LORD KILLEEN'S REVENGE.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Varley, when he had left her presence, had passed hurriedly through the hall, and being in a mood that desired solitude above all other good, made for a room little frequented and but dimly lighted, where he felt sure he might find himself alone. He flung open the door, closed it as vehemently, and throwing himself into a chair gave himself up to thought. A smile, bright, glad, victorious, broke over his face. There was triumph, indeed, in every feature. He threw out his arms as if to a foe vanquished, and in his excitement, his feverish exultation, the hope within him caught sound, and he spoke aloud.

"Time, time alone," he cried, in a clear, vibrating tone, "and opportunity are all I want. And then—riddance of this cursed stagnation, and life—with her!"

Something seemed to rise out of the dark corner before him to confront him as he spoke; a tall, indistinct shape, that after a while resolved itself into O'Grady. He looked leaner, darker, more bronzed than ever in the uncertain light as he stood up and looked silently at Varley.

The latter sprung to his feet with an oath.

"Where the deuce have you come from?" he said, then. There was insolence in his tone. Had the fellow heard—understood! He watched him with a lowering brow, and nervous, shifting eyes.

"Where the deuce have you come from? would be more to the purpose," said O'Grady, in his slow, methodical way. There was, however, a ring in his voice that spoke of anger, contempt, and a suppressed rage that bordered on disgust.

"What do you mean?" said Varley, drawing a step nearer. His blood was surging in his veins, and he was in that humor when a man would go as quickly to seek a quarrel as a kiss from the beloved.

"Do you compel me to answer? Is an answer necessary?" In his return O'Grady had moved a little; he was now much nearer to the man addressed. His eyes were glowing; he waited for Varley's next word.

"Speak," said Varley, premptorily.

"You do compel me, then!" said the other, coldly. "Well, hear me! For many days it has been upon my mind to tell you what I think of you; to give you my true and unvarnished opinion of your conduct. To-night you generously" (with a sneer) "offer me an opportunity. I accept it. I—"

"You! Who are you, sir?" broke in Varley, fiercely. "What the devil do you mean by bringing me to task? What do you know of me?"

"Very little, sir, I acknowledge; which is to my credit, I fancy. But that little is bad. In my opinion," said O'Grady, with the utmost calmness, "you are a most consummate scoundrel!"

"What?" said Varley, in a low tone. He seemed paralyzed. He placed a trembling hand on the back of the chair near him as if to support himself, and his face grew livid. His rage was so great that it mastered him, and deprived him of energy for the moment.

"Haven't you grasped it?" said O'Grady, with a curl of the lip. "Must I explain?" Then all at once his manner changed, and his studied calm deserted him. Passion, fierce and strong, conquered prudence, and came to the front. "You!" he said. "Are you a devil or a man, that you treat that creature so? An angel given you from heaven! There are some who would think it their highest good to be able to minister to her happiness; whilst you—you! cast the sacred gift from you, and scorn, insult, and betray her for one unfit to be named in her presence. Great Heaven! that such things should be! And what is to be the end of it? Do you think the world is blind? Do you think your assignation with that woman to-night was unknown?—that no one saw the delivery of her note to you? Does it ever dawn upon you that that little tale will be carried home to her to plant another dagger in her gentle breast? Has she not suffered enough already at your hands? Is there no—"

Varley put up his arm. The gesture was so imperious that O'Grady paused, and regarded him with expectancy. The pause was lengthened. Varley's face was as white as death, and his nostrils were distended. At last he spoke:

"Your wonderful solicitude for Lady Varley deserves my warmest gratitude," he said, with an evil laugh. "I thank you—in her name. Your manner, though no doubt one of your strongest points is, I confess, a little mystifying to so dull a mortal as I am. It leads me to imagine that you believe I no longer have an interest in Lady Varley. It even leads me to believe that you"—he looked straight at his adversary, and again that evil laugh broke forth—"want her."

The deadly insult to his wife had hardly passed his lips when O'Grady had him by the throat. The tall, thin, powerful man swung him to and fro in his paroxysm of rage and disgust as lightly as though Varley (who was a well-grown man) was but a child within his grasp. The latter did his best to retaliate, but, infuriated though he was, his efforts were in vain. He could not shake off O'Grady's hand, long and sinewy as it was, and firm as iron, though delicate enough to look at. The two men glared at each other savagely, speechless, but maddened with a hatred that would never know abatement. Then suddenly Varley's face changed. The veins swelled ominously upon his forehead. His breath grew labored and came at last in little stifled pants. His hold on O'Grady relaxed. Some passionately angry thought within the latter had perhaps induced him unconsciously to tighten his grasp on his enemy's throat.

A dry, painful sob burst from Varley's lips, which already were growing discolored. O'Grady, hearing it, was suddenly dragged back to remembrance of all he still owed to life, and life to him. His fingers instinctively opened without entirely losing their hold, and his eyes shot fire as they looked into Varley's.

"See!" he said, with a touch of rather devilish satisfaction in the thought, "I shake you as I would a rat. So! so! Now go!" He hurled him back against the wall. "And repent if it be in you!"

He put a chair out of his way in a light, strong fashion, and with a steady step left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Constantia's feeling toward Featherston had undergone a considerable change since that night of Mrs. Dundas's masked ball. A change, cruel indeed, because it is always terrible to the young when the first doubt, the first distrust of the one thing beloved dawns upon the mind. She had believed so entirely in Featherston; had so counted on his love for her, wordless though it had been. He had not spoken, indeed, but there had been glances, fond insinuations, lover-like pressures of the hand, delicate gifts of flowers that had convinced her as surely as any spoken testimony of his truth. And now—

That she still believed in him as a man superior to his fellows only added poignancy to her regret. He might have fallen so low as to make ardent love to another man's wife, but still, surely the germs of goodness were in him. With what wonderful ardor he had conducted the crusade against drunkenness in the village, and, indeed, in the country round! He was the foremost leader of the Blue Ribbon movement. How few men of his age would care to associate themselves with an affair of the kind! Old Lord Killeens was loud in his praise of him. Yes; there was good in him. This she conceded gladly, whilst yet her trust in him (so far as she personally was concerned) died resolutely. She was not the girl to hanker betwixt belief and unbelief. She had gone into it thoroughly, and knew.

To again regard him as a lover would be impossible to her. To place faith in his pretty subtleties, to let her heart grow warm beneath his glances; oh, never again! She could not trust him; yet a strange pity for him filled her breast at times. This pity grew with thinking, but it was never akin to love. That, beyond all doubt, was at an end. But she still trembled between her old friendship for him and the vague knowledge that he was undeserving even of that. It wanted, indeed, but a light touch to complete his overthrow, and change the pitying friendship to contempt.

It was a bright, an almost oppressively bright afternoon, and on tree, and field, and drooping flowers the sun shone vigorously. The slated roof of the Cottage looked burning hot, and even in the erstwhile cool recesses of the garden, where shade might reasonably be sought, comfort from the noontide heat there was none. This Constantia, swinging lazily in her hammock, acknowledged to herself.

The sound of steps upon the garden path roused her from her idle dreaming; and it was with a start and a vivid blush—wild and sweet as a hedge-rose—that she saw Barry and Mr. Stronge bearing down upon her. She was full of life and activity at all times, and now she sprung gracefully to the ground, and confronted them, still with warm, flushed cheeks. Her eyes looked misty and a little dreamy from her waking slumber and her musings amongst the hot blown roses. To Stronge she looked the very embodiment of flowery youth, and a little pang made sore his heart as he hastened forward to greet her. She placed her hand coldly enough in his, and answered his greeting with her eyes averted. She had been a little shy with him ever since that night of the masked ball that had wrought so many difficulties all round; and to Stronge now, her reluctant welcome seemed strangely like aversion. It was, indeed, with an unmistakable air of relief that she turned to the more debonair Barry, and told him she was glad to see him.

"Aunt Bridget is within," she said, hurriedly. "Come in; you shall see her."

This noble promise failed to raise joy in the breast that heard. However, perforce they turned, and accompanied Constantia into the dreaded presence.

Miss MacGillicuddy was, as usual, sunk in the depths of gloom. At the weekly Dorcas meetings she had just been insulted by the wife of a neighboring clergyman, a busy, pretentious little person who gave to her parish a baby every twelve months, and rather more of her opinions than they cared for. There was, however, justification for her in her skirmish with Miss MacGillicuddy, as she might reasonably be supposed to know more of the shape and size of a shirt for a new-born babe than a "benighted spinster," as Mrs. Ratkin somewhat irreverently termed the old lady.

Miss MacGillicuddy, however, stood to her guns. She had her theory. She would not believe that a garment of a cut and size so abnormally short could be of use to any human thing. A kitten, she declared, would over-fill it. Mrs. Ratkin did not care for theories. She clung persistently to facts, and demanded triumphantly of Miss MacGillicuddy whether she were or were not a reliable authority as to what a baby could or could not wear.

Miss MacGillicuddy, ignoring the numerous Ratkin babies with a diabolical persistency, as it seemed to the angry mother, declared her unswerving belief that the shirt lying there on the table before them, professing to be a proper pattern, was nothing but a swindle, and entirely useless. Any infant subjected to such clothing would die of cold within a time so short, that Miss MacGillicuddy shrunk from naming it.

"You think, then, you know more about it than I do?" demanded Mrs. Ratkin, rising up in virtuous wrath, and surveying her adversary with such angry eyes that the other members of the meeting felt their pulses throb hopefully. A row was imminent.

"Certainly I do, if you say that that doll's garment there is meant for a human child!" cried Miss MacGillicuddy, fiercely.

"You set your opinion above mine?" Mrs. Ratkin was leaning half over the table by this time, a table that had evidently been placed by Providence between them.

"In such a matter—in most matters—yes!" declared the spinster, undauntedly.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Ratkin. There was a world of venom in the simple ejaculation. "May I ask if you have ever had a baby?"

This was the insult. Miss MacGillicuddy retired, smarting under it, though, to do her justice, with colors flying, and with a backward glance that reduced Mrs. Ratkin (who was frightened at what she had said) to tears. It was quite a relief to the still indignant spinster when she beheld Barry enter the drawing-room. Here was a target on which to loose her shafts. She rose to receive the little group of three with an aspect stormy, and suggestive of dangers ahead.

"You!" she said, with a snort, fixing the luckless Barry with a stony stare. When she had sufficiently gorgonized him, she went on to the others. "How d'ye do?" she said to Stronge, of whom she was a little afraid, giving him a bony hand. Then her eyes fell on Constantia. "It is quite a relief to see you at last, Constantia," she said. "I began to think evil had befallen you. What have you been doing with yourself all the afternoon? Philandering, as usual, I suppose. Would it be indiscreet to inquire where these gentlemen met you?"

She fixed a glittering eye on Barry, who was already so frightened that he hardly knew what he was doing.

"It was only this moment, I assure you, that we—I—" he began, aimlessly.

"No doubt," said Miss MacGillicuddy, sarcastically. "What I ask is, where you found her?"

"In bed," said Mr. Barry, with charming simplicity. Then the enormity of his answer struck him, and he grew purple.

"What, sir?" shrieked Miss MacGillicuddy, wildly. "Is this a deliberate insult? Is the air full of them to-day? you—"

"Oh, I beg pardon, I'm sure," stammered Barry, miserably. His forehead grew damp and red; his eyes became tearful. "It—it was a hammock I meant; but, really, you are so hard on a fellow. You jump upon a fellow so suddenly, that—"

"Sir," interrupted Miss MacGillicuddy, with awful dignity. "A moment! I beg you to understand that never, even in the severest crisis of my life, did I jump upon a fellow-creature. You forget yourself, young man!"

She drew a long breath. It became plain to the others that this was only a mild preliminary canter, and that now she was about to launch out into a volley of vituperative abuse that would lay the wretched Barry's head low in the dust. But relief was near. Andrew Stronge, leaning a little forward, caught the irate lady's eye, and by means of a perfectly calm smile and a gentle movement of the right hand, magnetized her so far that he delayed the words already trembling on her lips.

"I know you will be glad to hear," he said, genially, "that Lady Varley is looking ever so much better than she did when last I saw her."

"Oh, yes! You have noticed that, too," broke in Constantia, forgetting her shyness of him in her anxiety to back him up and prevent the cascade about to be let loose on Barry.

"I am glad to hear it," said Miss MacGillicuddy. "I trust she is getting into a better frame of mind. To fight against the Divine decrees seems to me to betoken a certain amount of moral depravity." She almost forgot Barry in her eagerness to level abuse on some one else.

Constantia flushed warmly, and rose to her feet.

"You are tired, Aunt Bridget," she said, quietly. "We only distress you. I have promised Norah to take her for a walk this evening, and so, if you will excuse—"

"Take me, too," whispered Barry, in an imploring tone. Stronge heard it, and brought himself leisurely to his feet.

"Yes, dear Miss MacGillicuddy; I fear we called in an unlucky hour," he said. "We must only hope we have not done you any harm. Now pray"—going on rapidly, as he saw her open her lips as if to speak, "I entreat you to take my advice. A cup of tea for a bad headache, and to lie down. No, not a word; indeed, you must not try to persuade us to stay. A cup of tea, remember," squeezing her hand in farewell, "and an hour's rest; that is all that is required. Good-bye, good-bye! Now, do try my remedies."

He covered Constantia's and Barry's retreat, and presently found themselves once more in the open air, their numbers augmented by one. Norah had joined them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"I tried to catch you," cried the child, running panting up to them, "to stop your going in. She is in an awful temper. Some one vexed her at her precious meeting, and she has been prancing round the house ever since. She and Mulcahy had such a set-to just now—all about that little last wee thimbleful. You remember it, Connie? I'm sure it was such a little one that we never noticed anything about it, until we saw she had her best dress on with the back to the front. But what did that signify, poor old creature? It looked just as well that way on her. And if she preferred it so—I assure you, Mr. Stronge, it was nothing; nothing at all. But then, what could escape Aunt Bridget's eye?"

"We have, for the moment," said Stronge, taking the little slender hand that was flung out in a tragical disgust, and tucking it under his arm. He knew the child liked him, and by this time she had grown dear to him.

"I expected to find you all in tatters," went on Norah, with an explosive little laugh, "a limb here and a limb there, quite a shower of arms and legs and noses; but I see she has spared you, or else—" She stopped short, and her laughter grew shriller, and so heartfelt that they all joined in. "Did you kill her?" she cried. "Did you rend her in pieces? If so, expect no tears from me. Oh, what a life she has led me this day!"

"I regret to be obliged to inform you that she still lives to work her wicked will on unoffending people," said Barry, gloomily. "We neglected our duty shamefully, I allow, when we left her awhile since with the breath still in her body. However, there is a morrow!"

"No!" said Norah, shaking her shaggy head; "not a bit of it. 'An opportunity once lost is never regained'—that's what Connie wrote in my copy-book yesterday. You've lost your chance!" She shrugged her shoulders as though in contempt of him, and made a little moue at Constantia, who was pretending to be angry with her.

"Let Aunt Bridget alone," she said. "Her bark is worse that her bite; and even if it wasn't so, you shouldn't talk like that. I am sorry about poor Mulcahy, though; did she suffer very much at her hands?"

"'Twas a regular shindy," said Norah; "but it grew ever so much worse when Aunt Bridget advised Mulcahy to take Mr. Featherston as her model. He was a high priest of the blessed Blue Ribbon League, she told her, a shining light, a thing apart, and all that sort of stuff—you know, Connie. Mulcahy was very angry about that, and said all sorts of things about Mr. Featherston that enraged Aunt Bridget; but it wasn't until Mulcahy called him a 'say-sarpint' that the end came. She—"

"A what?" demanded Constantia and Stronge in a breath.

"A 'say-sarpint'—that's just what she said. What is it?" asked Norah, inquisitively. "Is there a serpent in the sea, Mr. Stronge? At all events, Aunt Bridget won't forgive that in a hurry."

They had entered the wood by this time, and the cool and leafy boughs arching above their heads filled them with a certain sense of rest and peace. Through the trees little patches of mossy sward, sun-smitten, lay like tufts of gold; but for the most part, the hot rays of the dying monarch were excluded, and a light that was almost twilight pervaded everything. It was delicious after the intolerable glare of the more open ground, and they wandered on aimlessly, but full of enjoyment, for some time.

The wood was Featherston's, and, as I have said, it adjoined the fields that encircled The Cottage; to step from them into the dark shadows of the trees was but the work of a moment. The charm of the golden midsummer weather was full upon them, and it was not until a slight glimpse of the house reached her through an avenue of limes that Constantia remembered how far she had come.

She started guiltily, and stopped short upon the little path that would, a few yards further on, lead to the principle drive.

"How far we have come!" she said, in a quick, dismayed tone—a tone almost frightened, that exercised Stronge's mind not a little; "too far. See there is the house."

"Let us go on to the gardens. It is quite early; there is plenty of time," urged Barry, who believed her reluctance to go further lay in the thought that she had already overstayed her hour, and that she would, in his parlance, "catch it" from Miss MacGillicuddy if not home in time. But Stronge knew better, and was more puzzled by her manner than he would confess to himself.

"Oh, no!" said Constantia, stepping back upon the path. "See, how strange it would look to Mr. Featherston to see us taking possession of his place in this sort of way! If he were at home, he might think—"

"But he isn't at home," said Barry, "He's in Fermanagh. Didn't you know?"

"No," said Constantia, thoughtfully. And again Stronge felt surprise fill his breast. If Featherston were more to her than any other man, and as Feathston loved her (he was too good a lover himself not to be sure of this latter fact), how did it happen that his movements were entirely unknown to her? And they such near neighbors too! It was inexplicable. A lover's quarrel, no doubt, he told himself with a suppressed sigh.

(To Be Continued.)

THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

The Russians Have Taken a Leaf Out o Canada's Book.

Siberia is a Russian Canada, larger and more populous, and, like Canada, it has a great future before it, says the Fortnightly Review. It is very rich in gold, while there are whole hills of graphite (black lead) and lapis lazuli; coal can be picked up on the very road near Nerchinsk, there is silver in the same district, and there are rich mines of iron near Nikolaefsk. Siberia, like Canada, is rich in fish. On the Amur River I was told that 200,000 puds of the kita fish have been caught within a few weeks in August, when the fish ascend the rivers; the pud (pood) being 400 pounds, that means 8,000,000 pounds of fish. In the Khabarofka Museum is a stuffed kaluga fish weighing 30 puds, or 1,200 pounds, caught in the Amur. The Russians have been struck by the fact that "the prosperity of Canada and its productive activity have grown, and continue to grow, with a rapidity which appears to us (Russians) miraculous, and by us inimitable, just from the date of the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean."

In 1889 they deputed two engineers to observe the Canadian line and its conditions and results. Attention in Russia was drawn to the facts that Canada, a country then of 4,000,000 people, had, by its own resources, without any pecuniary help from outside, connected the two oceans by an iron road 4,500 versts (3,000 miles), long, over very difficult and expensive ground for building, in the short time of four years; that the energetic population of Canada, 3,600,000, in 1871, and only increased to 4,300,000 in 1881, reached 5,000,000 a year or two after the first through train passed Winnipeg in 1886; that the quantity of grain carried in Canada had increased from 303,571 tons in 1886 to 500,000 tons in 1888; that in places without population there had arisen seven new towns, such as Vancouver, founded only in 1886, and holding 9,000 inhabitants in 1891. It was made known to Russia that "the cost of the Siberian Railway should not be even 65 per cent of the cost of the Canadian Pacific.

DOESN'T PAY FOR CORONATION.

The impression that the expenditure in connection with the coronation at Moscow was paid by the Czar out of his own pocket was erroneous. Every rouble in the Imperial Treasury is supposed to be at the absolute disposal of the Czar and he draws upon the Treasury at discretion. In addition, he is the owner of large estates in different parts of Russia, and is well able to pay all the bills incurred during the coronation ceremonies—if he felt so inclined.

BADLY BROKEN UP.

Awful accident at Jones's yesterday.

So? I didn't hear of it.

Jones hit his thumb with the hammer and immediately exploded with rage, while his wife burst into tears.

EMPEROR-EDITOR.

The Ruler of China's Millions Publishes a Newspaper.

It is not generally known that the Emperor of China is a newspaper editor, but he is, nevertheless. More than that, his journal has the proud distinction of being the oldest in the world, having appeared regularly every day for the last 800 years. The only drawback, if considered from a pecuniary standpoint, is its limited circulation. Only one copy is printed each day. The name of this unique journal is the Pekin Gazette. It is the organ of the Chinese imperial court, and each day the single copy is tacked up on a big board outside the Purple City, where the Emperor lives. It averages 16 pages.

The sheets are about seven inches long and three wide, and the reader begins at the lower right-hand corner and runs his eye up and down the vertical columns from right to left, which is the Chinese way. The paper contains nothing but strictly exclusive news, but not a line is there of gossip about the Son of Heaven or sensational details about his corrupt court. There is no advertising, and there never has been an advertisement in its pages.

Most of the articles are dictated by the Emperor himself, and they generally consist of official acts and reports. The Emperor's assistant in his editorial duties is his mother. All news relating to the condition of the kingdom, or anything else that the Emperor wishes to keep from his subjects, is, of course, rigorously excluded, and no Chinese journalist dares to draw any deductions or make any comments on what appears in this royal publication. After the paper is printed the Emperor sometimes makes marginal notes on it with a red pencil.

SOMETHING LIKE A HOT BATH.

What we call a hot bath would appear to a Japanese merely tepid. The Japanese take their morning tub at a temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and immediately afterward douche themselves with perfectly cold water. Herr Nippold, who was for many years Professor of Law at the Tokio University, declares in his book on Japan that after a bath at this heat, and the subsequent cold douche, he used to feel warm all day in the coldest winter weather, while in summer the bath had the exactly contrary effect, and was most cooling and refreshing.

A SCRUBBING MACHINE.

An ingenious machine for scrubbing floors has been invented, which is something like a lawn mower. It runs upon four wheels, and above the two front wheels is a tank which contains clear water, which may, of course, be heated if desired. The water is supplied to rotery brushes at the bottom of the machine, and these, rotating in an opposite direction to the motion of the machine itself, scrub the floor. At the back of these brushes and over the two back wheels is another tank in which the dirt and water is carried. The wiping apparatus consists of an endless band of absorbent material made especially for the purpose. This band is pressed upon the floor by rotary brushes, so that the cloth accommodates itself to the inequalities of the floor. The cloth is rinsed out mechanically as it leaves the floor and passes through the tank at the back. It is not necessary to sweep the floor before scrubbing.

EUROPE'S ELECTRIC RAILWAYS.

Electric lines in Europe increased in number from 70 to 111 during 1895, their length from 700 to 902 kilometres (560 miles), and the power from 18,150 to 25,095 kilowatts. Germany leads with 406 kilometres, followed by France with 132 and England with 107, and Switzerland fourth with 47. The only countries still free from electric traction are Bulgaria, Greece and Denmark.

A BIRD'S INTELLIGENCE.

An Oriole's Terrible Assault Upon a Chipmunk.

A lady who was one day watching a pair of redstarts as they worked in a tree was startled by a violent commotion that arose in the shrubbery hard by. Catbirds screamed, wrens scolded, and the robins shouted "Quick!" with all their might. A chipmunk was dragging a baby catbird by the leg from its nest and all the birds round about had come to help make a row about it, including a Baltimore oriole. The screaming and the swish of wings as the birds darted about made the squirrel abandon its prey, and then the commotion subsided as quickly as it had risen. All the birds but the oriole went about their business elsewhere. The oriole had not said a word so far and, beyond the countenancing the hubbub, by his presence, had had no part in it. The squirrel, having dropped the baby catbird, cocked itself upon a limb and began to chatter in a defiant way, while the oriole sat not far away looking but doing nothing else. But in a few moments the squirrel left its seat and ran out on the limb it had been sitting on until it had to use more care to keep its hold and then the oriole's opportunity for a terrible assault had come. Flashing across the space he struck the chipmunk in one eye with his sharp-pointed beak, and then turning instantly, struck the other eye in like manner. Quivering with pain, the squirrel let go the limb and dropped to the ground, where it rolled and struggled about apparently in the throes of death. The oriole flew away to its favorite elm, where he sang in the most brilliant fashion. The lady put the squirrel out of its misery, and then saw that the oriole had destroyed both eyes.

STONE SOLES FOR SHOES.

A German inventor has hit upon a method of putting stone soles on boots and shoes. He mixes a waterproof glue with a suitable quantity of clean quartz sand and spreads it over the leather sole used as a foundation. These quartz soles are said to be quite flexible and practically indestructible; they give the foot a firm hold on the most slippery surfaces