

LORD KILLEEN'S REVENGE.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Constantia was alone. In her need (as she told herself bitterly) they had deserted her, and left her to face "the ugliest man you could see anywhere for a penny" unbefriended! She stood motionless for a full minute, unable to lift her eyes from the carpet; and then, having discovered that the unsympathetic earth was not going to open and swallow her up quick, she drew her breath hard, and lifted a face shamed and crimson to Mr. Stronge.

He himself was decidedly pink as he stepped through the window and came straight toward her.

"Never mind," said he, earnestly. He took one of her hands and pressed it kindly. The distress on her pretty face made him so miserable that he hardly knew what he did. "What on earth does it matter?" he exclaimed. "Think no more of it. I cannot bear to see that look in your eyes. He had become quite calm now, and, remembering, sought to release her hand; but her fingers tightened upon his, and held him closely.

"Oh, I am sorry!" she stammered, tears filling her eyes. "And, besides, it wasn't true. Only George is so tormenting, and he was saying—" She broke off abruptly, and grew even redder. "I mean—that is—there really wasn't a word of truth in it. I have known any amount of people ever so much uglier. Oh, no, that is not it!" cried she, horrified at her last mistake, which indeed crowned the other. "I mean I have known many not so good-looking as—"

Mr. Stronge broke into a loud and hearty laugh. It was a laugh evidently from his heart, and irrepressible, and it had the effect of at once dispersing the cobwebs of awkwardness that hung on the mental atmosphere.

"Let us adhere to the truth at all risks," entreated he, still laughing. "If Nature refused me her blandishments, who shall dare to blame her? Not I, for one. We can't all be like—you, for example."

He bowed over the little hand he still held, and kissed it lightly—so lightly that it would have been impossible for her to understand the depth of the happiness he felt as his lips touched her. He was now smiling at her with the gentlest eyes in the world.

"But still—you must listen to me—I say you are not ugly," persisted Constantia. "And—and I don't suppose you will ever like me again, but—"

"Do not say that," interrupted he, still smiling, though now his smile had taken a tinge of sadness. "I shall always—like you—as you put it."

"It is very good of you, then," said Constantia, dejectedly. "And I only hope that by and by, when you leave this, you won't think it over and change your mind about me. But if you do,—please remember how dreadfully sorry I was."

"Tut! Nonsense!" said he, gayly.

At this juncture the door was partially opened, and Norah's head appeared. Finding matters on quite an amiable footing, she took heart of grace and entered boldly. Behind her was George. They had both been, evidently, listening outside in the hall to see if their assistance would be required in case Mr. Stronge should take the affair badly. Assault and battery might have been in their minds, to judge of the anxious faces that first presented themselves. However, they now grew quite chirpy, and advanced on Mr. Stronge with beaming faces and extended hands.

He met them half way. He had grasped the situation at a glance, and was amused by it. When he had greeted them, he went back to the window and stepped outside. Was he going away? The consternation of the MacGillicuddy's was intense. Constantia grew pale. Mr. Stronge, however, only stooped to the ground, and then brought to view a large basket, which he placed with some difficulty upon the sill.

"I—I thought you might like some strawberries for—Mrs. Dundas," he said. "My gardener tells me they are early, and so I brought them."

"Brought them!" exclaimed George, surveying the dimensions of the basket. "Drove to the gate, and brought them down the avenue."

"Strawberries!" cried Constantia and Norah in a breath. There was another pair of famous Chelsea dishes downstairs; upon them they would look just beautiful. Norah cast a lightning glance at Constantia. "Now will she laugh?" said the glance.

"Oh, how good of you—how quite too good!" said Constantia, with a remorseful glance at Stronge. "They were the very things, of all others, we wanted. But you have robbed yourself," looking at the very large and apparently very heavy basket he had now lifted into the room. "We—we sha'n't know what to do with all those."

"To tell the truth," began Stronge, growing very red, and bending determinedly over the basket as if to take out the strawberries. He did not tell the truth, however, whatever it was, but paused in a rather ignominious manner, and looked so confused that the three pair of eyes watching him came to the conclusion that he was, somehow, thoroughly ashamed of himself.

"Yes?" said Constantia at last, very gently. She was feeling wonderfully kind toward him just then; she wanted to help him if she could.

"Well, it is this," said Stronge—"that I thought, knowing Mrs. Dundas abroad, you see, and being pretty well acquainted with her tastes, I thought—in fact, I knew—she would like a glass of champagne; and I—I fancied—it would please you," looking entreatingly, as if for pardon, at Constantia, "to have it to give to her. Of course, I should not have presumed to bring it but that I knew

of your aunt's objection to wine of any sort, and therefore guessed it would not be in the house."

"In the house? Was it ever in the house?" thought Constantia, and her brow clouded. Stronge, seeing the sudden cloud, misunderstood it.

"But—but if you think I shouldn't—if, that is, you think it better not—why," seizing the basket in his agitation, "I can take it away again."

"Take it away? Oh, don't!" cried Constantia, with a gesture full of entreaty. "Champagne! Why, it is the very thing. I don't believe in Donna and tea conjoined, but Donna and Champagne! That sounds quite correct."

She went up to him. Her face was charming always, but now it was really lovely, with the sparkle of excitement in the eyes, and the quick smile on the mobile lips. "How did you think of it all?" she said. "You are the kindest man on earth, I think. How you must have studied Donna!"

If she had arranged the speech, it could not have hurt him more. So that was how she took it? He studied Donna; not her! Good heavens! how blind, how ungrateful a woman can be, when her thoughts are full of another! He had felt great joy when his present was accepted; when he knew he had not offended the one he loved best on earth, in his desire to please her; but now—

"I was not thinking of Mrs. Dundas," he said, stiffly.

"No, of course not," exclaimed Norah, with an indignant glance at Constantia, who had really meant nothing unkind. "You thought of Connie, wasn't that it?" She had thrust her arm through her protegee's, and was looking at him with a tender, protective gaze.

"Yes, that was it," returned he, smiling; something in Constantia's surprised face that told him she had meant nothing by her words, had reassured him. "I only came down for a moment to bring these things," he said, "but I'll be back about four. Will that do, Miss MacGillicuddy?"

"Don't be later," said she, with an anxiety that sent his blood rushing gladly through his veins. He looked round him.

"How pretty the table is!" he said at last. Indeed, the flowers were so exquisitely arranged that they struck him at once. "What lovely china! Real Crown Derby, eh? It is hardly to be mistaken." He took up one of the cups and examined it with genuine admiration. "And that Chelsea bowl! The whole effect is so charming that you must forgive my remarking it."

They forgave him with a heart and a half. They were indeed delighted with his criticisms. The knowledge that his own house was a very magnificent affair, and that footmen in plush and many such purchasable luxuries were not unknown to it, only added to the worth of his opinion.

"I have a few pretty things at Inchirone," he said, looking at Constantia. "I wish you could see them. You have been at Inchirone?"

"Yes, in the Desmonds' time," replied she, flushing warmly. The Desmonds were a good old Irish family who had come to grief, and whose estate had been put in the market and bought by old Stronge—the blanket man, Andrew Stronge's father.

"But never since?" asked he, taking no notice of her quick change of color, though he felt it, and understood it thoroughly.

"No," she shook her head, paused a little, and then said impulsively, "but I should like to."

"Should you really?" asked he, eagerly. "Of course I have been longing to ask you, that is, everybody to Inchirone forever so long, but there is something so specially awkward about being a bachelor. Nobody to receive anybody, as it were. Now if I had a wife—"

He stopped dead short, and became visibly embarrassed—so embarrassed, indeed, that he held down his head, and grasped his hat vigorously, and stared into it with all the fervor of one who was ambitious about learning by rote the name of his batter.

"Ah, yes, if you only had a wife!" said Constantia, who had returned to the flowers, and was so busy over a tiny bit of trailing ivy that she had not time to notice his face. It was very unfortunate, as she acknowledged afterward, but the fact was that by this simple remark of hers, she gave him an encouragement she never intended.

"Still," she went on, "I don't see why you couldn't give us a dance, or something, in spite of that great want of yours."

"Yes, a dance; with Chinese lanterns in those lovely groves, and a band, and a moon," cried Norah, clapping her hands. The latter article she plainly regarded as an item to be supplied by contract. "Oh, do think of it, dear Mr. Stronge!"

"Yes, do," said Constantia, which of course decided the question.

"You shall have your dance, your Chinese lanterns, and your moon, I hope, Miss Norah!" said Stronge, answering the child, rather than the child's sister, though the latter was to him more precious than rubies.

"Oh, no, I sha'n't," said Norah, sadly. "Aunt Bridget would not let me go anywhere."

"She shall—to me," said Stronge. "I'll see to it." He lifted the slender figure in her arms and kissed her cheeks one after the other, then placed her on the ground. But Norah still clung to him.

"I do love you, I do!" she whispered, with extreme affection in her dark, childish eyes. Stronge held her to him for a moment. Her affection was sweet to him, and yet, alas! why could not Constantia say what she had said?

He left them a minute or two later. His back was hardly turned, when George the irrepressible burst into a gay laugh.

"I do think that a fellow in love," said he, "is the most remarkable sight that can be offered one. Stronge, now, is as admirable a specimen of the really deep dye as one could desire. What did he say to you, Con? Did he upbraid you for your rather personal remark? Or did he like it? Lovers, they say, like anything, but that of yours was a tough one to digest, and no mistake. I conclude by his amiability when we appeared that, as a salve to your rudeness, you had just said 'yes' to his honorable proposals."

Constantia presented an impassive front to this charge.

"Andrew Stronge!" went on George meditatively. "I say, Connie, have you considered the numerous afterward? One of them lies in that name alone. You will have to call him Andy. Andrew will do very well for state occasions; but when you want a new bonnet,

or a trip to the moon, it will have to be Andy. It is homely, no doubt (and there is a great charm in that) but it is scarcely poetical."

"Better Andy than Garry," at all events," broke in Norah, flashing an indignant glance at him. "When I see Mr. Barry all I can ever think of is 'Garry Owen!' I'd hate a husband with a name like that."

This was distinctly ungrateful of her, Barry being quite a devotee of hers; but she still stood faithful to Stronge, who had her first love.

"I call Garry better than Andy, any day," said George, who found great joy in a skirmish with Norah, who was a veritable firebrand.

"And I call Andy better than Garry," persisted she.

"If I were you," said George artlessly, "I would not argue—with a smut upon the extreme tip of your nose."

This put an end to the conversation for the time being.

CHAPTER X.

Donna came in admirably time. She was not late, as was her wont, there being no people before whom to make a successful entree. She came therefore quite early, and was evidently in even higher spirits than usual. Mr. Dundas, she said, could not accompany her because he was busy farming, or slugging, or something, at all events, connected with the soil. She kissed Constantia, and told Norah she was a mouse, and begged George to take her to see the new puppies, whose fame, she said, had gone out throughout the land. George certainly was captivated by her, and Constantia was pleased, though Norah refused to be bought by that enervating term "mouse." She was an infant terrible in many ways, and had made up her mind long ago that Donna Dundas was not to be placed upon her list of friends.

Mr. Barry came presently, and so did Mrs. Blake, the doctor's wife. "Jack was so sorry, but he could not come, having been sent for at the very last moment by Mrs. Murphy, who was—at it again," Jack was the doctor, and this bit of special information was whispered into Donna's ear by his gay little wife, who was one of the Burkes of Sligo, and as merry as a cricket. "That wretched Mrs. Murphy! Nine if there was one, and the last only eleven months. Now who would have thought she would be so inconsiderate as to want Jack to-day, of all others?"

"That's always the way," said Constantia; "nothing fulfills itself save the unexpected."

"Quite so my love," chimed in George, who had just come up behind her, "very true. Only we've heard that trite remark once or twice before, and—the other fellow has said it so much better."

Donna was in the very gayest spirits. She said very little of her husband, but that was not surprising, as she seldom alluded to him in any way. She did not seem to think it odd, however, that Mrs. Blake interlarded her conversation with incessant allusions to Jack here and Jack there, and, indeed, rather encouraged that funny little matron to talk of her doctor, and made herself excessively agreeable to her.

After a little while, however, her gaiety decreased in a measure, and Constantia detected her in the act of stifling a yawn. She knew that Constantia had detected her, and she laughed. "An affection of the jaws, Con," said she. "Don't be uneasy about it. It comes and goes, and is never serious."

"Time for tea," thought Connie; and as Mr. Stronge arrived at this opportune moment, she forthwith carried them all off into the tiny dining-room, where really everything looked wonderfully pretty—considering. It was very warm, and the windows were thrown wide open to catch any passing breeze. Constantia was busy with the Queen Anne tea-pot, and the importance of the hour, but Norah's brain was free to watch and wonder. She had noticed that Donna was not pleased when Mr. Stronge came in, and this slight to her favorite hardened her heart the more against her red-haired guest. She had also noticed the decline of Donna's gaiety, and now she became aware of something else.

All in a second, as it were, Donna's color had deepened, and her great eyes had taken an additional increase of light. There was a step upon the gravel outside, a hesitation such as might arise from the flinging away of a cigar, and then a man stepped lightly up to the window and looked into the room, a little uncertainly at first until his eyes met Donna's. There they stayed.

It was Lord Varley! When he had answered the unspoken question on Donna's face—which had a good deal of angry impatience in it—he turned and addressed himself to Constantia.

"What! holding high revelry?" cried he, a whole tone of reproach in his air. "Oh, Connie! When he was only Frederic Grande there was a great intimacy between him and the young MacGillicuddy, an intimacy that had continued ever since. 'Why was I not bidden? Why was I the only one excluded? All the county, as it seems to me, is at your festive board, and I alone, your oldest friend, left out.'"

Constantia laughed.

"Well, better late than never. Come in now, at all events," said she.

"I have half a mind to refuse so late a call. But I was born without that orthodox spark of pride, so here goes." He vaulted lightly into the room and approached the table. He shook hands quite affectionately with Connie, and politely with Mrs. Dundas; to the others he nodded generally. There was a slight movement amongst them all, and Donna drawing aside her lace skirts, with a rather ungracious air, he sunk down into the seat by her side.

"Didn't you know Connie had asked Donna to tea?" asked Norah, inquisitively, leaning forward, a strawberry between her lips, to get the answer.

"No," said Varley, very emphatically. "Then what brought you?" went on the hospitable Norah, an unflinching determination to run the question to earth written upon her brow.

"Alas, Norah!" said Lord Varley. "Is it then forbidden me to come here openly to pay my addresses to you? Must business, cold and bald, alone permit my presence? So be it, then."

"Rubbish," exclaimed Norah, with illimitable disdain, returning to her fruit with a little moue that quite transfigured her quaint, sharp young face.

"Business brought me, indeed," went on Varley, speaking to Constantia now. "I met in the village our respected organist, old Mrs. O'Flanagan, and she desired me to tell you, if I saw you, that the first hymn for next Sunday would be that dear old favorite of ours: 'Blow ye the trumpet, blow ho—ho—ho—ho!'" He imitated the usual mode of singing this hymn in the parish church with a solemn air, and then

stopped short and fell back upon the strawberries. "Early for them, isn't it?" he said.

But he got no answer beyond a groan that went from Constantia, George, and Barry, all at once.

"That one again!" cried Constantia at last, with large indignation. "What a woman that is!" She alluded in wrathful tones to the organist, Mrs. O'Flanagan who for thirty years or so had presided over the squeaky old instrument called an organ that decorated the village church and annoyed the village choir. The latter was tyrannized over by another ancient dame, who chiefly because of an objection to join in with the youth of the parish, who to her appeared frivolous and positively radical in their desire for change. What could they want more than the good old tunes to which their forefathers had given their voices in the good old times?

This stanch conservative, whose name was Stannery, led the music, chants, hymns, and psalms, every Sunday, in a high, squeaky voice, that once, in the past century, perchance, had been harmonious, but now was sad indeed. It declined and fell like "Gibbon's Roman Empire," and when it rose at all, as on occasion it did, with the greatest presumption, it cracked miserably on the first high note, to the discomfiture of the older portion of the congregation, and the intense and open joy of the younger.

The rector, poor man, had made strenuous efforts to reconcile the former and the latter reign, but with no effect. The old ladies still clung to the "no innovation" cry, and the younger ones sulked prettily. There was considerable talk of a new organ, that would need the services of a new organist. But this happy thought seemed far from being realized, subscriptions coming in but slowly, and there being indeed but few in the parish whose worldly status would permit of their giving largely to even so admirable a cause. Lately a good many people had been drafted into the neighborhood, but as yet the rector was either too modest or too disheartened to make a charge upon them.

The hymn mentioned by Lord Varley was a specially favorite one with Mrs. O'Flanagan and her colleague of the squeaky voice. They sung it so slowly that it sounded like a funeral dirge, and the termination of the "blow" always resulted in a series of "ho, ho, ho," that were very nearly irreverent, and gave occasion for unlimited mirth, or badly suppressed indignation, as the dispositions of the hearers led them.

Just now it drew forth a prolonged groan from Mrs. Blake, the MacGillicuddy and Barry. The latter had an exquisite barytone voice and was a passionate lover of music, so that to him this torturing of the polite ear was an excruciating torment. Oh, to be rid of Mrs. O'Flanagan, and her discordances, and her partner in villainous sounds, Mrs. Stannery!

"Not that hymn again! At least not that one!" exclaimed Constantia, with quite an air of entreaty. "We have had it now every second Sunday since Christmas, and I can't stand much more of it."

"You sha'n't," put in Barry in a sepulchral tone. "They have pushed it just the trifle too far, and now its death warrant is signed." He spoke with deep earnestness, and then subsided into a reverie, out of which he presently emerged with a cheerful face and a mind apparently made up. He beamed upon Constantia. "That hymn annoys you as well as me," he said. "Well, be happy, then! I have meditated, I have wrestled in thought, I have conquered. Be consoled. Next Sunday shall ring in the funeral dirge of that unpalatable air."

Nobody took much notice of him. He spoke to a rather inattentive audience, that was discussing the rector, the chances of a new organ, and the curate—more especially the curate. This was Mr. Evans, who was also the principal of the college.

"He wouldn't be half bad," said Mr. Stronge, "if he weren't so imbued with a sense of his own importance (which is very uncomfortably small), and if his voice was human; but it is considerably more English than anything I ever heard in England."

"Oh, apropos of that," said Barry, who had waked out of his abstraction, "did you hear about him and Mrs. Harrington the very last little episode, I mean, with her? You know he keeps himself very much in evidence, and has always a clean pinafore on and his hair smooth when in her presence, with a view to her conciliation, because she has so many little boys coming on who must be educated somewhere."

(To be Continued.)

TOLLS FOR ROYALTY.

Curious Regulations That Govern the Use of St. Paul's Great Bell.

The Great Bell of St. Paul's was not tolled for Prince Henry of Battenburg because he was not in the line of descent from any English sovereign. This honor is paid only to a member of the Royal family who could under any conceivable circumstances succeed to the Throne; though it may be doubted whether the bell would toll for a Royal infant not in the direct line of succession. This rule does not apply to the consort of the sovereign, of the heir apparent, or of a Prince or Princess on the steps of the Throne. The booming of the Great Bell of St. Paul's was the first intimation which the citizens of London received of the death of the Prince Consort, which occurred at 11 o'clock on the night of Saturday, December 14, 1861.

Outside the Royal family, the only persons for whom the bell is tolled are the Arch-bishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's, and the Lord Mayor of London dying in his year of office. The bell tolled is not "Great Paul," but the old great bell on which the hours are struck. On the occurrence of a death in the Royal family, the Home Secretary at once communicates with the Lord Mayor, desiring him to convey news to the Dean of St. Paul's, with a request that the great bell may be tolled. The bell is then tolled at intervals of a minute for an hour. The last occasion was on the death of the Duke of Clarence, on January 14, 1892. The Duke died at 9.15 a. m., and the bell was tolled from 11 till 12. At the funeral of the late Canon Liddon, in September, 1890, "Great Paul," which is much the deeper and more sonorous bell of the two, was made available, as by the rules the old Great Bell could not be used

ODD DOINGS WHILE ASLEEP

FEATS PERFORMED BY SUFFERERS FROM SOMNAMBULISM.

Death from Abrupt Awakening—Some Can Hear a Whisper, But Not a Pistol Shot—Others Write Sermons and Compose Music.

The marvellous manifestations of somnambulism are still among the more surprising phenomena with which science has to deal. That a person deeply immersed in thought should walk and talk while apparently unconscious excites no surprise, but that any one should when fast asleep perform a series of complicated actions which undoubtedly demand the assistance of the senses is marvellous, indeed. Often the somnambulist will perform problems which baffle his skill while awake. Often he will rise in the night, walk from room to room, go out on porticoes and in some cases on steep roofs, where he would not dare to venture while awake. Frequently he will wander for hours through streets and fields, returning home and to bed without knowledge of anything having transpired.

One of the most singular and at the same time sad cases of somnambulism occurred a few years ago near Bakersville, N.C. A young man there named Garland had been in the habit of walking in his sleep from childhood. Like most other sleep-walkers when unmolested, his ramblings had always resulted without harm to himself or others. Consequently his wife usually paid little attention to them. But finally he began to stay away from the house longer than usual and always returned

SOAKING WET.

His wife followed him one night. Leaving his home, he followed the highway until he came to a rough, narrow pig trail leading to the Tow River. His wife followed with difficulty, as he picked his way through the tangled forest, over stones and fallen trees and along the summits of precipitous cliffs. For more than a mile the sleeper trudged on until he came to a large poplar tree, which had fallen with its topmost branches far out in the river. Walking on the log until he came to a large limb extending over the water, he got down on his hands and knees and began crawling out on it. The frightened wife screamed, calling to him to wake up and come back. He was awakened by the cries, fell into the river and was drowned. Each night for weeks he had taken that perilous trip, crawling out on the limb, leaping from it into the river, swimming to the shore and returning home unconscious of anything that had happened.

The Archbishop of Bordeaux attests the case of a young ecclesiastic who was in the habit of getting up during the night in a state of somnambulism, taking pen, ink and paper and composing and writing sermons. When he had finished a page he would read aloud what he had written and correct it. In order to ascertain whether the somnambulist made any use of his eyes the Archbishop held a piece of cardboard under his chin to prevent his seeing the paper upon which he was writing. He continued to write without being in the slightest degree incommoded. In this state he also copied out pieces of music, and when it happened that the words were written in too large characters and did not stand over the corresponding notes he perceived his error, blotted them out and wrote them over again with great exactness.

Negretti, a sleep-walker, sometimes

CARRIED A CANDLE

about with him as if to furnish him light in his employment, but when a bottle was substituted he carried it, fancying that he had the candle. Another somnambulist, Castelli, was found by Dr. Sloane translating Italian and French and looking out words in his dictionary. His candle was purposely extinguished, whereupon he immediately began groping about, as if in the dark, and, although other lighted candles were in the room, he did not resume his occupation until he had relighted his candle at the fire. He was insensible to the light of every candle excepting the one upon which his attention was fixed. The state of the eyes during somnambulism varies considerably. They are sometimes closed, sometimes half closed, and frequently quite open; the pupil is sometimes widely dilated, sometimes contracted, sometimes natural and for the most part insensible to light.

It is a remarkable fact that in the cases of some somnambulists the same ear which may be deaf to the loudest noises will perceive even a whisper from one particular person with whom alone the sleeper appears to be able to hold communion. The "Transactions of the Medical Society" tells of a case where a somnambulist did not even hear the report of a pistol fired close to him. Sig. Augustin, an Italian nobleman, could not be aroused from sleep even by blowing a trumpet in his ear, but during other paroxysms he would apply his ear to the keyhole and listen attentively to noises in the kitchen.

A young countryman who was a sleep-walker was fond of fishing. A number of nights in succession he got up, walked through a long meadow to a creek, seized the root of a tree growing on the bank and tugged and pulled with all his might, at the same time calling to the hired man to help him land a big fish. One night his brother followed him, determined to attempt a heroic remedy for his malady. He took an axe with him, his sole operating instrument. When the somnambulist got to the creek and began tugging at the imaginary fish the brother cut the root and let him fall backward into two feet of chilly water, the remedy was effective.

There are instances of murderers having been detected by talking of their crimes in their sleep. Experts claim that the truthfulness of sleep-talking may nearly always be relied on.

He—"I see your friend Mrs. Overton has written a society novel." She—"Oh, dear!—and I always thought she was such a nice-minded woman!"