LORD KILLEEN'S REVENGE

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

Varley nodded. If he was sorry for the untimely withering of the fruit of his loveless marriage, it was a sorrow of the very vaguest.

"I saw it to-day," went on Donna, still in a lower key. "It was in her arms—she seemed to cling to it. Her eyes were large as those of one who seldom sleeps. She was so fierce in her disbelief of the child's coming death that one knew how entirely she believed. She impressed me, somehow."

"Why will you talk of her?" cried Varley, with sudden, vehement impatience. He paced angrily up and down the exquisite room for a minute or two, trying to restrain his bitter remorse, and then flung himself suddenly into a chair.

"Is it true what Constantia says," said Donna, dreamily; "she is a saint. Perhaps to be a mother would make one feel like that! She received me very perfectly. I—were I in her place, and had she come to see me—I should have slapped her on the cheek. But she received me with a perfect grace. It was wonderful. I wish"—she paused, looking slowly at Varley, and then letting her eyes drop to the little white, idle hands toying with her fan—"I wish, as it was to be, that she—had been—some other woman."

She paused. Silence followed on her words. Her breath, that had been hurrying from between her lips with undue haste before, now grew painfully rapid as she marked the hesitation that kept him from replying. Was he wavering? She lifted her heavy, white lids, and turned her large, slumbrous eyes on his with a glance of keenest scrutiny. He felt it, and stirred beneath it uneasily.

"So do I," he said at last very quietly. His gaze was bent upon the ground. He could not see the swift transition of color that swept across her face, nor the light that lit her eyes.

"Ah! you have fear—regret?" she cried. The words seemed to burst from her in a little passion of contempt and anger.

"That is a silly speech. I have no fear, and certainly no regret strong enough to work a reformation. But I would gladly have had it all otherwise." He spoke moodily.

"Have it so, then," returned she impetuously. She made a scornful gesture with her hand, and threw back from her white brow the fine red hair that hung round it like a halo. "It is a simple thing to undo—this friendship of ours. To see me now and again, to speak to me—there is not much in it to be renounced."

"Is that how you look at it?" said he. There was reproach in his regard.

"It is how you will learn to look at it—when you have forgotten." A faint quiver shook her voice; something came into her eyes that made them softer, deeper, lovlier. Varley made a movement toward her, but she waved him back; "No, no," she said. "You must begin from this moment if it is to be so."

"There were years," said he "and yet did I forget?"

"How can I tell? Lady Varley is undeniably handsome. She is a stone, a bit of ice. You may have found her disappointing afterward. But certainly she is handsome."

"She may be. It is possible. I don't know," said he, wearily. "There is only one thing sure that always your face was before me, your voice in my ears, your touch upon my hand, my hair, your image in my heart."

"You will have to blot that out, my friend, if—" She paused. She drew nearer to him with the soft, languorous movement that was part of her, and was always so sweet to him, and laid her small, fine, strong little hand upon his breast. "It is not too late yet. Go—go back to her—to the woman you have married; leave the woman you—" She looked at him.

"Love," he said, finishing the sentence for her. He lifted her hand from his breast, and laid it on his brow and then upon his lips. He kissed it passionately. "Love," he said again, but this time he called her by it, as though it were her name. "My one love, my sweet."

She laughed. All the coldness, the cruelty went out of her eyes, and a subtle mockery, tinged with subtler tenderness, took its place.

"That is not the way to begin," she whispered, her beautiful red lips parted by a smile. "Take courage in both hands, and put me from you." The pretty palm, that still lay upon his mouth, pressed it ever so delicately as she thus advised him to relinquish her.

"Too late."

"Nay; that is mere cowardice. What am I more than another that you can not let me go? Catch up your honor, I implore you, ere it sink into the mire!" She spoke mockingly, with an insolent daring, for as yet the man had not so far fallen that his honor was no longer dear in his sight. She laughed aloud in the certainty of her power. Her glance burning into his, was a wild mingling of love and triumph. "Honor, Frederic!" she repeated recklessly. "Think of it! It is a magic word that should sway you. To love her means honor; to love me"—she crept closer to him, and raising one arm, passed it slowly seductively around his neck—"dishonor!"

"So be it," said Varley unsteadily. He drew her to him and pressed his lips to the exquisite blue-veined throat, from which the laces fell away as though deeming it shame to hide it.

She sunk into a low chair, and poured out tea into the pretty eggshell china cups before her. There was a delicate flush upon her cheeks; her eyes were gleaming; she looked adorable.

"After all," she said, "we have had our little tussle for nothing. Why should you not be my friend? Why not call here as you will, in spite of all the prudes in the world? There is nothing dishonorable in the mere fact of your finding me more attractive than your wife. If I had forbidden you my presence because Constantia said a few ugly things, I should have been as stupid as she. But if I had done so, I do not see how you would have been greatly the loser."

"I do," said Varley. "Not to see you, never to hear your voice, would have made life insupportable."

"You managed to exist for a considerable time, however, without those joys. If I had never returned, I dare say you would have got on very well without them until old age seized you."

"But you did return. We met. If I ever madly dreamed I had erased your memory from my heart, our first meeting dispelled the illusion."

"If only you had not married," said she very low. And then, with a sudden and entire change of manner, and a wrenching of herself away, as it were, from all such folly as even a vague remorse: "Well," she cried gayly, "some one should go to the wall; and she—doesn't love you. She!" with a contemptuous intonation. "One can see it in her eyes, her mouth—she doesn't know how to love. Sugar?" She paused and smiled, as at some happy recollection, and leaned toward him. "Do you remember," she said, "what a baby you were about sugar long ago? One, two, three lumps I used to drop into your cup, and you would not have them unless I put them in with my fingers. Once, when I refused (what a naughty boy you were then!), you threw my dear little repoussee sugar-tongs into the fire. You took your punishment very well, however."

Varley laughed.

"Put them in with your fingers now," he said. "You owe me something. All my life, I think, since first I met you, has been one long punishment."

"Until now," she put in softly. "Well, how many? The old number—one, two three? Greedy, as of yore? One would imagine sweets might have palled upon you by this."

"Not such sweets as you can offer."

He was quite himself again. Any shadow of remorse that had fallen upon him had been conquered, cast out by the brightness of her presence. He had pushed a low chair close to hers, and the perfume of the violets that nestled in her breast came to him with every breath she drew.

"Ah!" said she; "but if we are to be friends, you must be good, remember. Such petty speeches are to be tabooed. There are Constantias in the world, and—others. I would have you beware."

"There are also such hours as this," said he.

Even as he spoke, there came the sound of a heavy tread of approaching footsteps upon the corridor outside.

"Say moments, rather," whispered Mrs. Dundas, hurriedly, making a quaint little moue. "Here comes Cerberus. Push your chair back a bit, and take that look out of your eyes. Settle yourself in a bored position, and brighten up when he enters. Look specially glad to see him. . . . . Ah, Jo! what luck to get you at this time of day! Generally your horrid turnips hold you fast, or your shorthorns, or your bullocks, or some other worthless thing. Everything is of more consequence than your poor wife. Come here, and sit beside the injured woman, sir, and give her an account of your doings. It was just as well you came when you did, I can tell you, as Lord Varley was on the point of yawning himself to death. No, not a word, Lord Varley; not an excuse. I forgive you."

CHAPTER XIX.

Though Barry had suffered defeat on that last day when he strove to press his suit with Constantia, still he was in nowise daunted, and only waited for a romantic opportunity to press it again. The romantic moment, however, not presenting itself as quickly as the soul of a lover desired, he one day made up his mind to defy the power of effect, and marched up to The Cottage in a new suit of gray clothes that he flattered himself were eminently becoming, to seek an interview with Constantia.

He knew the room that oftenest held her; and going around through the tiny garden, gently approached the window, which was open, and looked in. Somebody was there certainly, a voice fell upon his ears. But surely those were not the dulcet tones of his beloved!

If his beloved was a most alarming old woman with a cap and a false front, and a violent temper, certainly she it was, Miss MacGillicuddy in a fine frenzy was pouring forth the vials of her wrath on the wretched Norah, who stood a trembling, miserable culprit before her. Barry stared, aghast, unable to move, so great was his astonishment and disappointment at not seeing Constantia. He was, too, a remarkably good-natured young man, and to see Norah in woe went to his heart. He was fond of Norah, not only because she was near to his rose, but for her own sake; and the child was fond of him, though perhaps she had a preference for Stronge. So great now was Barry's concern for the frail little creature under sentence, that he leaned his elbows on the window-sill, and listened with all his might to the altercation within, if that could be called an altercation when only one spoke. The child seemed stricken into a dumb terror.

He had not heard the beginning of the "row," as he called it, but he gathered sufficient from what was being then said to comprehend the first act. Norah had evidently not been proof against the temptations of a little fruit tart, two inches by two and a half inches, one of half a dozen prepared for the day's dinner, and had taken it from the pantry, and had eaten part of it when Miss MacGillicuddy had pounced upon her, and dragged her into this small parlor to receive punishment. Later on, it transpired that Mulcahy had given the little tart, with a kiss, and her blessing in honest Irish, but the child had been too frightened to explain. The unhappy tart now lay upon the table, half demolished, and the more tempting in that fruit could be seen.

"To steal," Miss MacGillicuddy was saying in awful voice, standing erect, her gaunt figure drawn up to its fullest height, whilst she shook a long forefinger at the trembling Norah, "means to be a thief! You are a thief!"

The child writhed in an agony of protest, but her frightened little tongue clove to the roof of her mouth, and no sound came. Barry's heart bled for her.

"You are not only a base thief but a glutton," went on Miss MacGillicuddy, triumphantly, who was plainly enjoying herself—as many of the pious ones of the earth do, over the despair of the sinners. "But your sin has found you out. And mine is the privilege to be the one to bring you to a sense of it, to show you the horrors of theft, to teach you the abomination of greediness, to instill into your mind the necessity for curbing the appetite, and subjecting all earthly passions to the more spiritual influences. Mind must govern body, not body mind!" She quite glowed with the fervor of her words, this old woman eloquent, as she thus addressed the shaking child of eleven. "I consider it to be my duty to correct you, so I ordain that you sit here on this high chair (I think it is a hard one) and keep that tart there before you on the table, within reach of your hand, for one hour by yonder clock. You are to keep your eyes fixed upon it; but let me find that during my absence your teeth make no acquaintance with it."

Barry could bear no more. He sprung through the window and into the room. Miss MacGillicuddy glared at him. Norah burst into low sobs. Barry, for her own sake, took no notice of them.

"I heard you as I came up, Miss MacGillicuddy," he began, shaking the hand of the unwilling spinster with immense empressment. "You are always so terse, so true, so eloquent, so—er—to the point, don't ye know."

Nobody could have known; but his manner was rich in flattery, and Miss MacGillicuddy caught at the word eloquent. She believed herself secretly to be a born orator, and often sighed for an opportunity to ascend a public platform and harangue an intelligent mob.

"If you have heard," she said, "you understand the sad necessity that has been forced upon me by this erring girl to punish a heinous misdemeanor. My words, it appears, reached your ears. Such, Mr. Barry, are the salutary lessons I teach my young charges, with a view to making their vices subservient to them, not they to their vices, as is too often the case in this present demoralized generation!" She made a full stop. She seemed struck with admiration at her own fluency of speech. Surely that was a sentence full of force and elegance.

"Excellent! Excellent!" applauded Barry. "Oh, if I had inly had an aunt like you in my young days, what a different man I might be to-day!" He spoke with such extreme fervency, that Norah, who was still crying silently with lowered and abashed eyes, lifted her head suddenly to bestow upon him a glance of withering scorn. She had believed in Barry, and now! She puckered up her small features into a disgusted expression, and her big eyes, that always seemed so many degrees too large for her thin little face, flashed fire. She had lost the elaborate wink that Barry had bestowed upon her, and fully regarded him as faithless. She would have her revenge, however, she mused—she would tell Constantia, And never, never would Constantia be civil to the traitor again.

"You should repent," said Miss MacGillicuddy in a sepulchral tone, looking at Barry. The look, however, was as mild as she could make it. She was

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touched by his regard that she had not had the guardianship of his youth. "You should join us." She pointed to the dingy bit of blue ribbon that adorned her dingier gown. Then, once more she addressed the miserable Norah, who had clambered into the obnoxious high chair placed near the table, on which was placed, in an offensive prominence, the unlucky tart.

"You have my orders," she said. "Do not dare to disobey them, lest worst befall you. I am now going to the town, to take the chair at the Women's Blue Ribbon meeting that takes place this afternoon. I shall probably be away about two hours, but as your punishment is to last but an hour—" She hesitated. "I have been mild, culpably mild, I think." She hesitated again, and Norah grew cold with fright lest the second hour was about to be tacked on to her first term of imprisonment. "However, my word has gone forth," she went on at last, "and so it shall rest. Watch that clock, you unhappy girl!" pointing to the undainty timepiece that desecrated the mantelshelf; "and when the hour has gone by, you may get off that chair. To study the time is the one recreation I will allow you—the only opportunity I will permit you to remove your gaze from that evidence of your gluttony. I regret that I cannot stay to entertain you, Mr. Barry," with grewsome graciousness; "but—"

"Oh, thank you. I beg you will not abstain from your good work for my sake," entreated Barry, eagerly. "I merely came to ask George a question."

"Quite so. You will remain here, then, probably for some time. Let me beg of you to see that that unhappy glutton yonder obeys my behest."

"Rely upon me. It will give me a sorrowful pleasure to see you are obeyed to the very letter," said Barry solemnly.

She bade him adieu and left the room. When she had disappeared safely up the graveled walk, and the gate had clicked behind her, a fact ascertained by Mr. Barry by a judicious peeping from behind the dingy curtains, he turned to Norah.

"She's gone," he said; "bad luck go with her. There's the click of the gate." He stood on tiptoe once more and craned his neck cautiously, and had the gratification of seeing her stalking down the road up to her ankles in dust. "Well, of all the old divils!" said he. He gave up his private reflections there, and went up to the sad little sinner perched on her stool of repentance.

"Poor little beggar!" said he, as tenderly as though he had called her by a more endearing appellation; "and was all that fuss about one cake?"

"Don't dare speak to me," returned Norah, with a wrathful shriek.

Mr. Barry gave way beneath it. He opened his eyes and gazed at her in ever-increasing wonder.

"Stuff and nonsense!" he cried at last; "d'ye mean to tell me you didn't understand me? That you didn't know I was on your side? Why, if I hadn't pretended to be civil to that old harridan she would have been here now, and we couldn't have had an opportunity of paying her out for all her sins. I say, get off that skinflint of a chair."

He tried tenderly to lift her to the ground, but the child, strong in her promise to obey—a promise given silently, but none the less solemnly, as Miss MacGillicuddy knew—clung persistently to it.

"Oh, I can't," she said, sobbing vehemently, "I daren't. She would find me out."

"She couldn't."

"She could, though. You don't know her. She would ask me directly she came back if I had stirred before the time."

"Well?" There was something so airy and innocent about Mr. Barry's voice as he asked this that I am glad to say the child failed to comprehend the iniquity of the inquiry.

"Well?" she repeated, tearfully, as if puzzled; "well, then, I'd have to tell, that's all."

She was looking up at him from her stool of repentance with great drowned eyes and a miserable red little nose. The nose was such a thoroughly melancholy affair that it inflamed Mr. Barry's ire against the absent tyrant.

"Would you, though, by Jove?" he said. "What for? Catch me telling her the tru— Oh! ha! h'm!" He broke off spasmodically, as he caught the child's clear gaze, and read something of wonderment in it that reduced him to order at once, and woke his slumbering conscience, and made him very properly ashamed of himself.

"You mean—" she began, hesitating, as if uncertain.

"Just so; just so," declared he, vigorously, with much effusion. "You are right—quite right. Nothing like the truth at all hazards. Give me the truth beyond everything. Martyrdom rather than a lie. I feel quite like you. In Limerick, I give you my word, you wouldn't find a falsehood amongst the lot of us."

"Yes," said Norah, who was entirely puzzled now, and so out of the running that she could only fall back upon the harmless monosyllable that means, as occasion offers, so much or so little.

"I say," said Mr. Barry, "do you think you can keep yourself from falling asleep, and tumbling of that consumptive old chair, whilst I make a run to the village? If so, I bet you a chip to a pony that we circumvent the old cat yet."

He was gone as he spoke. Norah sat on, speechless, oppressed, with a sense of even greater loneliness now upon her. Constantia was at Araglin, the boys at the Rectory, stumbling through their Latin primer, and George was in Dublin. Now her last friend, Barry, had deserted her. Where had he gone? And for what? Would he return? What was that word he had used—"circumbent?" How did a man "circumbent" a cat? Did it hurt? Was Aunt Bridget the cat in question?

She had not altogether come to the end of these secret interrogations, and had not so much as decided whether, in the event of it being proved that "circumbenting" did hurt, she would be glad or sorry to see her aunt made a victim of it, when Mr. Barry once more arrived on the scene, rushing tumultuously into the room, carrying in his hand the largest paper bag that Norah had ever seen.

(To be Continued.)

GOLDEN GRAINS.

All politeness is owing to liberty.—Shaftesbury.

The man of pleasure should more properly be termed the man of pain.—Colton.

Perfection is attained by slow degrees; she requires the hand of time.—Voltaire.

There is no opposing brutal force to the stratagems of human reason.—L'Estrange.

A picture is an intermediate something between a thought and a thing.—Coleridge.

Who ever saw old age, that did not applaud the past and condemn the present time?—Montaigne.

They could neither of them speak for rage and so fell a-sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.—Congreve.

When a man has not a good reason for doing a thing, he has one good reason for letting it alone.—Sir Walter Scott.

There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which beams and blazes in the dark hours of adversity.—Irving.

It is not enough that poetry should be so refined as to satisfy the judgment; it should appeal to our feeling and imagination.—Horace.

Repartee is the highest order of wit, as it bespeaks the coolest, yet quickest exercise of genius, at a moment when the passions are roused.—Colton.

Men and things have each their proper perspective; to judge rightly of some it is necessary to see them near, of others we can never judge rightly but at a distance.—Rochefoucauld.

Wit may be a thing of pure imagination, but humor involves sentiment and character. Humor is of a genial quality; dwells in the same character as pathos, and is always mingled with sensibility.—Giles.

Resentment is, in every stage of the passion, painful, but is not disagreeable unless in excess; pity is always painfull, yet always agreeable; vanity on the contrary is always pleasant, yet always disagreeable.—Home.

Beneath the rule of men entirely great, the pen is mightier than the sword. Behold the arch enchanter's wand! itself a nothing! but taking sorcery from the master hand, to paralyze the Caesars, and to strike the loud earth breathless.—Bulwer.

He who opposes his own judgment against the consent of the times ought to be backed with unanswerable truths; he that has truth on his side is a fool, as well as a coward, if he is afraid to own it because of the currency or multitude of other men's opinions.—De Foe.

To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood, to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances which every day has rendered familiar, this is the character and priveiege of genius, and one of the marks which distinguish genius from talent.—Coleridge.

Philosophy is a bully which talks very loud when the danger is at a distance, but the moment she is hard pressed by the enemy she is not to be found at her post, but leaves the brunt of the battle to be borne by her humbler out steadier comrade religion, whom on most other occasions she affects to despise.—Colton.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene and idleness is an atrophy. Whatever body or society wastes more than it acquires must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed and ceases to labor takes away something from the public stock.—Johnson.

WHY WATERS ARE SALT.

EFFORTS TO ANSWER THE QUESTION NOT SATISFACTORY.

Produced and Clarified the Atmosphere—Raised Continents and Created Currents—Interesting Information.

The sea at present contains ninety quintillions tons of salt. If this salt could be gathered in a solid form and compressed into the shape of a cube, it would contain 10,173,000 cubic miles. Each edge of such a cube would measure somewhat more than two hundred miles. This is enough to cover all the land on this globe with a uniform layer of salt to a depth of one thousand feet. The questions may well be asked, where did all this salt come from, and what is the use of it? Several scientific gentlemen have attempted to answer this first question, and their efforts are not entirely satisfactory. The second question is not so difficult.

According to the history of the creation of the world, as told by Moses in the Genesis, it is implied that the ocean existed before the land, for, on the "third day" the "water under the heavens" were gathered together and the dry land appeared.

SOLVING THE TROUBLE

The statement has bothered a great number of able philosophers, who, in their effort to stick to the letter of the Scripture and at the same time to reason out everything on perfectly natural principles, have been puzzled to know how such a grand transformation could be accomplished in one day. And their perplexity was not relieved when learned geologists announced that it must have required ages for the waters that enveloped the earth to subside and reveal this land that lay beneath.

But when it was suggested that the word "day" as used by Moses, meant not a real period of twenty-four hours but an era of thousands of years, the difficulty was removed. This meaning of the word "day" is at present generally accepted by devout scientists, who now declare that there is nothing impossible in Moses' account of the creation.

HOW IT BECAME SALT.

Accepting the Mosaic account, Dr. T. S. Hunt, a learned writer on the physical history of the globe, supplies what Moses left out, and in so doing he gives a very good reason for the presence of the salt in the sea. Having arrived at the point of Moses' meagre narrative where the earth was in a molten state and surrounded by an envelope of gases and of water vapour, Dr. Hunt says:

"The carbonates, chlorides, and sulphates (chemical combinations of carbon, chlorine and sulphur, with oxygen) were changed into silicates. The carbon, chlorine and sulphur, being thus freed from the oxygen, separated in the form of acid gases. These, with nitrogen, vapour of water and a probable excess of oxygen, formed the atmosphere, which was very dense (and also very unhealthy.)

"The surface of the earth was covered with lumps of molten rock (probable resembling furnace slag.) The depressed parts of the surface were filled with highly heated solutions of hydrochloric and sulphuric acids, which ate into the surface and decomposed it. In this way the silicates were changed to pure silica, taking the form of quartz as the atmosphere cooled, and the condensation of the vaporous atmosphere, produced sea water, holding in solution phases of sodium, calcium and magnesium, and salts of ammonium. The atmosphere, thus freed of its noxious elements, became pure and fit for man."

WHAT IS ITS USE?

It is therefore evident that the sea has been salty from the creation of the world. The salt does not come, as is generally supposed, from friction of the water against salt "rocks" in the bed of the ocean. This then, answers the first question. Where did the salt come from? The second question is pretty well answered by Mr. G. W. Littlehales in the Popular Science Monthly.

"It seems," he says, "that the sea was made salt in the beginning as a part of the grand design of the Creator to provide for the system of evolution which has been going on since the creation. Many distinct species of living organisms exist in the sea as a result of its salinity, and their remains have largely contributed to the growth of continents."

The minute creatures that have lived in the sea for ages past have left enduring monuments in the shape of islands, rocks and continents. If the sea had not been salty these marine animals could not have existed and secreted the hard substance known as a "calcereous skeleton," which was largely contributed to the growth of continents. Among these early inhabitants of the sea were corals, crinoids, sea urchins and star fishes.

The saltiness of the sea has also much to do with the ocean currents, which distribute the heat of the tropics over the colder regions of the earth. Currents are largely due to the difference between the specific gravity of sea water and the fresh water of rains. Thus when rains falls on a certain part of the ocean the effort of the heavier salt water of the ocean to establish an equilibrium causes a current.

"Having contributed to the growth of continents, the saltness of the sea has in a like degree peopled them by influencing human migrations through the streams of the ocean, upon which the race of man was spread to the distant archipelagoes at a time when there were only rudimentary means for struggling against the forces of nature."

THE WATER CRESS.

The water cress contains very many sanitary and medicinal qualities. A curious characteristic of it is that, if grown in a ferruginous stream, it absorbs into itself five times the amount of iron that any other plant does. For all anaemic constitutions it is, therefore, specially of value. But it also contains proportions of garlic and sulphur, of iodine and phosphates, and is, therefore, most valuable as a blood purifier.