

A LITTLE IRISH GIRL.

By "The Duchess."

CHAPTER I.

What is love? 'Tis not love-affair; Present north hath present laughter. What's to come is still in store.

"Bridget! Bridget!" cries Bridget's young mistress, in a clear, sweet tone. There is something of anxiety in it—

"An' what is it, aggra?" says she, stepping over the threshold, and looking up the big, bare room to where, in the third window, a tall, slight, childish figure is standing.

"Something dreadful, I'm certain. Come here! Come here!" beckoning hurriedly to the old woman, without taking her eyes off the window.

"What can be the matter with him, Bridget?"

"I don't know, ma-deer. But he do look bad, whatever it is."

"He shouldn't have come this way," says Miss McDermot, anxiously.

"You never care a pin about anything, Bridget," says her young mistress, glancing angrily at her over her shoulder.

"You, ma-deer?" retorts the old woman promptly; whereupon both mistress and maid laugh in a subdued sort of way, as if a little afraid of being heard.

"Pon me conscience! he'll be there all night, if the morning doesn't see him in the other world," says the old woman presently, who again has returned to her watching of the distant figure that is trying in an uncertain fashion to cross the morass.

"What is this? What is this?" demands her father, hurrying forward to where, in the dim growing of the autumn twilight, the silent figure lies.

"Dulcinea, in a low tone, and with a slender hand uplifted, as if to insure quiet for the wounded man, tells her tale.

"The whole scene makes a picture, hardly to be forgotten if once seen—as once seen it was."

"The soft, gray, dying light, that scarcely lights up the grand old hall; the central figure prone, inanimate; the old woman there, with her white hair and cap and scornful air; the bending figure of the man-servant; and here, where the lights from the eastern window fall upon her, the proud, slight figure of the girl, drawn to its fullest height, and with the lovely face uplifted. The rays from the departing sun fall with a wintry rapture on her nut-brown hair, lighting it in part to gold. She is looking stered, anxious; she is leaning a little toward her father; and her eyes—such eyes! blue, deep, heavenly blue; blue like the ocean when it dreams of storm—are turned expectantly to his. Her lips are parted. And in the background, the two still figures—the father's and the lover's—both silent, wondering.

"He is ill, father; he will die if moved," says the girl, in soft tones fraught with fear.

"He?—who is he?" asks the McDermot suspiciously.

"Ah! of that we know nothing." Her hand is still uplifted. "But Bridget says he is to rest there—there" with a swift gesture towards the comfortable lounge, "until the doctor comes."

"Certainly not!" says the McDermot, taking a step forward. "There! Here, Patsy, what are you about? Carry this stranger to—where, Dulcinea?"

"It has been prepared for Andy; but he may not come," says Miss McDermot. "And even if he does—taken care, Patsy. Father! his arm is broken."

"She runs to the body they are lifting, and thrusts her own young, firm arm under it, where the broken limb hangs helpless.

"This is a man's work, not a woman's," says Sir Ralph curtly, if courteously. "You must try to forgive me if you find me in the way."

"Who is he, do you think, Bridget?" asks Miss McDermot half an hour later of her benchwoman, when she has soothed down that angry despot to a proper frame of mind.

"How can I tell, honey? He may be the devil himself for aught I know; an' I wouldn't wonder, who but the old boy could come through that bog alive? What did he mane at all, I wonder, by comin' this way? Was there no one to warn him? or hadn't he an eye in his own head? But what's the good of an eye wid them English? Why, they haven't a grain o' sense between them."

"You think he's English?" eagerly. "Couldn't ye see that much in the cock o' his nose? Faix, ye're near as blind as he is himself if ye couldn't note that much; and the strange twist o' his tongue. Ock! English, sure!"

"I don't think he looks English! He is so dark. Did you notice that? And from where is he? What is he?"

"One o' them young gintlemen up at Ballybeg, I'm thinkin'. Two o' em come last night, as I'm told by Larry Murphy, the cab driver. You know him, miss?"

"No—no," dreamily. "Not at all."

"What! Not Larry the thief? Array, what ails ye at all, me dear?"

"Oh, Larry? Oh! of course, blushing furiously. "I thought you were talking of—of—"

"Well, I wasn't," says the old woman dryly. "I wouldn't presume to let me tongue run a race about them English folk!"

lock. An' yer father, darlin'—think o' him! What'll he say?"

"The McDermot, whatever his faults, would not grudge hospitality to a fainting man."

"Well, well, maybe. But look here now, my darlin'! There's Sir Ralph to be thought of! If he should hear of this—"

"Let him hear of it!" says the girl angrily. "Am I to study his wishes, even before I—?" she pauses as if to finish the sentence in distasteful to her, and a frown contracts her exquisite, low, broad, Greek brow. "I'm tired of hearing of Sir Ralph!" says she a second later, in a clear, ringing, wrathful tone.

A tone loud enough to reach the ears of the foremost of two men who now enter the hall by the lower door.

CHAPTER II.

"O sweet fancy! Let her boast Everything is spoilt by me."

"There is a garden in her face."

He is a tall man, between thirty and thirty-two years, but looking considerably older. Not a handsome man, not even a commonly good-looking one. A more decidedly plain man than a well-bred way than Ralph Anketell it would be difficult to find. That his large mouth is kindly and his small eyes earnest does little to redeem his face. But one thing at least he has, a magnificent figure. A better set up man than he, or one more strong or more vigorous, is hardly to be found in the Irish county to which he belongs.

Miss McDermot's last words have been quite clear to him, and being engaged to her he may be pardoned for not finding them exactly palatable. Beyond a swift glance at the girl, however, he takes no notice of them; and the glance goes astray, as she is looking at the prostrate figure on the chairs rather than at him, a fact that comes home to Anketell with a little chill.

He had entered the big hall (beautiful even in its decay and disorder) by the lower door that leads to the garden, followed by Dulcinea's father. The latter—The McDermot—is a spare, tall, gaunt man, with dull eyes covered by overhanging brows, and a most dogged mouth. Perhaps from him the girl has taken her obstinacy and hatred of control; if from her dead mother she has inherited the great love of truth and honor and the well of hidden affection that lives almost unsuspected within her breast.

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"Oh, Larry? Oh! of course, blushing furiously. "I thought you were talking of—of—"

"Well, I wasn't," says the old woman dryly. "I wouldn't presume to let me tongue run a race about them English folk!"

"You really think the poor man we rescued was—is an Englishman?"

"Sarra doubt of it! Bad sense to the day we saw him. Ye'll see my miss, 'twill bring us no luck, an' maught be a wanderin' artist. I'll bet me life! The old Lord above there is cracked on fools o' that kind. I'm towid."

"Why should artists be fools?" asks Dulcinea, perhaps a little coldly.

"Well, for one thing, they never has a penny to their name."

"We haven't a penny either," says the girl, with a superb straightening of her lovely figure. "Are we fools?"

"More or less," says Mrs. Driscoll, severely—"yer father any way. What's he bin doin' wid the property all these years; Makin' ducks and drakes o' it. However," says the old woman, "let McDermot do what he like. It's not of the likes of him I'd dare spide the unkind word; but thim others" with a contemptuous sniff.

"Who's thim? Nothin'! People as go thravellin' here an' there through the country, an' niver a roof to their heads, or a grandfather to their portion. A McDermot shouldn't be named in the same day wid thim, penny or no penny."

"Ah! the pennies count, Bridget," says the girl, with a quick but heavy sigh.

"Wid them that are risin', but not wid the old stock," says the old woman eagerly. "A McDermot poor is the same as a McDermot rich."

"No, no," shaking her head sadly. "Ye say that? The more shame to thim as makes ye feel it!" cries the old woman fiercely, her lips quivering.

"How dare any one forget the days, not so long distant ayther, when this old house was the best in the County Cork, and when the McDermots could shake their fists in the faces of all their enemies?"

"I suppose we could do that now," says Dulcinea, laughing in spite of herself. Then, going back to her former mood. "Well, that's all over, Bridget," says she impatiently. "The end of the McDermots has come. Father, as you know, is the last of them."

"No, I don't! There's you! there's you!" cries the old woman hastily.

"A melancholy specimen," says the girl, with a rather sad laugh. "I'm afraid I should never summon up enough courage to shake my fist at anybody."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WHAT A HORSE CAN DO.

Interesting Statistics as to the Extent of Equine Capabilities.

A horse will travel 400 yards in four and one-half minutes at a walk, 400 yards in two minutes at a trot, 400 yards in one minute at a gallop, says the Humane World. The usual work of a horse is taken at 22,500 pounds raised one foot per minute for eight hours per day. A horse will carry 250 pounds twenty-five miles per day of eight hours. An average draft horse will draw 1,600 pounds twenty-three miles per day on a level road, weight of wagon included. The average weight of a horse is 1,000 pounds; his strength is equivalent to that of five men. In a horse-mill moving at three feet per second, track twenty-five feet diameter, he exerts with the machine the power of four and one-half horses. The greatest amount a horse can pull in a horizontal line is 900 pounds; but he can only do this momentarily; in continued exertion probably half of this is the limit. He attains his growth in five years, will live twenty-five, and average sixteen years. A horse will live twenty-five days on water without solid food, seventeen days without eating or drinking, but only five days on food without drinking. A cart drawn by a horse over an ordinary road will travel 1.1 miles per hour of trip. A four-horse team will haul from twenty-five to thirty-six cubic feet of limestone at each load. The time expended in loading/unloading etc., including delays, averages thirty-five minutes per trip. The cost of loading and unloading a cart using labor is \$1.25 per day and a horse 75 cents is 25 cents a perch—24.75 cubic feet. On metal rails a horse can draw one and two-thirds as much as on asphalt pavement, three and one-third times as much as on good Belgian blocks, five times as much as on good cobble stone, twenty times as much as on good earth road, forty times as much as on sand. A modern compilation of engineering maxims states that a horse can drag as compared with what he can carry on his back in the following proportions: On the worst earthen road, three times; on a good macadam road, nine; on plank, twenty-five; on a stone trackway, thirty-three, and on a good railway, fifty-four times as much.

Surgical Wit.

As good an instance of surgical wit as can be found is still told about the staff of the Roosevelt hospital, says an exchange. A dangerous operation was being performed upon a woman. Old doctor A., a quaint German, full of kindly wit and professional enthusiasm, had several younger doctors with him. One of them was administering the ether. He became so interested in the old doctor's work that he withdrew the cone from the patient's nostrils, and she half-roused and rose to a sitting posture, looking with wild-eyed amazement over the surroundings. It was a critical period and Dr. A. did not want to be interrupted. "Lay down dere voman," he commanded, gruffly. "You haf more curiosity as a medical student." She lay down, and the operation went on.—Argonaut.

A Mistaken Policy.

First Tramp—I say, Mike, th' fashion of gents like me an' you carrying clubs is a mistake.

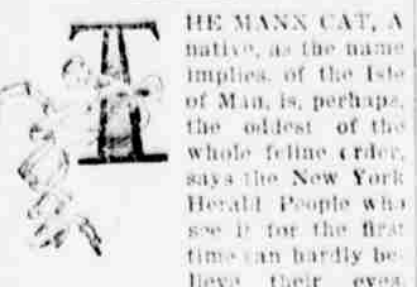
Second Tramp—Git out! Clubs scares people into being hospitable, don't they?"

First Tramp—They useter; but w'en folks began to notice our clubs they began ter keep big dogs an' now it takes all th' cold vittles they has ter feed th' dogs.—N. Y. Weekly.

THEY HAVE NO TAILS.

DEFECT IN MANX CATS IS DUE TO THE HUMIDITY.

Tailless Species in Other Lands—The Unique Animals That Have Curious Characteristics. What Naturalists Say of Them.



THE MANX CAT, A native, as the name implies, of the Isle of Man, is, perhaps, the oldest of the whole feline order, says the New York Herald. People who see it for the first time can hardly believe their eyes, so strange-looking and incomplete does it appear, for, to begin with, the genuine Manx cat has no tail. Then, it is much bigger and stronger than the common domestic "pussy" and has a rounder and proportionately larger head, with fuller and fiercer eyes. Its hair, also, is coarser and thicker, and not only are its hind legs much larger than the others but the hind quarters are formed almost exactly like those of a hare. Indeed, at first glance, the creature seems to be a typical hybrid, with the outlines of the hare predominating, but closer inspection of the massive head, strong teeth, long, sensitive whiskers and terrible claws tells that it is very much a cat. In its original home the Manx cat displays peculiarities of character which also distinguish it from its common brethren. It is not only shy but is suspicious and treacherous. While making its habitation among men it yet keeps aloof from them, rejecting all friendly or familiar advances and being apt to bite the hand that offers a caress. Although domesticated, it still remains a savage at heart and is at all times addicted to wildness and a roving life. Existing for the most part out of doors, it acquires predatory habits and is in the main self-supporting. It is very swift in its movements and, like its congener and next of kin, the wildcat, seems utterly destitute of fear. As the natural consequence of its habits it is the greatest of mousers, but it wages war as relentlessly upon rats, rabbits, hares, birds and the smaller game as on the feeble mouse. A writer on cats states apropos of the subject: "In Pegu, Siam and Burmah there is a race of cats—the Malay cat—with tail only of half the ordinary length and often contorted in a sort of knot, so that it cannot be straightened. The true short-tailed, or tailless, cat—the Manx—has also the hind legs relatively long. Mr. J. J. Weir tells me he has seen one which had the forelegs so short as to be useless in walking, and the animal sat up like a kangaroo. Tailless cats are not, however, the only cat to be found in the Isle of Man; some cats there have tails ten inches long, a fact probably due to the introduction of long-tailed cats from England, Scotland or Ireland. In cross breeding the progeny seems generally to resemble the father as to the length of the tail. O tailless breed of cats also exists in the Crimea."

Scientists have been very much puzzled in their endeavors to account for the absence of tail in the Manx cat. The consensus of opinion seems to be that the peculiarity originated in some disease of the caudal vertebrae, resulting from the excessive humidity of the climate and the dampness of the soil. The effect of the disease is supposed to have been that the tail rotted off, and that in the course of time its absence became hereditary. As to the hind legs of the Manx cat, it is probable that they became longer in obedience to the natural requirements of the creature's life—its environment among the hills, in fastnesses of which it anciently made its home, and to which it fled on the approach of danger. Nature is always kind to her children in adapting them to the conditions which compass them. It is thus that the hare has acquired such a length of hind leg which enables her to run up hill when chased by the hounds, and so to distance her pursuers. The history of the evolution of the Manx cat, could it be written, would form an interesting chapter in the origin of species. It might sound funny to say that the progenitors of the Manx cat lost their tails through sitting down in the wet, yet such really would seem to have been the case. Of the actual origin of the Manx cat nothing is known or can be known. It has existed on the island as far back as history or tradition reaches, and its presence there probably antedated the first settlement of Man by the Celts. It is reasonable to suppose that its ancestor, the wildcat, found its way to that portion of the earth long before the human race penetrated into Western Europe, and at a period when Man itself was not an island, but formed part of the mainland of Europe with the rest of the British Isles. That there is ample ground for this supposition is seen in the fact that foxes, wolves, deer, the great elk and other wild animals long ago extinct in the island were once plentiful there, and that those were identical with the primitive fauna, both of Great Britain and Ireland.

Rich in Game.

"Any quail about this neighborhood?" inquired a tourist who was about to register at a Western Texas hotel.

"Quail!" said the proprietor, with an indignant smile; "they have got to be a nuisance. The cook complains that she can't throw a piece of toast out of the back window but four or five quails fight to see which one shall get on it."

—Texas Sifter

TURNED DOWN BY A WIDOW.

The Old Man Did Not Seek to Discover the Reason.

I had been stopped for a day or two by a mountaineer named Collins, who had been a widower for several years and had grown-up children and as I was ready to proceed on my journey he said he'd go along for a couple of miles, says the Detroit Free Press. As we walked along he suddenly broke out with:

"See here, stranger, do you think I'm fiten to git married ag'in?"

"Why not?" I queried in reply.

"Dunno, but thought I'd ax ye."

"You are not an old man yet, are you?"

"No, the children won't raise a row about it."

"Who is the woman in question, if I may ask?"

"The Widdler White, who lives up yere 'bout a mile. Powerful nice woman, the widdler is. Bin sorter juno' up to her for a yar past, but ha'n't cum to the pint. I sorter reckoned—orter reckoned—"

"Sorter reckoned what? I asked as he stammered and paused.

"Sorter reckoned I might stop and ax her this mornin', if ye' reckoned I was fiten," he finished.

"Why shouldn't 'ya be fiten?"

"Dunno, but maybe I ain't."

I did all I could to assure him on that point and before we reached the widow's house it was agreed that I should go on a piece and wait for him and after he had talked with Mrs. White he should come on and tell me the result. I hadn't waited ten minutes before he came hurrying along and I knew by his looks that something was wrong.

"Well, how did you come out?" I asked as he took a seat on the stone beside me.

"I wan't fiten," he replied.

"But why not?"

"Dunno. I jest went in and axed the widdler if she'd hev me and she aid I wasn't fiten and run me over the bresh-fence with a broom-stick."

"And didn't you ask for any explanation?"

"Navy one, with a man ha'n't fiten and a woman says he ha'n't fiten, what yo' gwine to do? If yo's fiten yo's all right; if yo's unfiten then yo' ain't fiten and it's no use to ax about it or waste time. Mawin', stranger—I'm gwine back home and git to work at the co'n."

Anybody Fit for Anything.

In one of his letters to Motley, John Stuart Mill, that English friend of the United States, deplored "the fatal belief of your public that anybody is fit for anything." This optimistic conceit was no doubt developed by the practice of the earlier Americans, who turned their hands to anything, and, thanks to the bounty of a virgin continent, generally with good results. But progress has given rise to specialization and the American, like the European, has become a specialist. He is learning to do one thing well.

Already the "fatal belief" deprecated by Mills has disappeared from business, where it means ruin and bankruptcy, and from manufacturing and transportation, where it means arson and murder. But it still survives in our administration of public affairs, where the evil consequences, though greater, are not so strongly felt, because they are less personal, less tangible and more widely diffused. I hesitate to say that anything is or could be worse than our unreformed civil service, yet I suspect the baneful character of what Mills calls that "fatal belief" is most strikingly revealed in our administration of education.—The Forum.

How He Was Identified.

On one occasion the prince of Wales wanted to give Frederick Fyvre, the noted French actor, some testimonial of appreciation and consulted his companion in the box. "I can't buy him something; that would be banal. Do you think he would like to have my cane?" It was decided that the cane would do. So, stepping to the green room, the prince paid the actor a few compliments on the English part he was playing and begged him to accept the cane, saying it had seldom left him for ten years. He added that he hoped to see the cane with Fyvre on the stage. The incident was reported and Fyvre spent the following day dismissing a queue of Englishmen who invaded his lodgings trying to buy the cane. Afterward, when giving private entertainments in London, he repeatedly heard himself identified by the remarks made in the audience: "He's the one that got the cane."—Argonaut.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

The alligator never leaves fresh water, while the crocodile frequently travels long distances by sea. It has been seen one thousand miles from land, and it is possible that these sea-going crocodiles have given rise to sea-serpent stories.

The planet Neptune, which had for countless ages revolved in the heavens unseen by any one on earth, was discovered simultaneously and independently in 1846 by Prof. Adams and M. Leverrier, the two most brilliant astronomers of the day.

The first edition of Prof. C. A. Young's work on "The Sun," published in 1881, mentioned twenty-one elements as having been detected by the spectroscopy in the sun. In all of these 20 lines had been identified. The new edition of Prof. Rowland has now compared sixty elements with the solar spectrum, and established the existence of thirty-eight of them in the sun, being doubtful in regard to eight of the others. Of iron lines alone he has identified more than two thousand.

QUEER COINCIDENCES.

Striking Occurrences, Many of Which Have Become Historic.

The late well-known archeologist, Albert Way, crossing Pall-Mall, came stumbling against an old gentleman, says the New York Mail and Express. After mutual apologies counts were exchanged. On each card was printed "Mr. Albert Way." The older gentleman, dying, left his fortune to the other Albert Way.

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Sir Walter Besant tells of the following curious coincidence which happened to himself. "I was consulting," he says, "an artist with regard to the face and feature of a character which he was illustrating for me and I briefly described to him the kind of face I had in mind. He was meanwhile rapidly sketching a face on a piece of paper he had before him. 'Will that do?' he asked, showing me the exact portrait of the man I had been thinking of."

The four King Georges of England all died on the same day of the week.

A lady lost a ring on "the Underground." She returned and reported her loss. At that moment a train entered the station, when her ring was found on the step of her carriage, having completed the circle in that position.

At a place of worship in Rotherhithe, some little time ago, the minister was telling how Wellington said at a crisis of one of his great battles: "If darkness would only come it would save him." Hardly had he uttered these words when the gas went out in the chapel.

In 1890, a few weeks before the census taker began his enumeration of the people of Elm Grove, Va., the town authorities counted their own population, preparatory to filing articles of incorporation. The following was the remarkable result: Number of males over 21 years of age, 148; number of males under 21 years of age, 148; number of females over 16 years of age, 148; number of females under 16 years of age, 148.

Some four years ago in Teheran an English sailor was caught in the act of carrying off some precious stones from the shah's palace. The thief was brought before the "king of kings," who swore that next time the sailor crossed his path he would at once be put to death. It is a curious fact that this very sailor was crossing the street when the shah was driving in Berlin, now some years ago, and was knocked down and instantly killed.

Some Zulus were on exhibition in Aberdeen and a gentleman who had been in South Africa himself went and began to talk with the men in their own language. One of the natives was exceptionally shy, which rather attracted the gentleman's attention. He looked at him more closely and recognized him as a man who had worked for him in Natal and had run away with a pair of trousers which did not belong to him.

Appropriate to Autograph Hunters.

The unwillingness of the late Lord Tennyson to respond to requests for his autograph is well known. A fine collection in Albion contains a few lines written by the laureate's hand, which are highly prized not only for their value but for the difficulty with which they were obtained and which are interesting for their humorous pertinence of the sentiment quoted by the author from one of his poems. The first request of the Albion man for "an autograph and sentiment" was unheeded and the second fared no better but the undaunted admirer wrote again and to his third petition received a reply in a beautiful clear hand the words: "A. Tennyson. Sentiment: 'Ask me no more.'"—Rochester Post-Express.

Neck Ruches Are in Favor.

Neck ruches are now substituted for high collars and the variety displayed in the shops is endless. Some are made of alternate double strips of black and white tulle several inches broad and plaited very full in the center. Bows of black satin ribbon are added at the back or sides and fasten in front. Black and colored net, embroidered with cream lace, is also used, and very stylish ruches are made of black chiffon with a satin edge gathered to a ribbon band and wide enough to fall fully ten inches on the shoulders. Black satin bows or bunches