

The Peace of the Mountains.

I wish I could get the peace of the mountains into me.
The mountains of God are ever still, full of rest;
"Be quiet" they say, and lift their thoughts up to heaven;
The lark with his wings as he rises brushes their crest;
They gather the rose of dawn, the glory of even;
The night with her stars leans on them, breast to her breast.
I wish I could get the peace of the mountains into me.
And not to have all the world a trouble to me.

I am full of frets and fatigues, angers and fears;
I wish the mountains would tell me their secret of peace.
They have seen men born and die, all the work of their hands
Pass like the leaves of autumn; increase and decrease
Of natural things, and the years, like a glassful of sands,
Run out and be done, and the nations wither and cease.
They have looked to God through all the days and the years;
I wish I were still like the mountains, not vexed, full of fears.

The wind roars over them, singing up from the sea;
There is nothing that lasts, they say, but God and the soul.
They have crows of the mists, and rain for their habits gray;
The world's a dream, where ever the death bells toll.
There is nothing that lives, they say, but God and the soul.
Nothing at all that matters but God and the soul;
I wish I could get the peace of the mountains into me.
And not to have all the world a trouble to me.

—Pall Mall Gazette.

THE MASKED MAIDEN

Barrack life at Wicklow was exceedingly dull. Drill and parade formed about our only diversions. At times a party of young women visited the encampment, thereby varying the monotony a trifle. Our colonel was a hard man, who rarely granted a furlough. I, a young lieutenant, in common with my brother officers, in consequence, regarded our existence as a waste of life.

This was before the outbreak of the Sepoy rebellion. In '57 our regiment was ordered to India. Our contemplated departure was regarded joyfully by the younger fry of the officers. The evening before we embarked a masked ball was given, at which all officers were invited, and, needless to say, attended, in a variety of costumes. Father Sullivan, our chaplain, holding the rank of captain, was included in the invitation, but sent a note of regret, saying his cloth forbade his attendance, and winding



An air of mystery.

up with a short homily on the vanities of the world.
I, Con Costigan, then a lieutenant, and my chum, Charlie Connor, of course, were there, he in a pink and I in a black domino. A passing court fool hit me a blow on the head with a bladder filled with dried peas. Turning to resent the liberty, I saw a clown in baggy pantaloons and chalked face, whirling madly round and round toward me, clasping tightly a maid of buxom figure in abbreviated skirts. On they came, straight for

me. When only a short distance separated us the clown, by accident or design, stumbled and fell, releasing his partner, who spun like a teetotum right into my arms with such force that our feet shot from under us and we both sat down on the floor hard.

"Whoo-ee!" shrieked the maiden. "It's kilt I am!"

As quickly as my domino would admit I was on my feet, helping her to arise and pouring forth a string of apologies. She was not hurt, and seemed little confused by our awkward introduction. Without deigning to glance at the clown she whispered: "Ooch! don't apologize, captain, dear. Sure, it's glad I am we've met. That clumsy clown—troth! 'twas an appropriate choice of a costume he's made—can go without a partner for all of me. I shall spend the time with you!"

And, linking her arm in mine, the unknown led me away.

The clown, who by this time had also regained his feet, viewed her departure and then philosophically turned away.

My conductress led me to an alcove, whence we could obtain a view of the scene in the ball room and at the same time converse in comparative privacy, where, seating herself, she made room for me at her side, and I sat down with beating heart. There was an air of mystery about her that led me to imagine I was about to participate in some wild romance.

"Captain," she began, coyly hiding her masked features behind her fan, "captain—for by all appearance your rank is no less—"

"Right, madam," I hastily interrupted—which was false, for I was but a lieutenant.

"Alas!" she sighed, "what weight of woe is mine! My tale will enlist your sympathies, and, I trust, your aid! Oh, say I am not mistaken when I believe you to be one willing to assist a maiden in distress!"

Her appeal impressed and flattered me and I hastened to reply:

"Tell me, madam, what it is you require of me, and rest assured I will spare no effort in your behalf!"

"You are kind!" she murmured. "Alas! would we had met ere my heart was given to another!"

"Then you are not—" I began.

"No," she interrupted, "'tis not wholly on my own behalf I have sought you out. But Emilie—"

"Sweet name!" I murmured. "What of her?"

"For two days she has been in an agony of fear lest you shouldn't meet her. At the last minute she eluded the vigilance of her jailers, and together we've come to the ball, disguised as a fairy and a shepherdess. She has hidden herself away in a retired nook and bade me go search for you."

I was transported with joy. From the name let drop I was morally certain that my unknown innamorata must be Miss Emilie Sirron, a young woman whom I had long admired at a distance. But as a general rule she had treated my advances coldly, although once or twice, when I supposed she imagined I was not watching, I thought I detected her contemplating me, which encouraged me in the belief that she was not altogether indifferent to me.

I stammered a few sentences in reply, on which my fair friend arose, saying:

"Follow me, captain, and all will go well. Oh, but it's you are the lucky man if ever there was one—och hone!"

Slipping her arm in mine, we passed from the alcove and mingled with the merry-makers, as I whispered in her ear:

"Why do you sigh? From your words I thought 'twas you desired my aid. You have trouble? Trust me, for I am truly your friend this night!"

"Oh, what can you do?" she cried. "I have two suitors, but one alone holds my heart! We were to wed to-morrow, but—oh, saints!—my lover is not here and we may never meet again! Yestern'en he was impressed

and borne a captive aboard the transport that sails to-morrow—gone to fight the foe in foreign lands! Oh, captain, say that you can effect his release or that you can smuggle me aboard to him, or my heart is broken!" Here she sobbed.

I assured her she might consider the former as already accomplished.

"You dear!" she cried, and impulsively throwing her rounded arms about my neck she hugged me warmly.

Judge my emotions! I was in a rosy maze of wondering bliss.

"Now come," said she, "but carefully. If we are discovered we are lost!"

We threaded our way amid the throng and entered a second bower. My companion looked eagerly into it. It was empty.

"She is not here, but she will be soon," she said. "Come in, captain, and sit down."

We sat some time in silence. Presently the charmer went to the entrance and peered cautiously out.

"Emilie—Emilie!" she called, softly.

There was no answer, on which she returned to my side.

Presently, to my astonishment, she burst into a flood of tears.

"Whoo-ee—whoo-ee!" she sobbed, rocking to and fro.

"Don't cry," said I, soothingly, slipping my arm about her waist—a liberty she did not resent. "What is the matter? Why do you weep?"

"Och, my trials and troubles are more than I can bear! My lover's in the grave, and I wish that I were there!"

"Oh, no!" I whispered, encouragingly. "He's far from dead, let us hope!"

"But isn't he as good as in his grave, for sure, won't the naygurs kill him when he gets to India? And we'll never meet again! Whoo-ee—whoo-ee! Sure, 'twas in this spot I sit, at the Carty's ball, a twelvemonth since, that he first told me of his love and I took him for better or worse—and now he's gone! Whoo-ee—whoo-ee! Don't tell me Tim Casey hasn't a hand in this!"

"Who's Tim?" I asked.

"My discarded lover, sure—who else? He's here at the ball to-night and if he sees me here with you I'm lost!"

The sight of beauty in distress thrilled me to the soul. After what had passed between us who can blame me for drawing her gently toward me—for reclining her head upon my shoulder—for attempting to lift her mask to impart a kiss upon her lips? But she drew back coyly.

"Och, ye mustn't do that!"

"What harm? None can see!"

"Te-he-he!" she giggled hysterically.

"Just one!" My arm was still about her waist.

"He-he-he! Captain—" She made a playful feint of resistance, but seemed not much averse to the ordeal. With one hand I grasped the lower ends of our masks and was about to remove them.

"Zounds, sir! What are you doing there?"

These words, thundered in a deep voice at my ear, supplemented by the monosyllable "Tim!" shrieked forth by the maiden, caused me to look round in affright.

In the doorway stood an Elizabethan courtier, rapier by his side. With folded arms he glared alternately at me and my companion through the eyelet holes of his black mask. I started up, in my haste forgetting to release my hold on our masks, and off they both came, revealing to my gaze the countenance of my hitherto unknown charmer—a fat, red, merry looking face, which, as it looked into mine, reflected in its expression of ludicrous amazement the astonishment depicted in my own at what I saw before me. For a moment I was struck dumb by a host of conflicting emotions. When at last I found my tongue it was to gasp:

"What! Father Sullivan?"

"Tare-an'ouns! It's Con Costigan!"

"Here's a pretty kettle of fish!" said the Elizabethan courtier, his bel-

ligerent air vanishing, and he looked helplessly from one to the other of us.

Mutual explanations revealed the following state of affairs:

Miss Sirron, against the wishes of her relatives, had fallen violently in love with Gussie Fitzgerald, a fop cornet, to such a desperate degree as to compel her parents to lock her in her room, this act resulting from the discovery of a note addressed by her to Gussie, wherein she declared her intention of meeting him at the ball that night for the purpose of eloping.

She described the costume she would wear, together with that of a female friend who would accompany her, and advised Gussie what to wear in turn that she might identify him—which happened to be a domino like mine. The note fell into the hands of her brother, the Elizabethan courtier,



"What are you doing there?"

who was a lieutenant in my regiment. The brother hastened with the note to Father Sullivan to ask his advice and co-operation in the carrying out of a plan he had formed. The priest entered into the spirit of the adventure, and, disguising himself as a fairy, this being the costume of the female friend designated in the note, he had repaired to the ball in company with the Elizabethan courtier.

The plan had been for him to lure the unsuspecting gussie to the alcove on the pretense of leading him to the lady, where the Elizabethan courtier was in waiting, there to reveal themselves to him after showing him a copy of the note—the original had been forwarded to the one it was originally meant for—administer to Gussie his merited chastisement, and then turn him adrift with the promise of a severer punishment if he persisted in his addresses.

The brother and the priest until now had supposed me to be Fitzgerald. Now that our ludicrous error was discovered the awkward question occurred to each: What if the plot, instead of being a hindrance to the lovers, should prove an ally to their cause by keeping their enemies from them while they made good their escape?

Readjusting our masks we set out in company to patrol the ball room. But I need hardly say our search was in vain—the lovers had vanished—eloped—and the plot had been made to recoil boomerang-like on the heads of the conspirators!

We sallied at dawn. I afterward learned that some days after the ball the Sirrons received a penitential epistle from the fair Emilie, saying that she and Gussie were married, and, the latter having obtained a furlough, they were taking a wedding tour on the continent, and the one thing necessary to her perfect happiness was to know that she had the forgiveness of her parents for what she had done—which, as what was done could not well be undone, was not long forthcoming.

Until the time I now tell the story the part Father Sullivan played in the affair has always been kept a profound secret.—Chicago Tribune.