LORD KILLEEN'S REVENGE.

"That might be an old story to you. It is the same to-day as it was years ago, when you lived here, but for a few paltry changes."

"Those paltry changes mean all the rest. Tell me of them."

"Of the decline and fall of the Briscoes? The rise of the bloodless Murphys? Would such gossip interest you?"

"There is more than that. People known to one grow colorless; those unutilized, desirable. Tell me of the new the fresh."

"There is Lady Varley."

"Ah! What of her, beyond the fact that her wings have been already provided?"

"That is what puzzles me," said Constantia, a little uncertainly. "I do not believe she can be altogether above the rest of us, and yet—"

"Well, go on. Don't make a mystery out of nothing, my good child."

"I don't think she is altogether happy in her marriage," said Constantia, who was too young to grasp the meaning of the side lights, and who would have bitten her tongue out before making this avowal, had she known the thoughts that lay within the breast of her companion.

"What! Not with the irresistible Frederic? His temper was not considered his strong point in the old days, you will recollect. If she is now indifferent to him— By the bye, it is a trifle too soon to be on bad terms, eh?"

"Bad terms does not express it. There is something vulgar about that I only said that—I—thought she was not happy. I am sorry I said even that," exclaimed the girl, anxiously; "but you I can trust, Donna—I suppose?"

"Suppose it by all means." Mrs. Dundas smiled blandly, and threw a biscuit to the forgiven terrier with an unerring aim. "But they have been married—how long?"

"Two years. There was some arrangement between the families—some money matters—that made it almost a necessity that they should be married. Not a vital necessity, of course; but something sufficient to create a marriage if there was no strong reason to prevent it. Yolande's father had set his heart upon her marrying Varley, and Yolande was too frightened to resist."

"Frightened! Is your saint, then, a fool?"

"The old man was paralytic. They said another stroke would kill him. He was especially anxious about the match because Yolande was alone in the world, and Frederic was her nearest relative, and the estates adjoined. I can understand such a fear as that. The old man on the verge of the grave, and her acceptance or refusal of his decree the point on which his life might hang. Yolande obeyed him."

"Which all means that she married Varley, not caring for him."

"At all events, she married Varley, not caring for any other man."

"That is a point gained, certainly. What an interesting little cousin you are, Constantia; you tell one so many things. How can I sufficiently reward you for dropping in upon me to-day and dissipating my dolours, and giving me your company at my five o'clock gossip?"

"I was glad to come and see you," said Constantia, who by nature was honest, "for one thing, because you are my cousin; for another, because you were known to me during all my earlier life. You had dropped out of it, of course; your long residence abroad made a gulf between us; but we have passed that now, and I hope we shall renew the old relations."

"You are immensely too good," said Mrs. Dundas, who was evidently more amused than she cared to show. Indeed, the little stereotyped manner of the other accorded but grotesquely with her fresh girlish face, her frank eyes, and her nineteen years. "I may tell you that Mr. Dundas is charmed with you. That flying visit of his to this part of the world two months ago resulted in an undying—well, let us say, friendship for you. Strange, by the way, isn't it, that his ancestral halls should be situated in the same county as Lord Varley's?"

"That occurred to me," said Constantia.

"The severity of your manner conveys much. There was nothing in it, however. I did not know of Frederic Grande's accession to the peerage when I married Mr. Dundas. I did not even know he had gained his uncle's lands. It astonished me too when I heard that Mr. Dundas (whom I met in Rome about a year ago) had property in Ireland. A foolish possession in these days. But he laughs at Parnell—who, we all know, is the modern Machiavelli—and persists in preferring his home at Ballymore to any of his other houses."

"I expect you will change all that. Ireland, just now, is dull."

"Do you call it dull?" Mrs. Dundas grew animated. "Dull when bullets are flying, and one hardly knows, if they go to bed in safety, whether they may not rise to find the house in flames? I call it exciting. I am delighted he has elected to pitch his tent here, just now."

"You are easily pleased," said Constantia MacGillicuddy, with a gay little laugh. It tickled her immensely, the easy way in which her cousin took the Irish difficulty. "We hope all things," she said. "But of what use is that when Mr. Gladstone has set his foot down—upon us?"

"I do trust you don't go in for politics," exclaimed Mrs. Dundas, looking really anxious—she could always look exactly how she wished, not how she felt. "In Italy I got a sickening of that Let us return to some interesting matter. As I shall live here for some months to come. I want you to post me up about my neighbors."

"Well, there is Mrs.—"

"Oh, never mind the women, tell me about the men."

"If you want the very latest comer, there is Mr. Stronge of Inchirone."

"What! He here too? The world, small as it is, is full of surprises. We met him abroad—not Mr. Dundas; Uncle Timothy and I. He was quite a pet of Uncle Tim's, but I am bound to confess he did not affect me much."

"Where is your uncle Timothy now?" asked Constantia, remembering with a sudden rush of friendly thought the kind, gray-headed old man who was her cousin's guardian, and who, if only a vague memory to her, was yet a gentle one.

"Dead," said Mrs. Dundas, pleasantly.

"Dead! We never heard it!" Perhaps Constantia was more shocked by the callousness of her cousin's tone than by the intelligence itself. "Dead!" she said again.

"Why, yes. Quite a long time now—three months if a minute. I thought you must have heard of it even in these benighted regions. Why, he died before my marriage. Indeed," with a little smile, "I shouldn't wonder if his departing this life in the hot haste he did (heart disease they told me it was, afterward) had not a good deal to do with my present arrangements."

"You mean—?" questioned Constantia, who had shrunk rather away from her.

"That my uncle, when he died, left me without a sou wherewith to bless myself—or dress myself, which was a much more important matter, as the law forbids us to go about unclothed, but is light on the matter of prayer. You are evidently one who must get to the root of the subject, so I explain to you. I was destitute, in a foreign land." She paused as though struck by this remark, and then broke into a charming laugh. "It sounds like one of those printed charitable appeals, doesn't it?" she said; "that makes one laugh, but in reality it was unpleasant. To find one's self utterly stranded is inconvenient. Feeling this, I looked round me. I had dismissed Frederic—that is, Lord Varley. Counts and marquises innumerable were at my feet, but where was the money that would have helped to make life sweet with them? Nowhere."

She made a little graceful gesture with both her hands that suggested to the on-looker a puff from a southerly wind.

"Upon the whole matrimonial horizon, so far as I could see, there was only John Dundas. He was twenty years older than I, and hardly my beau ideal of what a husband should be; but he adored me, so I gave in to circumstances and married him."

"I dare say you might have done worse."

"Far worse! He is immensely rich, and thoroughly believes in me."

"Why should he not?"

"Why, indeed! Sweet cousin, your words are ever full of wisdom. I am so glad you came to see me to-day. You are positively exhilarating; and when one has been in a house for only twenty-four hours, one naturally feels depressed. But not with you, my pretty cross-examiner. A truce to frivolity, however! Let me be the examiner now. What more of the country-side? Mr. Stronge you have mentioned. What brings him here?"

"He, or his father, purchased property here some years ago."

"Rash man, whichever it was. I'm inclined to think it was the Mr. Stronge we know, as I greatly doubt his ever having had a father."

"He had, nevertheless. He has been made famous through his blankets."

"A good snug fame, at all events. Nothing cold, or—er—well, perhaps there is something embarrassing about it. Never mind. Even if your Mr. Stronge doesn't admire me, I can admire his blankets."

"He isn't my Mr. Stronge."

"No? The more fool you. The repose that marks the Vere de Vere is something, but in winter the repose that may be gained between the blankets is much more. It can't be always May, you know, my dear Connie, and if anything were to happen to you—if, for example, your aunt were to seek shelter in a warmer planet, what would become of the lot of you?"

"That is a question that need hardly be entered into now," said Constantia coldly. "My aunt is quite well."

"So I was sorry to hear."

"And as to Mr. Stronge," indignantly, "I consider it positively indelicate your so speaking of him. To say nothing of his birth—he is at least forty—"

"He is thirty-five."

"He is not the sort of person to whom we have been accustomed," said Constantia, with a faint frown and a touch of hauteur. "You have said only the truth when you spoke of his want of birth. There is something very brusque about him—a roughness, a lack of repose—"

"A lack of rupees," put in Mrs. Dundas, gayly. "That should square everything. Innumerable lacs are his. There, don't look at me so indignantly, I quite understand. Repose of manner is certainly to be desired, but a fortune although made out of blankets, is better still. Take it, my dear girl, if you can."

"I think I shall take my departure, at all events," said Constantia, rising to her feet, which were exquisitely formed, if rather roughly shod.

"You would leave me—desert me? What brutality!" cried Mrs. Dundas in an agonized tone. She rustled out of the deep recesses of her chair with the activity of a mischievous kitten, and seized hold of her cousin. "You shan't go!" she declared. "Make up your mind to that. And as to your dreaming that you are offended with me, put that out of your charming head altogether. It is a charming head, I assure you, Constantia, in spite of the murderous frown that is at present darkening your brow. You have a head and face that would have reduced Miss Manners—the last American importation, the latest success in pork, the beauty of our Rome season—to despair! Indeed, you are rather like her."

"I don't fancy, then, that I should be one of Miss Manners's admirers."

"Of course not," willfully misunderstanding the angry modesty of the reply; "you and she would have been rival beauties and at daggers drawn. I meant only a compliment in comparing you to her, though I certainly think the compliment was to her. She was flawless, however, in color and skin. There was only one mistake about her, and that was her name. She hadn't a manner in the world."

"I am beginning to think that that is of little consequense."

"Very good, very good, indeed," cried Mrs. Dundas, clapping her hands. "Tell you what, she'd have been nowhere if you had been beside her!"

"And how about you?" asked Constantia sarcastically; "were you no enemy within the camp?"

"Well, I guess I ran her pretty hard," confessed Mrs. Dundas, with such a care-

"And how about you?" asked Constantia was assured belonged to Miss Manners, that she gave way a little, and smiled.

"That's right," said her cousin; "now that we've jumped that fence, sit down and tell me all about it."

CHAPTER II.

"About what?" asked Constantia.

"The country, of course. You began, you grew angry, then silent. I still wait to hear who else adorns this portion of the Emerald Isle on which a cruel fate has cast me."

"It was your home once." Miss MacGillicuddy had reseated herself, and was now making friends with a macaroon. She was still young enough to like cakes of all kinds, and macaroons, as a rule, her household didn't run to. "The Moores still vegetate within the old Manor, and the vicar is godlier and moldier than he was. There was never any one like him, I think."

"There is a good deal of consolation to be got out of that bit of information," said Mrs. Dundas meekly. "Well, go on."

"Garrett Barry has inherited his uncle's property after all—though that terrible old Englishman always declared he shouldn't—and is now living at Belleisle."

"Ah! Garrett Barrett, I remember him also—just a little. He was charming, eh? A genuine Irishman—a trifle farouche, perhaps, but amusing always. He can't be all, however; there must be somebody besides your blanket man and this splendid specimen of the early Irish."

"The Harringtons are always at Cairn."

"I know. Mrs. Harrington as English as ever?"

"A trifle more so; it grows on her as she gets older. She now quite shudders when the word Ireland is mentioned, and dreams out loud, impossible dreams of flying to some unknown shore."

"Does she still keep on wondering why she married her husband?"

"Yes; she wonders still, almost as hard as you do."

"For a youthful maiden, you have an admirably sharp tongue. But you have at least proved yourself human; you have erred, my pretty Constantia. I think I told you exactly why I married Mr. Dundas."

"Yet at first you gave me the idea that—"

"Never mind the 'at first' of anything. Allow for the shock of receiving so blunt a question without a kindly forerunner to give one a warning, and time in which to answer it with becoming solemnity," she delivered her rebuke with the most careful artlessness.

Constantia colored. "Blunt"—yes, she had been blunt. And yet it was hardly her nature to be so. Her sudden contact with this lovely, red-haired cousin of hers, after all the years of silence between them, had set her teeth on edge somehow, and taken all the softness out of her, and thrown out all her coolness. The Donna she knew now, could never have been the Donna (as far, at least, as she was concerned) in whom she had so firmly believed in her childish days. Was it a touch of artificiality in the lovely woman or the sometime mockery in the large eyes? The quick drooping of the long lashes to conceal those tell-tale orbs, or the almost imperceptible curving of the perfect lips when such and such things were said? She could not tell. Donna was evidently kindly, laughter-loving, ready to condone; bon camarade doubtless, and with a generous air; but was there no subtlety, no unscrupulous will beneath the merry mask?

For all that, rudeness was an inexcusable thing, and acknowledgment of it necessary.

"I am sorry if I said what was displeasing to you," said Constantia, coloring highly.

"I will tell you one great truth, Constantia," said Mrs. Dundas, shutting up her fan with a resounding click. "You are too pretty ever to say anything displeasing. Say what you like, they will condone it."

"They?"

"Men! Never think of anything else. The rest don't count. Get men on your side, and there you are! Now to proceed. We have had Mr. Stronge, Garrett Barry, and Lord Varley. Any more?"

"There is Mr. Featherston," said Constantia. There was a faint hesitation, a vague difference in her tone as she pronounced his name, and Mrs. Dundas looked fixedly at her.

"Is he the favored one?" she asked, leaning forward with a smiling eagerness, and thus throwing an additional touch of brightness into the already bright picture she presented.

"No," said Constantia, without addition to this bald denial. Nevertheless, the denial cost her a blush.

"No? With that lovely color on your cheeks? Will you swear it has not been born for him? Do you know where even good little girls go to when they tell a fib? There! Don't eat my head off; it was a simple every-day question, after all. And you must pardon me if I still go on believing that, if he is not the one, he is at all events one of them. Naughty girl! At your age to have so many strings to your bow!"

Constantia laughed.

"I don't fancy I have one real string," she said. "Not one that would not snap, were I to pull it a thought too fine."

"Pouf!" She snapped her long, lovely jeweled fingers in the air. "That! for such a fancy." Then, with a little gay air: "Seriously, I should be only too glad to believe you. The county suggests itself to me as being dull, and if all these young men were your special property—I would not be uncousinly for worlds, but you will understand that it is a necessity with me to amuse myself."

"As how?"

"Have I not said? The tyrant man is the one thing that truly diverts me. Not this man or that—any man will do, provided he can speak the queen's English, and moves in the world in which I live. I hold that it is quite possible to knock a month's laughter out of the very dullest of them. You see, I am not greedy. You shall have your choice, and I shall not interfere; but the others must be free game."

Miss MacGillicuddy grew slowly red. She looked down. For the moment she knew she was looking shy, and this increased the extreme anger and disgust she was feeling. She knew, too, that Mrs. Dundas was watching her with eyes openly amused, and this did not tend to decrease the indignation. She conquered herself sufficiently, after awhile, to be at least able to speak.

"You mean," she said, still with her eyes on the carpet, "that you would permit them to—to—to pay attentions to you?"

There was righteous horror in the girl's tone. Mrs. Dundas, hearing it, and seeing the girl's pretty, flushed, and angry face, fell back amongst her cushions. She looked what she was—unutterably amused.

"To put it so broadly shows crudeness," she said. "Time, however, the all-powerful, will no doubt teach you that—so that I shall spare you my lecture, and refrain from giving you the lesson on the polite skipping required in decent society, that is on the tip of my tongue. Just now, if you were at a loss, you might have said you failed to understand me, or something of the sort."

"That is a lesson," returned Constantia. "But I can not benefit by it. I did understand you, thoroughly. You meant you would find your amusement in making a man love you, and then laughing at him. I thought one never did that after one was married."

Mrs. Dundas broke into laughter, noiseless, but full of mirth to overflowing. Yet not a sound escaped her. It was a little way she had. There would be no sudden declaring of her mirth—no movement of the body, no click even of the never-absent fan, and then all at once, when you turned to her to know why she had not answered your last question, you would find her in a very agony of laughter. She did not purposely suppress it. It was only, as I have said, one of her little ways, and she had many. Strange as it was, there was something in it catching too. Something, that if you were in the mood for it, would take you, and compel you to join in with her in her silent merry-making. If you were not in the mood, however, it was indescribably annoying.

Just now Constantia was not in the mood.

"Yes?" she said, with distinct and scornful interrogation in the innocent monosyllable. She gazed at her cousin steadily, with somber eyes, and in her usual downright fashion. Mrs. Dundas after a bit dried her eyes, and pulled herself together in what she meant to appear a very penitent manner. But it was still abominably full of enjoyment of an enraging kind.

"You are propriety itself," she said. "A very Una. It would be impossible to say how much I honor and admire you—and do not desire to imitate you. I hope it will last with you—or perhaps I should rather hope it won't. 'Be virtuous and you'll be happy, but you won't have a good time.' You know the new copy-book text? 'When one is married.' Was that your text? Do you know," she glanced up here, and changed her tone to one deeply confidential, "it is an absurd—an almost impossible thing, but there really are moments when I entirely forget I ever was married!"

(To Be Continued.)

THE PENALTY IS HEAVY.

For Delivering Letters Unless You Are a Government Official.

Joseph Laverty was arraigned before Judge Dugas at Montreal the other morning on the somewhat novel charge of delivering letters. Mr. D. Mulligan, the Post Office Inspector, was the prosecutor in the case. The evidence went to show that since the government raised the cost of delivering city mail to two cents a letter, a number of merchants found that it paid them to engage the services of a man to deliver letters, such as invoices, etc., at one cent each. This also gave a chance to men out of regular employment to make two or three dollars a day by delivering them. The postoffice learned of this and as there is an act called the "Post-Office Act" covering this, they made investigations which resulted in the arrest of Laverty.

The gist of the act is that no one but the Postmaster-General can collect, convey, send or deliver letters in Canada, and the penalty for infringement of this law is a fine of twenty dollars for each letter delivered.

The inspector charged Laverty with delivering five letters and he was fined twenty dollars for the first letter and five dollars for the other four.

The inspector says that the Post Office Department is going to prosecute all infringements on their privilege to the utmost, and he also says that a large number of the most prominent business houses in Montreal have been violating the law ever since the postage was raised.

Speaking of this law, a prominent police court official said that every day letters from the court were delivered by messengers and he wanted to know where the line should be drawn. Still the simple fact exists that if one man asks another to kindly oblige him by delivering a letter to some house on his way home, the obliging friend lays himself liable to a fine of twenty dollars, which in these hard times is a stern test of friendship.

SOUND TEETH FOR MAIL CLERKS.

Curious Postal Regulation in England and a Woman's Sacrifice in Order to Get Appointed.

Most of the postal clerks in the smaller offices in England are women. Candidates must pass an examination. One of the regulations is that no one shall be employed who has not absolutely sound teeth, no matter how fit in other ways for the post. The reason for this regulation is shrouded in mystery. To comply with this rule an English woman the other day exhibited a strange heroism. Having passed the other tests, the dentist reported against the condition of her teeth, his affidavit stating that two of her molars were quite hollow and that twelve others were in various stages of decay. Without hesitation the fair candidate hurried to the nearest dentist's shops, and at a single sitting had extracted the fourteen teeth that threatened to terminate her official career before it had fairly begun. Armed with a fresh certificate, testifying that her remaining teeth were sound and in good condition, she again applied for employment and was appointed.

ROUND THE WHOLE WORLD.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE.

Old and New World Events of Interest Chronicled Briefly—Interesting Happenings of Recent Date.

Both Oxford and Cambridge now have university hockey teams.

Van Tromp, a Dutchman, of 28 inches, danced, fenced and sang to perfection, and was quite a favorite at The Hague some years ago.

Employes in the British Home Office are to be retired for age at 60. The Under Secretary, who signed the order, is himself 65.

Simon Paape was barely 30 inches high at 26 years of age, and was presented to Prince George, the Regent of England, by one of his foreign friends.

The table upon which Cromwell wrote when he affixed his signature to the warrant for the execution of Charles I. was recently sold for £145.

Abdul Aziz reigned from 1861 to 1876. He was a reactionary and the puppet of court intrigues. He was deposed May 30, 1876, and "found dead" five days later.

Ann Cleaves, of Matloch, England, lived to the age of 103. She was three feet nine inches high, and lived in a house built for her, and especially adapted to her size.

Abdul Hamed II., the present Sultan, involved Turkey in the war with Russia. He is believed to possess considerable intelligence and determination. He has been called "the man of blood."

Dublin is threatened with a plethora if not a plague, of tram cars. The whole city and country will in a short time be overrun with them, and there will be no place for any other vehicle.

Mrs. Keeley, the venerable actress, whose ninetieth birthday was recently celebrated in London, sang the "Mermaid's Song" in a performance of "Oberon," conducted by Weber himself, in 1826.

Abdul Medjid reigned from 1839 to 1861, and to him was first applied the epithet "the sick man." It was during his reign that the famous treaty giving Turkey control of the Dardanelles was signed.

Two Russian battleships, on their way to the Mediterranean, put into Portsmouth harbour recently, being the first Russian vessels to whom the privilege had been allowed in over a quarter of a century.

Afossil dragon fly 27 inches long, armed with big jaws and teeth, has been found in the Department of the Commentry, in the Department of the Allier, France. It has been christened Megancura Mongi.

One of the first acts of the recently formed Waiters' Union in London was to declare war against "tipping." It seems that the objectionable practice results unsatisfactorily to the generality of the men.

It is proposed to supply London with sea water for bathing by pumping the water from the channel near Brighton, and conveying it to a great reservoir on Epsom Downs, from which it would flow down hill to London.

There are three soldiers of mark living on the Isle of Wight wearing the Victoria Cross—and singularly, they are all of the same name—viz., Sir Samuel Browne, of Ryde; Col. Brown, of Westmount, Sandown; and Col. Browne, of Brook.

A cheque for £8,225,000 1s. 10d., the first instalment of the Chinese war indemnity to Japan, was recently signed at the Bank of England. The money will remain in the bank until the Japanese Government give instructions as to its disposal.

The recent strike of Paris omnibus drivers elicited the curious fact that French judges and judicial officers are forbidden by the etiquette of the profession to ride in an omnibus. They must take a cab or walk, if they do not own a carriage.

Mahomet II., who reigned for over 30 years, was one of the ablest statesmen of the early part of the present century, and has been called "the most energetic figure modern Turkey." He was perpetually at war with the reactionaries, and his death was "sudden."

Selim III., who ruled Turkey from 1789 to 1807, was a reformer and a liberal. He was a man of great personal courage. He was assassinated for his attempts to institute reforms in the army and civil service, and because it was said he had violated the Koran.

London's district markets are disappearing, owing to the competition of the great stores of the open-air markets in the streets, especially on Saturday nights. Billingsgate even is threatened, its sales of fish being interfered with by the Shadwell market.

English ships will be attracted to Siberian ports now that Capt. Wiggins has shown that it is possible, by the decision of the Russian Government, to allow foreign merchandise to be imported into Siberia by the Arctic route for some years to come at least.

The German schoolmaster is very poorly paid. Thirteen thousand schoolmasters have salaries of less than $200 a year. They lately met and resolved that they ought to have at least $300 to begin with, and a chance to rise to $600 by the end of twenty-five years.

All the electric car lines of Genoa have been stopped by a decree of the Syndic on account of the frequency of accidents. The hills of Genoa are very steep, and the people of the town were so much alarmed at the possible consequences of a runaway that they threatened violence.

The Japanese Government have given orders in Switzerland for 18,000 watches, the cost of which is not to exceed 10s 6d each. The watches are to be given to officers and men of the army and navy who distinguished themselves in the late war with China, and to take the place of the medals always awarded at the close of national hostilities.

Dr. Saunders, an eminent specialist and member of the Health Board of London, is a great believer in the value of the electric light. He claims that electricity is a great moral power; that it protects humanity better than the philanthropist, and, by purifying the workshops and the factories, the sanitary laws are carried out with much less friction