; he had been traveling, it seems, and only had his attention called to the newspaper notice ordered by Miss O'Neill on his return. He must have been away from home also, he thinks, on the occasions of that lady's former researches. I cannot help regretting, my dear Molly, that since Mr. O'Neill is so fond of traveling he did not further prolong his recent tour; the time allotted for inserting the above-named advertisement would shortly have expired, and your cousin, in all probability, would have continued ignorant of his claim.

"However, it has been otherwise decreed and we must make the best of matters as they stand. I did not like to alarm you on receiving the first intimation of Mr. O'Neill's existence, thinking it would probably turn out a mere scare, such as we have already had experience of. But now, I regret to say, there is no longer room for doubt. Finding, on further corresponding with Mr. O'Neill, that he appeared to have grounds for his claim, I dispatched a trustworthy messenger to Boston, whose report, just received, confirms all the former's statements. In the meantime your cousin has himself appeared on the scene. We have had two or three interviews, and in short, as I have already said, we must now make up our minds to look upon him as the rightful heir to the O'Neill estates. He is extremely anxious to inspect them forthwith (though I must own he is equally desirous of treating you with all delicacy), therefore I have written this somewhat lengthy statement, to explain to you exactly how matters stand, and to prepare you to receive him—'" "I wonder," said Molly, breaking off suddenly, "why Mr. Burke doesn't give us time to get away before he comes?"

"Read on, my dear," said her aunt, whose chin rested on the girl's shoulder, while her forefinger pointed to the ensuing passage:—

"'I say nothing of his ulterior views, but know your own dignity and self-respect will sustain you under these trying circumstances.'"

"What does he mean by 'ulterior views?'" cried Molly, fiercely.

"I do believe your foolish day-dream has come true," returned Mrs. Mackenzie, with a semi-hysterical laugh. "Here is your husband coming to look for you, my dear!"

CHAPTER XI.

MAN PROPOSES.

"Now, Molly, what do you think of him?"

"Well, if you want my candid opinion, aunt, I think he is simply abominable."

"My dear!"

"Yes, I do," cried the girl, who was pacing up and down the room somewhat after the manner of her deceased relative. "Not only does he consider himself free to make inane comments on every thing here as if he were already its master (of course he is, but it would be in better taste not to appear to think so), but he looks at me, as he talks to me as if, as if—oh, he is too odious!"

Mrs. Macknzie rubbed her chin.

"Well, my dear, you know the circumstances are very peculiar. He is probably wondering if you will suit him or not—"

"Auntie!" exclaimed Molly, darting at her, and taking her by the shoulders. "Hush! How can you bring yourself to talk of it so calmly? I know quite well what he is thinking of, and it is that which maddens me. That I should be supposed to be anxiously waiting for him to make up his mind as to whether he will or will not throw the handkerchief at me! As if, for any earthly consideration, I would have anything to say to him! Why won't Mr. Burke let us go away at once?"

"My dear, you know, as he told us, you must not do anything precipitate. Your whole future depends on the step you take next, and he thinks it only right to give you time to know your cousin—"

"I don't want to know any more of him," interrupted Molly. "He has been three hours in the house, and I hate him already. He has not a single redeeming point about him. To begin with—what does he look like?"

"He looks dreadfully delicate," put in Mrs. McKenzie, compassionately.

"So he is—'a mass of rheumatism,' as he told me himself—he loves talking about his health, I can see that. Did you hear him detailing his symptoms to me?"

"Molly, he can't help his rheumatism."

"I know he can't, but he should be humbler about it and not appear to consider it an additional attraction, I tell you," said Molly, coming to a standstill and checking off each statement by an emphatic rap on the palm of one hand with the fingers of the other, "that cadaverous creature thinks himself simply bewitching. He can't say two words without striking an attitude. Did you notice how he was looping himself up against the flower stand in the hall when he was talking to me? Evidently he goes in for being esthetic."

"Does he? I thought he looked as if he had a pain somewhere, and very likely if he is rheumatic, you know, he had, poor young man! Don't be so uncharitable, Molly, and do go and get ready for dinner."

"Just let me finish, auntie. I shall feel better when I have said my say. Well, my cousin, Hugh O'Neill, is a decrepit little wretch, without two ideas in his head, yet overburdened with conceit—a man that no girl with an iota of self-respect would condescend to look at (from the matrimonial point of view), and nothing would induce me to say or think otherwise, not if he and I were years and years together. There! the sooner you and Mr. Burke make up your minds to that the better. Now I'll go and dress."

Mournfully enough did poor Mrs. Mackenzie retail this speech to Mr. Burke, as the couple sat in the drawing room waiting for dinner, neither Molly nor her cousin having as yet made their appearance.

"I knew she couldn't have anything to say to him," said the lawyer disconsolately. "Of course she wouldn't—anyone who knows her might be sure she wouldn't!"

"I thought there was just a chance!" sighed the lady. "He seems a quiet, gentlemanly young man—"

"Pah!" said Mr. Burke.

"And it is really very hard—very hard," pursued Mrs. Mackenzie with a sniff or two, "to be obliged to turn out after all, and for Molly to have to work again, just like Cinderella and her fairy godmother, when I had let my house and everything."

The lawyer compassionated his old friend's distress too sincerely to criticise this slightly confused speech.

"It is a pretty state of affairs, I must say," he assented, after a pause, "and all the result of one woman's morbid craze about her family. Poor Miss O'Neill! I don't wish to abuse her famnow that she is gone, but I must say"—here Mr. Burke compressed his lips as though repressing volumes of disapproval—"I only wish," he remarked, viciously at last, "that she could see her heir, that's all! I wonder what she would say to the Neill fascination as exemplified in him—good Lord!"

Further discussion was prevented by the entrance, first of Molly, and afterwards of Mr. O'Neill himself.

A slight, not to say lean, young man, with a face pallid in hue, and almost triangular in shape, fair hair and mustache, and passably regular features. The gait with which he crossed the room was somewhat halting, it is true, but the air and gesture with which he offered his arm to Molly were graceful to the last degree. During dinner he devoted himself gallantly to his cousin, though her pretty shoulder was persistently turned towards him, and his various overtures elicited only monosyllabic replies. The others were too much preoccupied to evince much interest in his unceasing flow of small talk, while even the vapid little jokes with which he endeavored to enliven the conversation would have passed altogether unnoticed, had it not been for an occasional lugubrious "Ha!" from Mrs. Mackenzie, who sometimes managed to catch their drift five minutes or so after they were uttered.

Another man would have been discouraged, but Mr. O'Neill's buoyancy was unimpaired; he talked on as though he were "wound up" (as Molly subsequently remarked), and appreciated his own humor, if no one else did. His voice was somewhat high pitched, and his accent peculiar; he eschewed the nasal twang as completely as the brogue itself, and while he elongated his vowels, and occasionally used words in a sense not usual on this side of the Atlantic, he also rolled his r's like any foreigner.

"You certainly are not a bit like an American," ejaculated, all at once, Mrs. Mackenzie, who had expected their new acquaintance to put his feet on the table, and to "guess" and "calculate" according to the conventional idea of "a Yankee."

"You see, I don't call myself an American," said Mr. O'Neill, smiling, "and neither"—anticipating the correction which Mrs. Mackenzie was hastening to make—"neither do I consider myself an Irishman. I have lived pretty nearly everywhere, and do not claim to belong to any particular country; in fact, I am, as I say, a citizen of the world."

Molly shot a distainful glance at him over her shoulder; it struck her that the term was not altogether original.

"Like the dear little busy bee, you know," he pursued, "flitting from flower to flower, and extracting honey from each, I have wandered over the face of the globe, assimilating the best characteristics of every country. Yes, I have had a very good time"—with a blandly retrospective smile. "I never stayed long enough anywhere to get bored, but while I was in a place I made a point of conforming to the habits and studying the language of the natives. The result is rather alarming. "I am neither more nor less than a polyglot."

"A what?" gasped Mrs. Mackenzie, to whom the somewhat pedantic term was altogether new. "Gracious!"—she leaned back in her chair, staring with blank horror. "Are you—are you going to bring any of them over here?"

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. O'Neill, in some amazement, "any of—?"

"Any of—your wives!" sighed the lady, faintly. It was now the visitors turn to gasp and stare.

"My wives?" he echoed, gazing from one of his new acquaintances to the other, as though craving some explanation.

"Really!" ejaculated Mr. Burke, in deeply scandalized tones.

"Well, I am sure there are people in America who have several wives," explained poor Mrs. Mackenzie, covered with confusion: "I know there are; and he said himself he was a poly-something-or-other."

"A polyglot—not a polygamist," explained Hugh politely, as the source of the blunder dawned on him; "though I am supposed to be an American, I am not necessarily a Mormon. I assure you, when I claimed to be the master of several tongues, I did not intend to convey the impression that they were feminine ones. No, I have not gotten one wife," he added, "not even one—fortunately."

"Fortunately for her, do you mean?" cried Molly, checking the laughter evoked by her aunt's mistake, and deeply resenting this speech, which her cousin pointedly addressed to her. "You are a modest man, Mr. O'Neill."

"No, I did not mean that," he returned imperturbably, notwithstanding the warning flash in the girl's eyes, and the bright red danger signal on either cheek: "I meant fortunately for everyone—under the circumstances."

What was to be done with a man of this sort? A man whom it was impossible to snub, who would not see he was meant to "keep his distance," who was persistently good-humored under the most severe rebuffs. In spite of the coolness and dark looks which met him in every quarter, the obvious indignation and dismay with which his advent was greeted by the tenantry—every man, woman and child about the place being desirous to impress on him the fact that he was unwelcome—he was determinedly charmed, not only with his new possessions, but with Molly herself. Do what she would, say what she might—and I must confess that occasionally her exasperations betrayed her into something closely akin to rudeness—she could not manage to offend him. Not satisfied with conveying his admiration to her in a thousand ways, he appeared to take it for granted that she reciprocated his feelings, and that Miss O'Neill's last behests would be carried out to the letter.

To Molly the position was unendurable, and she revolted against it with all her strength. Passionately, almost tearfully, she besought her aunt to go at once, and no longer to subject her to the attentions which were the more distasteful to her that—her cousin having hitherto refrained from putting his intentions into words—she could not finally reject them.

Poor Mrs. Mackenzie pleaded, reasonably enough, that she was making all the haste she could, but must give her tenants time to leave her little house at Donnybrook; in the meantime, as she pointed out, they could not afford to go into lodgings.

"It is all very well for you to talk in that sort of 'money-no-object' style," she said, in her downright way. "'Let us go—let us go!' Where are we to go to, I should like to know, and who is to pay? You will have to get rid of your fine lady ideas now, Molly, and consider ways and means."

"That is true, certainly," sighed the girl, who, little as she had hankered after her whilom inheritance in the past, was not above acknowledging keen regrets in giving it up now. "But I would rather do anything—I would rather be a maid-of-all-work"—clenching her small hands—"than continue to eat that man's bread, and to appear to accept his attentions."

Luckily, however, she was not called on to take so disastrous a step. Mrs. Mackenzie's tenants, in consideration of the circumstances, were induced to surrender the house to its owner at once, and about a fortnight after Mr. O'Neill's arrival, Molly was informed that they were free to depart.

After the first eager joy at the unexpectedly speedy deliverance from so painful a position, and when preparations for their flight were being actually made, she inwardly felt many and acute regrets; but her pride forbade her to acknowledge them openly. She wandered round the house and out of doors, saying good-bye to her favorite haunts, and taking a last look at spots dear to her, not only for their intrinsic beauty, but for association's sake.

Hugh O'Neill proceeding in search of her at as rapid a pace as his somewhat feeble limbs were capable of, came upon her all at once, leaning against an old tree, beneath which their kinswoman used formerly to sit, her arms flung round it her young face pressed against its rough bark the sorrowful abandon of her whole attitude touching, as much as it surprised him.

"Cousin," he said—a designation very repugnant to Molly, but which he had adopted from the first—"what is this I hear? Why are you leaving tomorrow?"

"So we always intended to leave," she returned, starting into an upright position, and hastily dashing away her tears. We were only waiting till our house was ready to receive us. You were very kind to allow us to remain so long, and now we must not further trespass on your hospitality."

"Well, but surely, you are aware of the conditions of our late relative's will," resumed Mr. O'Neill, his eyes growing rounder and rounder in his amazement and distress. "You and I, you know—"

"Oh, don't," said Molly, faintly.

"Yes, but we are, you know," he insisted. "I thought it was all right, and that you understood. I assure you I don't mind in the least," he added; "really I don't."

"Well, but I do," cried Molly desperately. "I can't marry you Mr. O'Neill, and so you see I had better go."

"You can't marry me!" he echoed. "Good gracious—why not?"

To this embarrassing question she at first vouchsafed no answer, but on being further pressed observed decisively that she did not want to.

Hugh's surprised chagrin at this announcement would have been ludicrous had it not been almost touching in its naivete.

"But—but why?" he persisted, leaning against the tree, and throwing one arm over a branch—"looping himself up," as Molly termed it—in an attitude of studied grace. "Don't you like me?"

"N—not in that way," owned the girl, who was desirous of putting the matter as delicately as she could, being softened by his dismay.

"Gracious! What am I to do?" I thought we should get along so nicely, and that you would help me to manage everything. What on earth am I to do here all alone, with nobody to put me in the way of things?"

"You must find some nice American wife," suggested Molly consolingly, "or perhaps,"—dubiously—"you ought to get an Irish one."

"Do you think so?" moaned poor Hugh, "but I want you, cousin; I had made up my mind to have you."

He drew a step or two nearer, gazing tragically at her, and clasping his hands; in all his distress he could not refrain from being theatrical.

"It is certainly unfortunate," agreed Molly, looking very sympathetic, but edging a little further away from him all the same.

And then, to her great confusion and dismay, down went Mr. O'Neill on his ricketty little knees.

"Oh, do!" he pleaded humbly, "pray do think better of it, dear cousin. Really you would not find me half a bad fellow, and I—I would try to keep out of your way a good deal if you wished it. Couldn't you, cousin Molly?"

"No, I really couldn't," said the girl decidedly. "Please get up, Mr. O'Neill. Oh dear!" half laughing and half crying—"this is so bad for you! Do get up. You will make your rheumatism much worse if you kneel like that on the damp ground."

"Do you suppose I care about my rheumatism?" returned the other, slowly rising nevertheless, and dusting the knees of his trousers with his handkerchief. "It don't matter what becomes of me now—I don't care a cent if I die."

"Hush, hush, nonsense!" stifling an increasing desire to laugh, as the ludicrousness of the situation grew upon her. "You can't like me so much as all that; why you hardly know me, and I am sure I have never encouraged you to suppose—"

"No, you haven't, and I think that is why I like you so—I kind of respect you so much. I do like you dreadfully, cousin Molly! I think you're just lovely," said poor Hugh, getting more and more American in his distress. "Even if I wasn't thinking of myself, I should feel real bad in turning you out. Say, cousin, let's divide everything, do let us! I should feel much happier. You needn't take me, you know," he said, sorrowfully.

Molly was touched at this chivalrous offer; she had not given the little man credit for so much generosity. Like most of us, she was too prone to judge by externals, and to forget that much affection and absurdity may often hide real kindness and delicacy of feeling, even as the mud and slime of rivers may conceal gold as pure as any to be met with in the solid quartz.

She declined his offer with all gratitude, however, and began to walk homewards at an accelerated pace, Hugh trotting beside her, and gasping out various petitions the while.

"At least you'll take fi—ve thousand pounds?" he pleaded.

"I coudn't," said Molly, almost breaking into a run in her anxiety to put an end to the painful discussion. "It would be given against Miss O'Neill's wishes."

"But as a present from me," came the breathless rejoinder. "I'm your cousin, after all. Well, two thousand—one thousand? No?"

"I'm very, very much obliged to you," returned Molly, gratefully, "but it must be—No!" And unable to bear the sight of the woebegone face any longer, she darted into the house.

(To be Continued.)

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BUSINESS SAGACITY.

"It is very generous of Mr. Black to allow the football teams to play on his grounds."
"Oh! he's a director!"
"Of which team?"
"Neither; funeral director."

HAS HIS WIFE ARRESTED.

Libby, Mont., Man Charges Her With Stealing $25,000.

CLEVELAND, O., Dec. 1.—Mrs. Grace Robinson, aged eighteen years, of Libby, Mont., was arrested here tonight at a leading hotel and was charged with being a fugitive from justice. Mrs. Robinson is the wife of one of the officials of the American Kootenai Mining and Milling company, at Libby. She is charged in the telegram to the police here with having stolen $25,000 worth of the stock of that company belonging to her husband. The woman says the stock is in her name on the books of the company. She offers to return to Montana.

LAUGHED AT THE JUDGE.

Murderer Owens Sentenced to Be Hanged at Springfield, Ill.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Dec. 1.—Judge Dunn at Paris today sentenced William Owens, alias Radcliffe, upon plea of guilty, to hang Dec. 1 for the murder of James Hogue on a freight train between Paris and Terre Haute Sept. 22. Owens and his partner, John Daly, attempted to rob Hogue in a stock car but Hogue escaped. He was followed by Owens, who killed him and threw his body from the train. The murderers were captured at Terre Haute. Owens laughed at the judge when sentenced. The judge gave Daly forty years in the penitentiary. Owens says he will starve to death.

CHICAGO AND RETURN, $13.50,

Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 2 and 3.

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DEATHS

COYNE—THE FUNERAL OF MRS. Austin Coyne, announced to take place from St. John's church at 2 p. m. yesterday was postponed until today at 9:30 a. m., awaiting the arrival of a member of the family from the South.

MARRIED.

MARRIED—Esther Conkey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Wallace, 294 Sherburne avenue, to Mr. William Collison. At home after Dec. 16, Duluth, Minn.

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For Vim, Vigor and Perfect Manhood, go to the Famous Minnesota State Medical Institute, permanently located corner Fifth and Robert streets, St. Paul. Consultation free. Call or write. Hours 8 a. m. to 8 p. m.

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